

***JOHN WILLIAM
BURGON***

HOLY BIBLE

***INSPIRATION AND
INTERPRETATION***

John William Burgon

Inspiration and Interpretation

**Seven Sermons Preached Before the University of
Oxford**

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PREFACE.

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I am unwilling that this volume should go forth to the world without some account of its origin and of its contents.

I. Appointed last year, (without solicitation on his part,) to the office of Select Preacher, the present writer was called upon at the commencement of the October Term to address the University. His Sermon, (the first in the volume,) was simply intended to embody the advice which he had already orally given to every Undergraduate who had sought counsel at his hands for many years past in Oxford; advice which, to say the truth, he was almost weary of repeating. Nothing more weighty or more apposite, at all events, presented itself, for an introductory address: nor has a review of the current of religious opinion, either before or since, produced any change of opinion as to the importance of what was on that first occasion advocated.

Another, and another, and yet another preaching turn unexpectedly presented itself, in the course of the same Term; and the IInd, IIIrd, and IVth of the ensuing Sermons, (preached on alternate Sundays,) were the result. The study of the Bible had been advocated in the first Sermon; but it was urged from a hundred quarters that a considerable amount of unbelief prevailed respecting that very Book for which it was evident that the preacher claimed entire perfection and absolute supremacy. The singular fallacy of these last days, that Natural Science, in some unexplained manner, has already demolished,—or is inevitably destined to demolish^[1],—the Book of Divine Revelation, appeared to

be the fallacy which had emerged into most offensive prominence; and to this, he accordingly addressed himself. —It will not, surely, be thought by any one who reads the 11nd of these Sermons that its author is so weak as to look with jealousy on the progress of Physical Science. His alarm does not arise from the cultivation of the noblest study but one,—viz. the study of GOD'S Works; but from the prevalent *neglect of the noblest study of all,—viz. the study of GOD'S Word*. His quarrel is not with the Professors of Natural Science, but with those who are mere *Pretenders* to it. Moreover, he makes no secret of his displeasure at the undue importance which has of late been claimed for Natural Science; and which is sufficiently implied by the prevalent fashion of naming it without any distinguishing epithet,—as "Science," absolutely: just as if *Theology* were not a Science also[2]!

It is not necessary to speak particularly of the contents of the next two Sermons; except to say that the train of thought thus started conducted the author inevitably over ground which was already occupied in the public mind by a volume which had already obtained some notoriety, and which has since become altogether infamous. Enough of the contents of that unhappy production I had read to be convinced that in a literary, certainly in a *Theological* point of view, it was a most worthless performance; and I recognized with equal sorrow and alarm that it was but the matured expression of opinions which had been fostering for years in certain quarters: opinions which, occasionally, had been ventilated from the University pulpit; or which had been deliberately advocated in print[3]; and which it was

now hinted were formidably maintained, and would be found hard to answer. Astonished, (not by any means for the first time in my life,) at the apathy which seemed to prevail on questions of such vital moment, I determined at all events not to be a party to a craven silence; and denounced from the University pulpit with hearty indignation that whole system of unbelief, (if system it can be called,) which has been growing up for years among us^[4]; and which, I was and am convinced, must be openly met,—not silently ignored until the mischief becomes unmanageable: met, too, by building up men in THE TRUTH: above all, by giving Theological instruction to those who are destined to become Professors of Theological Science, and are about to undertake the cure of souls.... In this spirit, I asserted the opposite fundamental verities; and so, would have been content to dismiss the "Essays and Reviews" from my thoughts for ever.

But in the meantime, the respectability of the authors of that volume had attracted to their work an increasing share of notice. An able article in the 'Westminster Review' first aroused public attention. A still abler in the 'Quarterly' awoke the Church to a sense of the enormity of the offence which had been committed. It was not that *danger* was apprehended. There could be but one opinion as to the essential impotence of the attack. But the circumstances which aroused public indignation were twofold. First,—Here was a *conspiracy* against the Faith. Seven Critics had *avowedly combined* "to illustrate the advantage derivable to the cause of Religious and Moral Truth from a free handling, in a becoming spirit, of" what they were pleased to

characterize as "subjects peculiarly liable to suffer by the repetition of conventional language, and from traditional modes of treatment[5]." They prefixed to their joint labours the expression of a "hope that their volume would be received as an attempt" to do this. That their allusion was to the Creeds, Articles, Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments,—was obvious. Equally obvious was the *un*-becoming spirit, the arrogance and the hostility,—with which all those sacred things were handled by those seven writers.

