

Pamph
E. J. J. J.
McMaster



**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE SENATE
OF McMASTER UNIVERSITY TO INVESTIGATE CHARGES
MADE BY REV. ELMORE HARRIS, D.D., AGAINST THE
TEACHING OF PROF. I. G. MATTHEWS.**

*The Report was adopted at a meeting of the Senate held on
May 27th, 1909.*

To the Senate of McMaster University:—

It will be remembered that at a meeting of the Senate of McMaster University, held in May, 1908, Dr. Elmore Harris called in question the orthodoxy of the teaching of Professor I. G. Matthews, basing his charges chiefly on the teaching of the Professor in his course on Old Testament Introduction. After considerable discussion, Dr. Elmore Harris, Hon. John Dryden and Dr. L. S. Hughson were asked to have an interview with Professor Matthews for the purpose of ascertaining his views on the various points raised by Dr. Harris. They presented a report to the Senate at a subsequent meeting to the effect that they found Professor Matthews sound on all the fundamentals of Baptist faith and practice, with the result that the matter was allowed to drop.

At a meeting of the Board of Governors, held May 11th, 1909, Dr. Harris again called in question the teaching of Professor Matthews and presented in writing charges embraced in the following communication, which was passed on to the Senate for consideration. To the Board of Governors of McMaster University:

My dear Brethren:—

A very disagreeable and exceedingly distasteful duty devolves upon me at this time.

Will you allow me to preface what I have to say by repudiating any personal feeling of any kind whatever against the Professor whose teachings are in question in my communication. If he were my own brother in the flesh, my imperative duty in the interests of McMaster University would be precisely the same.

It is within the memory of every member present that last year the teaching of Professor Matthews was called in question at a meeting of the Senate of our University. After considerable discussion and an interview with the Professor on the part of three members of the Senate, Prof. McCrimmon reported to the Senate

that in course of conversation with him Professor Matthews had stated that he held substantially the same views of the Old Testament as those enunciated by Professor James Orr in his "The Problem of the Old Testament." It will be remembered that at this point I suggested that the matter be held in abeyance.

I append herewith, as part of this communication, a stenographic report of thirteen lectures of Professor Matthews.

The views of Professor Matthews are opposed to those of Professor Orr on every essential point, as they are presented in the thesis of the Rev. J. Glyn Williams, and in his stenographic report of the Professor's lectures, and are purely destructive of the historicity, truthfulness and integrity of the Word of God. It will be found that they are wholly occupied with discrepancies and contradictions in the Old Testament which have no real existence apart from the rationalistic method of dealing with the Word of God.

I leave you to judge whether this is the kind of teaching our people generally would commend, or which, in your estimation, would be profitable to young men preparing to preach the Gospel of the grace of God. I am quite sure that unless this destructive criticism comes to an end in our University, it will simply mean trouble of the most serious kind for us, and will militate against our missionary and evangelistic work as a denomination, and wean away the sympathy and financial help of our people when the facts become known.

I beg leave to call your attention to the following extract from the Rev. J. Glyn Williams' letter, which is appended to the thesis already referred to:

"The most injurious feature of the course of lectures is the implication that is in them of the denial of the supernatural, or as far as the Hexateuch is concerned, that there has ever been a revelation from God. If the lectures are correct in their conception, it inevitably follows that the Founder of our religion and the writers of the New Testament were ignorant of the history of the race whence they sprang. I am heartily in favor of historical criticism, and I owe a debt to the Professor for giving me an insight into it; but I have no love for that criticism which is too shortsighted and feeble to give a true interpretation of the facts of oriental history, and which is irreverent because it has no faith and leaves the deplorable impression on the mind of the student that the sacred writers wrote with a deliberate attempt to deceive."

Personally, I feel quite sure that in view of the facts thus brought to light, the usefulness of Professor Matthews to our University is gone I am,

Yours sincerely,

ELMORE HARRIS.

in the discussion that followed the reading of this communication, Dr. Harris again renewed his charges and presented to the Senate what he declared to be a verbatim report of Professor Matthews' lectures taken down in shorthand by Rev. J. Glyn Williams, formerly a student in Theology at McMaster, together with the thesis of Mr. Williams, referred to in his letter. Dr. McCrimmon, however, took occasion to state that that part of Dr. Harris' letter, in which he is represented as reporting to the Senate that in the course of conversation with him Professor Matthews had stated that he held substantially the same views of the Old Testament as those enunciated by Professor Orr in his "The Problem of the Old Testament," was an incorrect representation of the conversation referred to.

A Committee consisting of Rev. J. G. Brown, D.D., Rev. W. T. Graham, Rev. L. S. Hughson, D. D., Rev. W. E. Norton, D.D., Mr. Frank Sanderson, LL.D., Mr. R. D. Warren, and the Chancellor, A. C. McKay, LL.D., was appointed to make a careful investigation of the charges contained in Dr. Harris' letter to the Board of Governors, and to report to the Senate at a subsequent meeting. The resolution of the Senate appointing the committee was as follows:

"Moved by Dr. Gilmour and seconded by Dr. Hughson, that a committee be appointed to look into the matter presented by Dr. Harris and bring back a report to this Senate. Carried."

The Committee has realized the gravity of the work committed to its hands and has had only one object in view—to ascertain the real facts in the case. It has held eight sessions, most of them of several hours' duration, and has made as careful investigation into the charges as time and opportunity would permit. The report of the lectures was gone over carefully; lengthened interviews were held with Professor Matthews, with a view to ascertaining very fully his views, not only on questions of Old Testament criticism, but also on such fundamental doctrines of Baptist faith as Inspiration, the Deity, Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Salvation by Faith, etc. By request of the Committee, six students of the University, two of them recent graduates in Arts and Theology and the others in various stages of their course appeared before the Committee and gave testimony as to the character of Professor Matthews' teaching, the general impression which his attitude towards Old Testament problems had made upon the minds of the students in general, the effect which the teaching was likely to have on their own religious life, on their attitude toward the Bible as the Word of God and on their preaching as ministers of the Gospel; and finally as to their impressions of Professor Matthews as a man and as a teacher. All these students, except one, had taken the course of lectures complained of, and were, in the opinion of the Committee, among the best qualified to give evidence on the special subject under enquiry.

More than two hours were spent in conference with Rev. J. Glyn Williams, who was present by special request, for the purpose of securing, if possible, further light on his report of Professor Matthews' lectures and his thesis, which documents formed the basis of Dr. Harris' charges. And finally one whole evening was given up by the Committee to an interview with Dr. Harris himself, in order that he might have an opportunity to explain in detail the charges he had made, and present any further evidence he had to offer in the support of the same.

THE DOCUMENTS

On Which the Charges Were Based.

Coming to the documents filed by Dr. Harris in support of his charges against Professor Matthews, the Committee found that they consisted of:

1. A typewritten report of thirteen lectures taken down in shorthand and given by the Professor between October 3rd and November 28th, 1907—being lectures one to twelve and lecture fifteen, of a course of twenty-one lectures on Old Testament Introduction.

2. An original manuscript copy of a thesis on the "Composition of the Hexateuch," prepared by Mr. Williams as a class exercise, at the request of Professor Matthews, and purporting to embody the results of the student's own investigations.