Secondly,—*"Essays and Reviews"* attracted notice because six of its authors were *Ministers of the Church of England*. Here were six Clergymen openly making light of their sacred profession, and apparently worse than regardless of their Ordination vows. As an infidel but certainly in this instance most truthful as well as able Reviewer, remarked concerning the work in question,—*"In their ordinary, if not plain sense, there has been discarded the Word of GOD, the Creation, the Fall, the Redemption, Justification, Regeneration, and Salvation, Miracles, Inspiration, Prophecy, Heaven and Hell, Eternal punishment and a Day of Judgment, Creeds, Liturgies, and Articles, the truth of Jewish History and of Gospel narrative; a sense of doubt thrown over even the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and Ascension, the Divinity of the Second Person, and the personality of the Third. It may be that this is a true view of Christianity; but we insist, in the name of common sense, that it is a new view. Surely it is waste of time to argue that it is agreeable to Scripture, and not contrary to the Canons[6]!"*

This twofold phenomenon, which has shocked the public conscience and perplexed common sense, has been *the sole* cause of the amount of attention "Essays and Reviews" has excited. Laymen might have combined to produce this volume, almost unheeded. An obscure Clergyman might possibly have published any one of these seven papers; and with a rebuke for his immorality or his insolence, he would probably have been unnoticed by the world. But here is a combination of Doctors of Divinity; Professors; Fellows, nay Heads of Colleges; Instructors of England's Youth; Teachers of Religion; Chaplains to Royal and noble personages!

The Jesuitical notice prefixed to the book, (deprecating the idea that its authors should be held responsible, except severally for their several articles,) completed the scandal. As if seven men, each armed with his own appropriate weapon of violence, breaking into a house, and spreading ruin around them, could "readily be understood," (to quote their own language,) to incur each a limited responsibility!... Charity doubtless would have rejoiced to spread her mantle over any one or more of the number, "who, on seeing the extravagantly vicious manner in which some of his associates had performed their part, had openly declared his disgust and abhorrence of such unfaithfulness, and had withdrawn his name[7],"—with some expression of sorrow for the irreparable mischief which he had actively helped to occasion. But long before *nine* editions of "Essays and Reviews" had appeared, it became apparent that each of the living authors, (for one, alas, has already gone to his account!) has made himself responsible for the *whole* work[8]. Nay, there are some of the number who make no

secret of their satisfaction at what has happened; and seem desirous only that their volume should obtain a yet wider circulation[9].

"Essays and Reviews," as already stated, with the turn of the year, experienced a vast increase of notoriety. The entire Bench of Bishops condemned the book; and both Houses of Convocation endorsed the Episcopal censure. A very careful perusal of the volume became necessary; and it proved to be infinitely weaker in point of ability, infinitely more fatal in point of intention, than could have been suspected from the known respectability and position of its authors. A clamour also arose for a Reply to these Seven Champions,—not exactly of Christendom. "You *condemn*: but why do you not *reply*?"—became quite a popular form of reproach.

It was useless to urge, in private, such considerations as the following:—To reply to a volume of 433 pages, each of which contains a fallacy or a falsity,—while some pages are packed full of both,—is a serious undertaking.—Besides, the book *has been* replied to already; for there is scarcely an objection urged within its pages which was not better urged, and effectually disposed of, in the last century. Nay, every good Review of "Essays and Reviews" has *answered* the book: for what signify the details, if the fundamental lie has been detected, and unrelentingly exposed? The man who plants his heel on the serpent's head, and refuses to withdraw it, can afford to disregard the tortuous writhings of the long supple body.—Again. These attacks are seven. Must seven men *with* "concert and comparison,"—with leisure and inclination too,—be procured to *demolish* this flimsy

compound of dogmatism and unbelief? to disperse these cloudy doubts, and to analyse and repel these many ambiguous statements?—Once more. A fool can assert, and in a moment, that 'There is no God.' But it requires a wise man to refute the lie; and his refutation will probably demand a volume.—I say, it was in vain to urge such considerations as these. "Why does no one *reply* to these 'Essays and Reviews?'" was asked,—till, I apprehend, pens enough have been unsheathed to do the work effectually.