3. An excerpt from a letter from Mr. Williams to Rev. C. J. Cameron, in which certain charges were made against the general effect of the Professor's teaching.

With regard to the typewritten report of the lectures, the Committee regrets to have to state that they found it interlarded with exclamatory paragraphs (not a part of the original copy, but specially intended for the eye of Dr. Harris for whom the report was made), calculated to cast contempt upon the Professor, and revealing an animus and an attitude scarcely becoming in a student toward his teacher.

In answer to the enquiries of the Committee, Mr. Williams stated that the lectures were verbatim so far as they went, but that of course they did not contain all that the Professor had said in the class. Nevertheless, they faithfully mirrored the Professor.

Professor Matthews, however, on being questioned, stated that they did not correctly mirror his teaching, that they bore evidence of being a selection rather than a verbatim report, that they contradicted his position on essential points and that Mr. Williams had frequently left out qualifying adjectives and adverbs which would greatly modify the meaning in many places.

While not expressing any opinion as to whether the report of

the lectures mirror the real teaching of Professor Matthews or not, the Committee was impressed with its fragmentary and elliptical character, especially in some parts. In a number of places a simple word was written down, evidently to aid the student in recalling a whole sentence and to indicate merely the drift of the discussion. The Committee found that the reading of the copy of an ordinary lecture took only about ten minutes whereas the lecture period lasted an hour.

With reference to the second of the documents filed by Dr. Harris, viz., the thesis on the "Composition of the Hexateuch," the Committee felt compelled to rule it out of court altogether. They found it to be a conglomerate of material gathered from the Professor's lectures and from various encyclopaedias—together with Mr. Williams' own views. So far as representing Professor Matthews' own standpoint, the latter disclaimed all responsibility and in so far as it represents Mr. Williams' own views, the positions taken are those of the advanced critics. A grave error was made in ever bringing in as evidence against a Professor an original thesis purporting to give the results of Mr. Williams' own investigations on the "Composition of the Hexateuch."

As to the excerpt from the letter of Mr. Williams, the third document filed as evidence against Professor Matthews, the Committee found that it was not a part of the original thesis, but was attached to it when Mr. Williams sent the manuscript to Dr. Harris.

THE CHARGES.

Coming to the charges against Professor Matthews' teaching, as set forth in Dr. Harris' letter, the Committee finds that they are five in number, and may be summarized as follows:

No. 1. That "the views of Professor Matthews are opposed to those of Professor Orr on every essential point, as they are presented in the thesis of Rev. J. Glyn Williams and in the stenographic report of the Professor's lectures."

No. 2. That these views "are purely destructive of the historicity, truthfulness and integrity of the Word of God."

No. 3. That "they are wholly occupied with discrepancies and contradictions in the Old Testament, which have no real existence apart from the rationalistic method of dealing with the Word of God."

No. 4. That unless the kind of teaching given by Professor Matthews, which Dr. Harris chooses to call "Destructive criticism," comes to an end in our University, "it will mean trouble of the most serious kind for us, and will militate against our missionary and evangelistic work as a denomination, and wean away the sympathy and financial help of our people, when the facts become known."

No. 5. That the lectures of Professor Matthews carry with them the implication of the denial of the Supernatural, and that the Founder of our Religion and the writers of the New Testament were ignorant of the race whence they sprang. Further, that the teaching is irreverent, unbelieving and leaves upon the mind of the student the impression that the sacred writers wrote with the deliberate attempt to deceive.

AS TO CHARGE NO. 1.

With regard to Charge No. 1, the Committee is of opinion that Dr. Harris has no right or authority to set up Professor Orr or any other Old Testament scholar as a standard by which to gauge the orthodoxy of Professor Matthews. At the same time, recognizing that Professor Orr is looked upon in most orthodox circles as a safe and conservative teacher, the Committee has made a comparison between his views and those of Professor Matthews, with a view to discovering whether Dr. Harris' statement was well founded that Professor Matthews differs from Professor Orr on every essential point.

From a careful scrutiny of the lectures and from interviews with himself, the Committee submits the following as a summary of Professor Matthews' views on the Bible in general, and the Old Testament in particular:

1. That it would be nearer the truth to say that the Bible contains, rather than that it is the Word of God, inasmuch as if it were actually the word of God, it would be perfect in every detail—language, syntax, chronology, etc.

2. That it chronicles and preserves the steps in a progressive divine revelation.

3. That one mind runs through it all, no matter how many hands were at work on its composition.

4. That it contains a unique element, an element of new truth, a religious content, not found in other literature, which cannot be accounted for on any naturalistic grounds. It is this element that constitutes the Bible a revelation from God.

5. That the canon of the Old Testament came into being as the result of the demand for certain books of value to the religious consciousness, both on the part of the individual and the Church.

6. That the study of the Old Testament reveals difficulties, problems and discrepancies as to facts and details, which can be accounted for most satisfactorily on the theory that the writers, in addition to the common Semitic tradition, had access to different historical documents which did not harmonize in every particular.

7. That these difficulties, problems and discrepancies do not in the least invalidate the religious message or the religious value of the various books. So far as their religious message is concerned, they are infallible.

8. That the Messianic note runs through the whole of the Old Testament and that its types and prophecies find their ultimate realization in Christ.

9. That so far as the Pentateuch is concerned, the Professor holds to the Mosaicity rather than to the Mosaic authorship of its various books, that though its core is Mosaic it bears evidence of development, growth and amplification at the hands of other writers, and that the same principle of development obtains in regard to the priesthood, the cultus and the various legal codes embedded in the Pentateuch.

In proof, that the views of Professor Matthews, so far from being diametrically opposed to those of Professor Orr on every essential point are actually in agreement in many important particulars, we take the liberty of making the following quotations from Professor Orr's books:

"If we thus let the Bible—Old Testament and New—speak for itself, and compare it part with part: still more if we yield ourselves to its power, and strive faithfully to follow its directions, the conviction will irresistibly grow upon us that it is right when it claims to be based on divine revelation. Out of that revelation, the literature of revelation which we call the Bible, grows. If this fact be firmly apprehended, particular questions about the dates or placing of books, will not much trouble us. The revelation is there, and no changes in the dates or placing of books—none at least that are likely to be permanently brought out—can do anything to alter its fundamental outlines."

—Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, p. 48.

"That such a literature exists, adequate in every respect for making known to us the revelation, animated and penetrated by its spirit, though in varying degrees—for the strictest upholder of inspiration will hardly place the Books of Chronicles on the same level with the Gospel of St. John—fitted as a whole infallibly to accomplish its great end of making men wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and of completely furnishing the man of God unto every good work—that such a literature exists, the only ultimate proof that can be given is the existence of the book itself; and such a book, as we have seen even from this brief inspection of its character, we have in the Bible."

"This, as we understand it, is the Bible's own test of its inspiration, alike in Old Testament and in New, and by it, without nearer definition, we are content, for our present purpose, to abide. The subject is taken hold of by its wrong end, when the test of inspiration is sought primarily in minute inerrancy in external details, as those of geography, or chronology, or of physical science. Inspiration does not create the materials of its record; it works upon them."

"The Scripture fulfils the ends for which it was given; no higher proof of its inspiration can be demanded."

—Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 49, 50.

"To what result—we must now ask—does our whole investigation conduct us on the origin of the Priestly Writing, and the age and composition of the Pentateuch generally. We began by leaving it an open question, whether, or how many, separate documents were employed in the compilation of that work, and if so, what were the ages and mutual relations of these documents. To what conclusions have we now been led?

"For one thing, it is first to be said, not to the conclusion that Moses himself wrote the Pentateuch in the precise shape or extent in which we

now possess it; for the work, we think, shows very evident signs of different pens and styles, of editorial redaction, of stages of compilation. As before observed, its composition has a history, whether we are able ever to track satisfactorily that history or not. On the other hand, next, very strongly to the view of the unity, essential Mosaicity, and relative antiquity of the Pentateuch. The unity which characterizes the work has its basis mainly in the history, knit together as that is by the presence of a developing divine purpose."

"In the collation and preparation of the materials for this work—some of them, perhaps, reaching back into pre-Mosaic times—and the laying of the foundations of the existing narratives, to which Moses by his own compositions, according to constant tradition, lent the initial impulse, many hands and minds may have co-operated, and may have continued to co-operate, after the master-mind was removed; but unity of purpose and will gave a corresponding unity to the product of their labors. So far from such a view being obsolete, or disproved by modern criticism, we hold that internal indications, external evidence, and the circumstances of the Mosaic age itself, unite in lending their support to its probability."

—Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 369, 370.

"One thing plain is, that, at whatever point revelation begins, it must take man up at the stage at which it finds him. It must take him up at his existing stage of knowledge and culture, and with his existing social usages and ethical ideas. Just as it was remarked above of the prophet, that it is psychologically inconceivable that he should be lifted out of all the forms of his existing consciousness, and transported into conditions for which no analogy was found in the contents of that consciousness; so it must be said of historical revelation that it could not at a stroke annihilate existing conditions, and create a world of new ones. Revelation must begin somewhere, and must work patiently in accordance with the laws of historical development: must lay hold on what is better to counterwork and gradually overcome what is worse; must be content to implant principles, and bear patiently with much remaining evil, till the good has time to grow, and to give rise to a new order of things that will supplant the old. This is the true side of the law of evolution, and it applies in grace, as well as in nature. We see this law in operation even under Christianity."

—Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, p. 472.

"In general, then, we perceive that revelation, without parting with anything of its reality or authority, is, in the truest sense, an organic process—a growing from less to more, with adaptation at every point to the stage of development of its recipients—a light shining often in a dark place, but still shining more and more unto the perfect day. Its higher stages criticize, if we may so speak, its lower; shed off temporary elements; disengage principles from the imperfect forms in which they are embodied, and give them more perfect expression; yet unflinchingly conserve, and take up into the new form, every element of permanent value in the old. Prophecy does not let fall one element that was of permanent value in the law; Christianity conserves every jot and tittle of the spiritual content of both law and prophets.

Progressive revelation culminates in Christ. Here, as we began, so we end. In Christ, the long development of Old Testament religion—Abrahamic promise, Mosaic covenant, Levitical sacrifice, Davidic kingship, prophetic hopes, Messianic ideals, strain of psalmist, redemptive purpose—finds its fulfilment and point of repose. His Person clasps Old and New Testaments into one."

—Orr, *The Problem of the Old Testament*, pp. 476, 477.

"There are books in the Bible—for example, Kings and Chronicles, compilations from earlier materials, and admittedly of late date—the authorship of which is unknown. Yet their authority is not destroyed, and it is a legitimate question how far this process of compilation may extend.

"Or, take the question of the **Pentateuch**. I myself take a high view of the connection of Moses with the Pentateuch. I believe this to be the view borne out by internal evidence, by the later testimony of the Old Testament, and by unbroken tradition since. Yet there are parts of the Pentateuch which we know Moses did not write—e.g., the account of his own death (Deut. xxxiv.); and if it should prove (as I think probable) that different hands co-operated in the composition of this large work, that it embodied older or later records, and that it underwent repeated revision and re-editing, our faith in its essentially Mosaic character and truthfulness would not be sensibly affected."

—Orr, *The Bible Under Trial*, p. 51.

"Many of the books of the Bible are compilations from older records. They use, and in some cases embody, materials derived from uninspired sources—e.g., the letters of the Persian Kings embodied in the Book of Ezra, portions of State chronicles, genealogies, tribal lists, etc.; but they also embody older prophetic histories and biographies (Cf. I Chron. xxix. 29; 2 Chron. ix. 29; xii. 15; xiii. 22; xxvi. 22; etc.). Some of these documents had been handed down for centuries, and doubtless had suffered in the usual way in the process of copying and transmission. What relation does inspiration sustain to such materials? Is its function ended in their faithful reproduction and use as given, for the purpose intended by the Spirit of God? Or does it lie with inspiration to supply all defects, correct all corruptions in names and numbers, check mistaken readings, and the like? It will be very difficult to maintain that it does."

—Orr, *The Bible Under Trial*, p. 274.

"The phrase 'verbal inspiration' is sometimes understood as if it were equivalent to a direct or mechanical 'dictation' of the very words of inspired Scripture to its several authors. Conclusions are then drawn from this idea by opponents which, it is safe to say, no intelligent upholder of the inspiration of the Bible would consent to be bound by.

"I myself, partly for this reason, prefer to speak of a "plenary" inspiration—plenary for the end for which inspiration is given, that is viewing Scripture as a whole, the imparting in a complete and infallible way of the mind of the Spirit on the great subjects of God's revelation. It is by this time a commonplace with writers on inspiration of all schools that the action of the Spirit does not suspend or annul the natural workings of the human faculties, but quickens, exalts, and uses these to the fullest degree in the communication, orally, or in writing of the divine message. The books of the Bible show as clearly the marks of the individuality and genius of their human authors as they do of the mind of the Spirit expressed through them. When we trace further this action of the Spirit in relation to the form of the record, we get much light that is of use to us on the subject of 'discrepancies.'"

—Orr, *The Bible Under Trial*, p. 268.

AS TO CHARGE NO. 2.

With regard to Charge No. 2, that the views of Professor Matthews are purely destructive of the historicity, truthfulness and integrity of the Word of God, the Committee would be free to admit that on Professor Matthews' teaching the idea of an absolutely infallible, inerrant Bible cannot be maintained. But, as no object of animate or inanimate creation, though imperfect, ceases thereby to be God's handiwork or to be the medium through which he reflects His Glory, so the Committee fails to see why absolute perfection should be demanded in the record of a revelation that had necessarily to be given largely through the medium of fallen human nature and in a manner and degree adapted to the successive stages of development of the race. It must be remembered that the Bible is not a scientific book, that the Semitic writers had not the same idea of writing history that the modern historian has, that they drew their materials from a variety of historical documents, that the Bible as we have it to-day is a synthesis of sixty-six books written in different ages by writers representing different stages of moral and religious development, handed on down to us through many media, both oral and written, and consequently exposed to the danger of both interpolation and error on the part of the copyist. The attitude of our Lord and His disciples toward the Old Testament will help us much in this connection; for we find the Lord Jesus, though constantly falling back upon the Old Testament as authority, yet Him-

self freely perfecting its legislation, clarifying its spirit, and intimating, that while divinely adapted to the stage of development for which it was given, it was still destined to give way to a newer and higher revelation. We find, too, that our Lord and his Apostles in quoting from the Old Testament, for the most part, quoted from the Septuagint, a very imperfect translation, rather than from the original Hebrew and in many cases made use of the sense of Scripture rather than the exact words.

The universal testimony of the students examined by the Committee was that the historical and critical study of the Old Testament under Professor Matthews, though it had necessarily altered their view point, had not lessened but rather increased their love and reverence for the sacred Scriptures.

AS TO CHARGE NO. 3.

With regard to Charge No. 3, that "the lectures are wholly occupied with discrepancies and contradictions, which have no existence apart from the rationalistic method of dealing with the word of God," we fear that this statement is a generalization from a very hasty examination of the contents of the lectures, for, while the first eight lectures are largely confined to the discussion of problems, from the ninth on the lectures are largely constructive in character. It must be remembered, too, that only about half of the lectures in the course, and those the first half, were filed as evidence before the Senate. It is scarcely fair to pass judgment upon lectures in which the Professor was chiefly stating problems, without giving due weight to those lectures in which the constructive side of his teaching was set forth.

With the second part of the charge, that the alleged discrepancies and contradictions in the Old Testament have no real existence apart from the rationalistic method of dealing with the Bible, the Committee does not feel called upon to deal. This is Dr. Harris' own private opinion, for which he alone is responsible. We doubt, however, if a single Old Testament scholar of international reputation could be named who would agree with him. "The truth is," writes Dr. Orr on page 9 of his "The Problem of the Old Testament," "and the fact has to be faced, that no one who studies the Old Testament in the light of modern knowledge can help being to some extent a 'Higher Critic;' nor is it desirable that he should. The name has unfortunately come to be associated all but exclusively with a method yielding a certain class of results; but it has no necessary connection with these results. 'Higher Criticism,' rightly understood, is simply the careful scrutiny, on the principles which it is customary to apply to all literature, of the actual phenomena of the Bible, with a view to deduce from these such conclusions as may be warranted,

regarding the age, authorship, mode of composition, sources, etc., of the different books; and everyone who engages in such enquiries, with whatever aim, is a Higher Critic, and cannot help himself. . . . As the world of nature presents a different aspect to the man of science still more to the metaphysician, from that which it does to the common view of sense, yet is the same world, so the Bible may present a somewhat different aspect to the eye of the trained critical scholar, yet is the same Bible, for edification, devotion and instruction in the way of righteousness."

AS TO CHARGE NO. 4.

With reference to Charge No. 4, "that unless the kind of teaching given by Professor Matthews comes to an end, it will mean trouble of the most serious kind for us, and will militate against our missionary and evangelistic work as a denomination and wear away the sympathy and financial help of our people when the facts become known," the Committee desires to submit as evidence the testimony of the students of the University, believing that they are, after all, the best judges of the character of the teaching of Professor Matthews and that what they have to say will have the greatest weight in settling the question as to what is likely to be the influence of that teaching upon the preaching of our pastors and upon the churches to which they minister.

* Testimony of Student No. 1, a graduate in Arts and Theology:

Professor Matthews' lectures have not changed my impression of the authority of Scripture at all; that is, the Scriptures are the authority to me. He has not weakened my faith. That is not because I have not related myself to his teaching. He has in many ways strengthened my faith, because I met the problems of the Old Testament before I knew there was any settlement for them; that is, I knew they were there. The influence of his teaching has certainly been to strengthen me. I feel a great deal stronger now than I did eighteen months ago, in my faith in the Word of God. There has come back to me more than I have parted with, and what has come is of a great deal more value than what I have lost. Well, I don't know that I parted with anything. I parted with some ideas, probably, that I had; but the ones that I have parted with have been stumbling-blocks to me. I certainly consider Professor Matthews' teaching wholesome and his influence helpful. I expect to take another year under him. The statement that "the effect of his lectures was to destroy the historicity, truthfulness and integrity of the Scripture" would, I suppose, need some qualification. As far as destroying the historicity of the Scriptures is concerned, it is not destroyed at all. It might probably have to be qualified to some minds. The integrity of the Scriptures is not destroyed to me whatever in any way. When I made the qualification with regard to the historicity of the Old Testament I did not mean that it takes away the literalness of the history, but my idea of the Old Testament before—at least I tried to have the idea—was that we received it **en bloc**, and its historicity in that way was changed; but the real historicity of it is strengthened. Now I call it a progressive revelation. Apart altogether from orthodoxy or the reverse, I consider Prof. Matthews a pretty good lecturer; he is a strong man and a growing man; I notice the development in his teaching. I took three years'

*The Committee attempted to present in continuous narration the evidence of the students given in answer to questions, employing only their actual words.

Hebrew under him; then I took this course and another course in Hebrew Prophecy. I notice the development since his first year. I consider him one of the strongest men in the institution; I have no hesitancy in telling any of the other professors that. I think the opinion is general among the students, as far as I can make out. His dealing with the question of prophecy has not weakened my faith in prophecy; it has changed my viewpoint, but it has not weakened; it has strengthened. I could realize that for a person, for instance like my father, who has not had anything to do with the study of it, he might think it was weakening. As I gather from Mr. Matthews' teachings, he holds to the predictive element in prophecy probably not as sometimes understood, but with the addition of the fact that it has a local fulfilment and a secondary in the future. I am going out to preach, and I can certainly preach from the Old Testament with a greater confidence and more enjoyment than before I took the course, because the difficulties were there to me before, and I had not seen any person who had tried to harmonize them. It is easy enough for an old person who has had certain religious experiences to overlook the difficulties; but for young men, who have not had the years of experience the old men have had, to try to overcome the difficulties before they have had the experience, is a hard thing, and apt to create doubt; and among the young people of the country we have to answer those questions, and I am able to answer them without shaking any faith; and I could not do that when I went out from here after my Arts course. I certainly agree with taking the theological course when a man is going out preaching.

Testimony of Student No. 2, a student in the Second Year of the English Theological Course:

I have just completed my first year in McMaster in the Three Years' English Course. I have been in the pastorate for four years. I have taken lectures under Professor Matthews in Hebrew History and Hebrew Prophecy of this year. He has not weakened my faith in the Old Testament as the Word of God; it is a different book to me, a more valuable book than it was. I suppose it has become more valuable because there is more light upon it, because I am able to understand it, possibly in a way that I was not able to understand it before. When I came to McMaster I had been four years in the pastorate, and some years before that since I became a Christian and in my work and contact with men in different parts of Canada, I have found that it was necessary for me to look into the theology...at had been handed to me, and to go over it, part by part, and see just where I was, and try to make it my own. I did that, and found possibly two years before I came down here, that it was necessary for me to discard some things that had been given to me, and to make some changes in my way of thinking theologically, so that, when I came to McMaster in September last, my theology was beginning to be worked out, I might say, in form, and one of the results in coming in contact with Mr. Matthews has been that he has steadied me. Perhaps I might have gone to the other extreme; I used to hold very tenaciously to certain views that were preached and given to me, and there possibly was a tendency to swing to the opposite extreme; but Mr. Matthews has prevented that, in that he has steadied me, and I am moving perhaps more cautiously than I would have, had I not come in contact with him. He has not prevented thinking at all; his method of teaching is such that a student literally has to think, if he is going to make anything out of it, and Mr. Matthews guides, to my mind, very wisely; he presents different sides of the question, and allows you to take which one you think best. If you question him he will give you light personally. I have gone to him outside of lectures and asked him questions regarding things, not so much that have grown up out of the lectures, and I have always got a satisfactory answer from him. He is always ready to state his own position; at least I have found him that way. Professor Matthews is not at all dogmatic. You understand what I mean by the word dogmatic. He does not say, "This is the thing, and if you don't accept this, there is nothing else to it." But I think in his teaching you can see just about where he stands. I don't think it is at all hard to come to a conclusion just where he stands in regard to a point. Of course, he presents every side of it and does not thrust his opinion upon you; if you take it, all right; and does not thrust his opinion upon you; if you take it, all right; if you don't wish to take it, all right; but he helps you to come to a correct conclusion. I think he leads to safe ground; I think he has led me to safe ground. Of course there are other men in the class who take different views, and possibly do not agree with Mr. Matthews, but yet at the same time I think his teaching has led me right along to safe ground; at least it is leading me to safe

ground. I consider Professor Matthews' teaching, as a whole, wholesome and strong, and his influence upon the students good. I have not known of any students who have professed to having been injured by having their faith shaken, or been seriously harmed, but there are times in Mr. Matthews' classes when a view is presented which we have not thought of before, and at first it strikes us as being a little strange; but when we have thought the thing over, perhaps it does not seem quite so strange, and perhaps we are ready to forsake a view that we have held, and accept his. I have found that. There have been men in the class to whom Mr. Matthews' teaching seems to have come in a more startling way than possibly to some others and these men have seemingly found it hard to accept just his view, and I don't know whether they do now accept it, or not; but in the general discussion Mr. Matthews has always given the greatest latitude, and the questions have been threshed out among the students themselves, with Mr. Matthews guiding, and afterwards he would sum up the situation, and give us, possibly, his own views sometimes; sometimes he didn't. I do not know, I am sure, about these men, but it seems to me to be just that the surprise was a matter of degree; that is all; one was more surprised than the other, more startled; that is hardly the word, but it came in a little different way to a little different type of mind. It has occurred to me that one of the difficulties has been that these men have approached the problem with views already formed, and they have found it somewhat difficult to relinquish their own view. Speaking generally, Mr. Matthews' method is to get the students to face the problems and work them out for themselves, rather than force his own views upon them. He will give you the benefit of his own views if you wish, and guide you, and thus get you to form a standing-ground of your own. I do not think he gives undue proportion of his time to what we might call the disturbing element; his work is constructive right through; he does not break down; he perhaps might displace a view that we had with a better one; but he does not tear away something and leave it vacant; he has always got something better to leave in its place. He has not changed my views on the being and character of God. His teaching has most decidedly been such as to help me in my work when I go on the field. What work I have taken under Mr. Matthews has been of the greatest value to me. I do not expect to have another year in the institution that will contribute so much as this one has done; Mr. Matthews has had a large share in that. Under the circumstances, coming here in the condition I was in, you see the place it put me, and he steadied me. We did not touch anything like the discrepancies in the narratives of Genesis, for instance, but the same thing occurred in Prophecy. Bringing those discrepancies into prominence, however, has really not disturbed me at all. For instance, taking the Prophecy of Isaiah, and looking at it from points of view as to who the author might be, has not changed the value of the book at all; whether there might be three, or four, or five, or six, or one. Simply looking at it from a literary standpoint, and also from a historical standpoint, and trying to determine really whether one or more men have had a share in making the book, has not decreased the value of the book at all, but rather increased it. Mr. Matthews' method is to lead a man to attain a wider knowledge of the Old Testament; it has resulted in that I think with most of the men of this year. From the very first, Mr. Matthews' method appealed to me something like this: it seemed to me something like moving an old house off a piece of ground and putting a better one in its place. It has always appealed to me that he had something better to give you, and he did not ask you to throw anything out of your thinking, doesn't ask you to change your views in any way; but you have something better presented to you, and you immediately move it into your thinking, and leave something else out. The house, of course, refers just to views, not the Bible.

Testimony of Student No. 3, a Fourth Year man in Arts, with about one-half of the Theological Course finished:

Professor Matthews so far as he has impressed me, has cleared away a great many doubts I had, and established a firmer faith in the Scripture than I had before. It has a larger value for me now, a value that means more to me, something I could rest on, it seems to me, both as a matter of faith and as a matter of reasoning. His method, so far as I remember, was to state all the positions that are held to-day, both so-called conservative and so-called critical-historical, and so far as I am concerned he left me to judge for myself, and come to my own conclusions, and I have come to my own conclusions concerning some things. I had to fight the thing through myself, and

come to a ground I could stand on myself, as he didn't dogmatize; and when he stated both sides, of course he left the problem with us, in anything I took under him. I know that he has established my faith quite considerably since I took work under him in Old Testament, and has made the thing richer and dearer to me. I don't know that I could say anything more definite. As to detailed teaching, I don't suppose that I could tell you very much of the details he gave. All one does get, it seems to me, from any of them, is simply to be up against the problem and face it and fight it out; and if you don't, you don't get anything out of it. That is the impression I received from him. He increased my faith in Scriptures.

Asked if he considered it was a weakness in Professor Matthews' methods that after giving both sides of a problem and allowing time for it to be worked out, he did not state his own view, the student replied:

No, I do not, because if he told me what he believed, and I was to accept that, it would be a mere mechanical thing, it would not be mine, it would be somebody else's; so I think the method of teaching—the true principle of pedagogy—is to put the thing before you, and let you work it through yourself and it is your own. Most of the students come to a conclusion somewhat similar to my own—that there is a religious content which you can rest upon, and in which you find peace, and which satisfies. Especially is it true with those who have taken Arts work. There are some men who have come here, not only in his lectures, but in all the lectures in Theology, who have had their own system of thought and theology, and they have stood by that, and were not perhaps influenced one little bit, and went away just as they came in, except that they have gone through the experience of being in school, but were not any bigger men, nor had they learned to think, simply because they would not allow themselves to think. So far as I know, every man that has gone through the Arts course, and some who have not, has got about what I have. It is very evident that there are problems there that disturb every thinking man before he comes to the College at all; and if these get settled it is a great thing to do for a man, and I believe it has been done in a great many cases. I think there has been more settlement than unsettlement. The best men who have gone out of here the last three years were men of that type, who were absolutely unsettled when they came here—the best men, and so accepted by those who knew them. I suppose it would be the general consensus of opinion that these men have shown evidence of being the strongest men, and I think they all can give an account of themselves because they have got something positive. The men who have not gone out with something positive have not given very much account of themselves.

When I go out to preach now I have just as much pleasure in preaching the Gospel as before; it means more to me now. My people are quite satisfied, apparently, and I have heard considerable comment upon my own work out there from men who have gone out—various professors from this institution—and they expressed satisfaction. I think my preaching after pursuing this course will have as strong an evangelistic element as before; that is, influencing the unsaved toward God. If any person were to say that the effect of Mr. Matthews' whole teaching was to destroy the historicity and integrity of the Bible, I would ask him to prove it, and I think he would be up against it then. I would not dogmatize; that is one good thing you learn around this institution; the more a man knows, the less he will dogmatize.

Testimony of Student No. 4, a graduate in Arts, and now in his final year in Theology:

The views I have of the Books of the Bible are of greater value to me than my old views; previously I avoided the books (referring to books studied under Professor Matthews) to some extent because of difficulty in harmonizing them, possibly the teachings; that in a measure has been removed, I think. Certainly I appreciate and value the teachings of them more than I did before. My confidence in the teaching of the books has been strengthened rather than weakened. I am looking forward to taking further work. In the Book of Job, Professor Matthews certainly showed the difficulties, but I do not think it was with the idea of showing discrepancies, but maybe to show the difficulties of harmonizing this with

the views we possibly held, and showing possibly the way in which we might interpret them with better harmony. I would not agree with all he said; I do not think he would expect us or wish us to; but so far as personal feeling with respect to the reverent study of the book and its influence in that respect, and spiritual teaching, I do not think agreeing with all he said would detract from the Book as a revelation of God, any more than possibly some minor things. I felt confidence in respect to his teaching; it was generally helpful, and as a whole was very helpful to me. I have every respect for Mr. Matthews' Christian spirit and influence and character. His influence through the institution is good, as far as I know. I think everyone respects him as a Christian gentleman. I think the general impression is that he is a splendid teacher, and if we may express our views, developing in that respect—a growing man. I cannot feel that his teaching has detracted from my desire in evangelistic work at all; in fact he has shown his interest in evangelistic work, in the work in which I am connected, enquiring regarding it. I think his teaching and influence would not detract from my evangelistic efficiency.

Testimony of Student No. 5, a graduate in Arts and Theology:

I knew Mr. Matthews when he was here in his M.A. work as a student, and I have known him ever since, and I have learned to trust the man himself. I have never been in any way prejudiced in his favor. Perhaps, when he first came here, if there was any prejudice at all, it was the other way, and I would like to say that I have learned, through my contact with Mr. Matthews, to trust him as a man, as a gentleman and as a Christian. That has impressed itself on me, and perhaps has overcome what might have been a little prejudice when he came here—not from any of his views or anything, but personally. In his classes I have come to see his sincerity and his honesty with himself and with the student, and also there has been no doubt in anything I have ever learned in his classes that he is a Christian man. My conception has been that the Bible is God speaking, that God is speaking to the Prophet, and I have never had any other impression, either in the Hebrew or in the Introduction. I have taken only one course in Introduction—O. T. Introduction last year. I did not take all the lectures; I took two-thirds of them, I suppose. I do not remember now any definite things that were said, but the impression I have taken away from his lectures has always been that we were studying Divine truth, and we have been handling it reverently. In his critical method I think he is scientific and safe and fair; his whole treatment and attitude is sincere and scientific, and his way of approach commended itself to me as reasonable and safe, with only one object in view—to find the truth. I cannot say from my experience that Mr. Matthews has ever tried to enforce a theory. Since I have studied in his classes the Bible is just as precious to me, and just as much the Word of God as when I began. I have never found Mr. Matthews destructive; I have always found him wanting to help me to further light. I do not know that I can make any comparison of Mr. Matthews as a teacher that is worth anything. As a teacher I like him and I like his method, and I feel that I am working along with him. I do not feel that Mr. Matthews has ever raised problems, but for the sake of finding the truth. I have found his lectures full of interest and stimulating, and certainly I have found his own personality and teaching something which makes his class very attractive. Certainly, in the classes I have been in, I think that opinion is pretty generally held. I hear him well spoken of. I think he is a growing and developing teacher, and in my own mind I have looked forward to having his help for a number of years to come. I think, as far as I have been able to judge, that whenever he raised problems it was for the purpose of finding a solution and helping the student to the truth. In my experience—perhaps it is more in the Hebrew than in the Introduction—I do not feel that Mr. Matthews raised the problem; it seems to me the problems were already raised. I may be wrong, but I do not know of anything now that Mr. Matthews has raised that would not be found raised in George Adam Smith, for instance. I do not think he has raised any vital problem for me. He has, in particular instances that I did not know about, but in the general method of treatment I do not think he has raised any that I have not come across before. I do not think the effect of his teaching is to destroy the integrity of the Bible. I do not think it would be right to say that; I would rather say this—that it was to find out the truth about the Bible, and what it meant. If a man makes a charge that the whole trend of his teaching is to destroy and undermine the Word of God, I should say that charge is false.

"He leaves the deplorable impression on the mind of the student that the sacred writers wrote with a deliberate attempt to deceive." That certainly is false in my own mind, and I think I can answer for every student that I know, that I have ever taken with, that that is false. Professor Matthews faces the difficulties that inhere in the Bible, certainly with the view of establishing the Bible rather than overthrowing its authority. I am sure of it, because, without ever any knowledge that there was any suspicion, or without taking any pains to think it over, to investigate, I have had the impression ever since I have been having lectures with Mr. Matthews, I have never felt that we were doing anything but to understand God's revelation, and we always approached it from the standpoint of truth. I can honestly say that he really treats it as God's revelation.

"The most injurious feature of the course of lectures is the implication that is in them of the denial of the supernatural, or as far as the Hexateuch is concerned, that there ever has been a revelation from God." I do not think I can answer that question. The thing has never—that would never suggest itself to me out of the lectures at all; no such thing would ever occur to me as that he was denying the supernatural. It never entered my mind at all before that he was denying that there had been a revelation. If Professor Matthews were asked to resign, the students would feel an injustice had been done, a good man had been sacrificed. I don't know all the students. I only know those I have worked with, and I think that would be the unanimous opinion of those I know. I think it would be an injury to the institution, not only from the standpoint of Mr. Matthews personally, but that would mean that his method would have to go too. It would mean that, for one thing, these questions have been raised elsewhere than here; if they are not met here, they are raised by the students anyway. I do not think Mr. Matthews has raised all our questions in the Old Testament, because I do not think you can read the commentaries without finding them, and if it were—I am not speaking as a theologian, but as a student—that Mr. Matthews had to leave on that account, it would mean that we would have to find the thing ourselves, we would have to face it ourselves, and we would not have the man to help us. I feel these problems have to be faced; I don't see any other way for myself; I don't see what else I can do. I feel we would have to shut our eyes and keep them shut all the time. I can not only go into the pulpit now and take the Bible and preach from it just as heartily and earnestly and confidently as I could before I came in contact with Professor Matthews, but I say better. I am not holding a brief for Mr. Matthews when I say that I honestly can; I can say better. I think the Bible is richer to me a good deal. I have been through three of the prophets; I have been through the work in the Old Testament with Mr. Matthews, and it has enriched it for me a great deal, and it has not taken away anything from me. It has changed some things, but it has settled me in some things that I was unsettled in before.

Testimony of Student No. 6, a Student in his Third Year in Theology:

My general impression of the whole course that he took on Old Testament Introduction was of a very high order. I felt that Professor Matthews gave us just the study that we ought to have. I objected more to the lectures at the time on Bible History, for this reason: there were a good many, in fact the class was largely made up of, First Year Arts men who were getting their first impression of the Bible, and some of them were not settled at all in their opinions. I thought it would hurt Theologs at all to raise questions that were raised, and I felt sometimes—and I had a long talk with Professor Matthews toward the end of the term about it, and told him how I felt, and I asked some questions and others were asking questions, because we felt that the Arts men who were there were inclined to treat the matter lightly. This refers to the course in Bible History. In the other course—in the Introduction class—we were nearly all Theologs, if I mistake not. My general impression of the course was that it was of a very high order and very valuable. I would not take a good deal for what I got out of it. I consider it helpful to me in my work. If the Arts men were to follow him through and take all I have taken, he would settle their faith before he got through, I think. I know I had my questions answered before I got through. I felt that I had made a fool of myself that I didn't wait and let him finish his course of lectures before I asked questions. I couldn't see far enough ahead; he could see, but we couldn't see how things were coming out. Of course it was a different attitude from what I had taken

before, to what I had learned. It was new to me, and I guess it was to most of the students. The result was not at all to weaken my faith in the Bible. I think it was Dr. Farmer asked me toward the end of the term if my theories of inspiration had been changed any, and I told him they had not. That was not the impression on me anyhow. When asked if it would be correct to say that Professor Matthews eliminates the supernatural entirely from the Bible, the student said: No, I didn't get that impression. I never heard him make that statement, and never asked the question. I would not infer it from his teaching; I do not think I would.

Q. Do you infer from what you have gained that he accepts the Old Testament as a revelation from God?

A. Well, I hardly know how to answer that question. Of course Professor Matthews opened this question, which was a new question to me. I had never faced this problem—the question of sources in the Old Testament—and I fought it like a tiger for pretty near the whole year; I didn't want to accept it, and I was wild at first. When he raised the question of sources, I was furious because I hadn't faced that question.

Q. Even suppose you admit the sources, composite authorship, did he not still hold that, through the Old Testament, God was making progressive revelations?

A. Oh, I think so, I think so. That was my impression. I think the other men in the class had the same impression. I don't think any got any other. At least I never heard them say, if they did.

Q. Did you have any doubt about it?

A. Oh, no, not at all.

Q. Do you think from what you have gained that he accepts the Old enticity and reliability of the Old Testament?

A. Well, it has changed things about, because I have always been inclined to think of the Mosaic authorship, or practically that, of the Pentateuch, and when he brings the history of, and the date of the Kings, and many of those books down to a later date, and puts Amos back there as the first writing prophet, and many of those portions that were of later authorship, it changes things around. I never held that the Bible, as it stands to-day, was in exact chronological order. I don't think the New Testament was ever questioned. Probably when I was a child I believed that the revelations was given in the order that appears in the New Testament.

"The most injurious feature of the course of lectures is the implication that is in them of the denial of the supernatural, or as far as the Hexateuch is concerned, that there ever has been a revelation from God." Well, that is Mr. Williams' impression. I don't think it characterizes the lectures. When I came to close grips with the Old Testament, I recognized that there were problems. I didn't before. I wouldn't face them before; but I think the result of my study during the whole two years, but especially during the first year in that class helped me to see these problems and made me come to the conclusion that I would have to face them. Professor Matthews helped me to face the problems. I have not solved them all; there are questions there I have not solved; I do not know whether I can solve them.

Q. Would you say the general drift of Professor Matthews' teaching was in any sense dangerous, harmful, destructive, subversive?

A. I don't think so. As we understand the conservative position, Professor Matthews we would hardly call a conservative. I think he is conservative among critics. I have been told when he is among higher critics they think he is exceedingly conservative, especially in Chicago University. I don't think anything I got from Professor Matthews would cripple my powers in the pulpit; I don't consider so. It does not lessen my regard for the Bible a bit in any sense. I don't think it would weaken me along evangelistic lines. I think I would preach any of my evangelistic sermons now as well as any time. I do not think I have lost any. I would have to change some things, probably, remodel some of my sermons. It would be a poor institution if it wouldn't make me do it. I think Dr. Farmer has shaken me up as much as anybody.

AS TO CHARGE NO. 5.

With respect to Charge No. 5, that the lectures of Professor Matthews carry with them the implication of the denial of the supernatural, and that the Founder of our religion and the writers of the New Testament were ignorant of the race whence they sprang; further, that the teaching is irreverent, unbelieving and leaves upon the mind of the student the impression that the sacred writers wrote with a deliberate attempt to deceive, the Committee would state that so far as the first part of the charge is concerned, it was withdrawn by Mr. Williams before the Committee, as based on insufficient evidence. As to the latter part of the charge, we feel that it is entirely refuted by the united testimony of the students and by a reference to the lectures themselves. There is not a hint in any part of the report of the lectures filed as evidence, of any such insinuation. Possibly a quotation from Mr. Williams' last words in his interview with the Committee may throw some light upon the whole matter. "Since Professor Matthews says he does believe in the supernatural, in the divine element, I accept that frankly, I am very glad that I was wrong. . . . Perhaps it is a misfortune for me that I happen to be a Welshman; I have a Celtic temperament, and you know Welshmen have a tendency to write some very strong things, and possibly you should take the statements with a grain of salt. . . . I am greatly indebted to McMaster University. I am exceedingly proud I crossed the Atlantic and had the privilege of entering this institution, and if I differ with Mr. Matthews I hope he will agree now to differ with me. I think he will allow me to differ from him, but I am going to study this question and it is quite possible that I might even adopt this view."

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT.

With regard to the course of lectures under discussion, Professor Matthews volunteered the following explanatory statement—That the Course was one in Old Testament Introduction, delivered during the fall term of 1907 and dealing primarily with such subjects as the date, authorship, etc., of the various books of the canon, that the course had not been given since and would not be again in the same form in which it was presented then; that for three years he had felt the lectures were not well adapted to the calibre of the students then in the class, several of whom were men of very limited education and training, and that the problems were too large to be satisfactorily dealt with in a course of twenty-six lectures, especially as the discussion in the class had so delayed progress as to make it impossible to go over all the ground and present with adequate fullness the constructive as well as the critical side of the subject. The result was that the Professor himself, three months

before any complaint was lodged by Dr. Harris a year ago, brought the matter to the attention of the Faculty, and on their recommendation the courses in Old Testament were very considerably changed by the Senate, the work in Introduction being placed along with Religious Teaching, in connection with three distinct courses, viz., Hebrew Legislation, Hebrew Prophecy, Hebrew Wisdom.

The Committee readily admits that in the part of the particular course referred to an undue proportion of the time, and emphasis was given to the problems, discrepancies and contradictions in the Old Testament. Nor is it to be understood that they agree with all the positions on critical problems taken by Professor Matthews, as those are questions on which Bible students of every school of thought hold different opinions. They are glad, however, to report that the course of lectures has undergone reconstruction and the emphasis changed from the critical to the constructive side of teaching.

IN CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, the Committee, while not questioning for one moment the sincerity and good faith of Dr. Harris, desire to say that after a careful weighing of the evidence, they fail to find his charges against the teaching of Professor Matthews proven, and so cannot agree with his judgment that the Professor's usefulness to the University has gone. On the contrary, they are convinced that his removal from the Chair of Old Testament would be an injustice to him, a grief to his colleagues, and an injury to the University, and that such an action would be keenly resented by practically every member of the student body.

They find that Professor Matthews is greatly respected as a Christian and a gentleman; that he is regarded by his students as a strong and inspiring teacher; that he is a man of humble and devout spirit and sound on all the fundamentals of the Baptist faith. In matters of Biblical criticism he is a conservative, and while holding his own opinions on many disputed points, finds himself most nearly in accord with the general position of the late Professor A. B. Davidson, Edinburgh. Though accepting many of the results of modern critical scholarship, he holds firmly to the inspiration and supernatural character of the Old and New Testaments, accepting the definition of inspiration given by Dr. A. H. Strong in his monumental work on Systematic Theology as essentially representing his own view, "Inspiration is that influence of the Spirit of God upon the minds of the Scripture writers which made their writings the record of a progressive divine revelation, sufficient when taken together and interpreted by the same Spirit who inspired them, to lead every honest enquirer to Christ and to Salvation."

His Chair of Old Testament is, we think will be admitted by all, one of the most difficult to fill in the whole University, because of the critical problems that will necessarily be raised in dealing with the religion and literature of the Semite peoples. There are three ways of facing these problems. One is to ignore them altogether; the second is to recognize them, but seek to deal with each individually as it arises in the mind of the student; and the third is to state them frankly, face them, and then seek to find some solution that will stand the severest strain that may be put upon it by an age that is nothing if not scientific. Professor Matthews adopts the last of these three methods, believing that it is better for the students to face these problems in the privacy of the classroom, under the sympathetic guidance of their teacher, than to meet and solve them alone unaided, as they are bound to do in after years in the course of their ministry. And in this Professor Matthews has the hearty endorsement of the Committee.

It must be remembered, too, that a University stands for freedom, for progress, for investigation. It must be open-doored to truth from whatever quarter and never be guilty of binding the spirit of free enquiry; and McMaster University, a Christian school of learning, under Baptist auspices, stands for the fullest and freest investigation, not only in the scientific realm, but also in the realm of Biblical Scholarship. Holding fast their historic position on the personal freedom and responsibility of the individual, refusing to bind or be bound by any human creed wrought out by never so keen-dialectic skill, rejecting the authority of tradition and taking their stand on the Word of God alone as the supreme and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, the Baptists have ever been ready to accord to all students of the sacred oracles the largest possible measure of freedom consistent with loyalty to the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

A. C. McKAY,
J. G. BROWN,
R. D. WARREN,
F. SANDERSON,
W. T. GRAHAM,
L. S. HUGHSON,
W. E. NORTON.

II.

QUOTATION FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENATE AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS TO THE CONVENTION.

At the meeting of the Senate, held on October 21st, 1909, it was agreed that the annual report to be presented to the Convention should refer to this theological controversy only as implied in the following paragraph:

"Questions as to the teaching in Old Testament Introduction have received long and serious consideration by the Senate. These questions, and the whole attitude of the University towards the Bible, are of such far-reaching importance to the denomination that they require the fullest consideration possible. This consideration the responsible authorities intend to give, at meetings to be called specially for this purpose at such times as may reasonably assure full attendance of the members. The making of any further report to the Convention is deferred until after such consideration."

III.

SUBSEQUENT ACTION OF SENATE.

This delay in reporting the matter to the denomination was granted at the solicitation of a minority of the Senate, who urged that it was desirable to have further discussion. For this discussion the Senate held two special meetings since, on November 15th and December 2nd, respectively. At the first of these special meetings, probably the largest in attendance ever held, it was decided to ask the members of the Faculty, teaching Theology, to present a report called for by the following resolution:

"That the Professors in Theology in this University be requested to present through the Chancellor to this Senate, at an adjournment of this meeting, a statement in general terms of the view which in their teaching they seek to work out of the attitude of the Institution towards the Bible."

At the second special meeting of the Senate a report signed by all the present members of the Faculty, teaching Theology, was presented. This report is here given:

To the Senate of McMaster University:

Brethren,—In compliance with the Senate's request of November 16th, the members of the Theological Faculty beg to submit this statement touching the view of the University's attitude to the Bible, which they seek to work out:

The trust deed of Toronto Baptist College commits the care of the institution to the regular Baptist churches, and these are described as holding and maintaining substantially certain specified doctrines, among them this:—

“The divine inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and their absolute supremacy and sufficiency in matters of faith and practice.”

In the report of Toronto Baptist College, published in the Year Book of 1885, there is embodied a series of doctrinal statements, the first of which bears on this matter, and is in these words:—

“The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience.”

Since the deed refers to the Regular Baptist churches, the constitutions of six different associations whose minutes were at hand have been consulted. In three of these the statement is the same as in the deed. In the other three the statement is as follows:

“The divine inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a complete and infallible rule of faith and practice.”

By the charter of McMaster University, granted in 1887, the trusts of Toronto Baptist College are continued in the University.

Two other facts in the history of the University since then have fundamental importance in this connection. The first is the resolution of the Convention of the Regular Baptist churches of Ontario and Quebec, held at Guelph, March, 1888—namely, “That McMaster University should be organized and developed as a permanently independent Christian school of learning, with the Lordship of Christ as the controlling principle.” The other is the University motto, adopted by the Board of Governors in July, 1888, namely, ‘In Christ all things consist.’

These facts and declarations indicate, in general, the attitude of the University to the Bible in the past, and imply that fundamental in all our faith and life are the authority and Lordship of Christ.

Each member of the theological faculty hereby declares that, according to his best knowledge and belief, he is teaching in harmony and in sympathy with that attitude; and they agree that, while complete freedom should be accorded in the investigation and discussion of facts, no theory should be taught in McMaster University which fails to give their proper place to supernatural revelation and inspiration, or which would impair in any way the supreme authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour.

The report was signed by J. H. Farmer, B.A., LL.D., Dean in Theology, and Professor of New Testament and Patristic Greek; I. G. Matthews, M.A., B.Th., Professor of Hebrew and Aramaic and Old Testament Exegesis; E. M. Keirstead, M.A., D.D., LL.D., Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics, and J. L. Gilmour, B.A., D.D., Professor of Church History.

Dr. Trotter's Endorsation.

Dr. Thomas Trotter, of Toledo, Ohio, the Professor-elect of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, who will enter upon his duties January 1, 1910, having been communicated with, made the following statement in a letter addressed to the Senate:—

“The affirmations embodied in the historical documents of Toronto Baptist College and McMaster University, respecting the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, and the Deity and Lordship of Christ, accord with my most settled beliefs and convictions, and will, in my work as Professor, be supported by the full weight of my teaching and influence.”

The report of the Professors teaching Theology was unanimously adopted by the Senate.

The foregoing reports and resolutions are published by authority of the Senate of McMaster University.

Toronto, Dec. 2nd, 1909.

Printed by The Standard Publishing Co., Toronto, Ont.