It struck me, in the meantime, that I should be employing myself not unprofitably at such a juncture, if (laying aside all other work for a month or two) I were to attempt a short reply to the volume in question, myself; and to combine it with the publication of the Sermons I had already preached; and which I had the comfort of learning had not only been favourably received by some of those who heard them, but had attracted some slight notice outside the University also. Accordingly, with not a little reluctance, in the month of February I began. The *Destructive* part of the argument, I determined to address to the younger members of my own College,—men with whom I live in daily intimacy, and on terms of private friendship; and whom, above all, I desired to protect against the influence of that "moral poison," (as the Bishop of Exeter describes it,) of which the world has lately heard so much. The *Constructive* part of the argument, I resolved to complete as opportunities might offer, in my Sermons. One such opportunity presented itself early in Lent; of which I availed myself to establish some fundamental truths relative to the Interpretation of Holy Writ[10]. By favour of the Vice Chancellor, the promise of

yet another preaching turn was obtained. It appeared best to avail myself of the opportunity to consider the chief objections which have been brought against the Bible from the *marvellous* character of some of its contents[11]. An University Sermon preached exactly ten years ago, (on the Doctrine of Accommodation,) supplied an important link in the argument.... Thus the unscientific shape in which the present volume appears, is explained; and its want of exact method is accounted for. Let me add, that but for the forward state of what I like to regard as the *Constructive* part of the present volume,—(and which I am not without a humble hope will secure for the rest a more than ephemeral interest,)—I should have been slow indeed to undertake the distasteful task of answering a work of which I have long since been heartily weary.

II. And now, for a few words on the general question which has called out these "Sermons" and "Preliminary Remarks."

At the root of the whole mischief of these last days lies *disbelief in the Bible as the Word of GOD*. This is the fundamental error. Dangerous enough is it to the moral and intellectual nature of Man, when the authority of the Church is doubted: or rather, this is *the first* downward step. Not to believe that Christ bequeathed to His Church a Divine form of polity: not to believe that He set officers over His Kingdom, of which He is Himself the sole invisible Head: not to believe that He invested His Apostles with authority to delegate to others the Commission He had Himself conveyed to them; and that, by virtue of such transmitted powers, the Church has authority in the Ministration of God's

Word and Sacraments: not to believe that He vouchsafed to His Church extraordinary guidance at the first, and that He vouchsafes to His Church effectual guidance still:—an utter want of faith in the Church and her Ordinances, is the first step, I repeat, in a soul's downward progress.

Next comes an impatience of Creeds. It has been falsely asserted by an Essayist and Reviewer that "Constantine inaugurated the principle of doctrinal limitation[12];" by which is meant that definitions of Faith date from the Council of Nicæa, A.D. 325: the truth being that the famous [OE]cumenical Council which was then held did but rule the consubstantiality of the SON with the FATHER: whereas elaborate Creeds exist of a far earlier date; as all are aware. Creeds indeed are coeval with Christianity itself[13]. What need to add that when the decree of the first [OE]cumenical Council concerning the true faith in the adorable Trinity has been set at nought, all other decisions of the Church are disregarded also?

That marvellous concrete fact, the Bible,—has next to be encountered. Unmethodical as it seems to be, the Bible arrests a man in his impatient course with many a significant History,—many an unmanageable precept. Much of its contents, it is true, are of such a nature that they may be glossed over,—explained away,—ignored,—set aside. The reading is doubtful: or there are two opinions, (perhaps twenty,) concerning it: or the language may be figurative: or the words are not to be pressed too closely: or a perverse logic may pretend to find in it agreeable confirmation, instead of stern reproof. Not a few places there are, however, which defy any such handling; stubborn rocks

which refuse to yield a single trace of the wished-for vegetation, in return for the most determined husbandry. Nothing of the kind ever will or can be made to germinate upon them. They are absolutely unmanageable, and hopelessly in the way of the man who is determined to cast off restraint,—whether spiritual, intellectual, or moral. He is for being lawless; or at least, without law: but *the Bible* is unmistakably *an external Law*, and is opposed to him. The Bible is his enemy, and the Bible claims to be Divine.... What need to state that to deny the Inspiration of the Bible, and to undermine its authority, and to explain away its statements, becomes the next object of the unbeliever? It is precisely at this stage of his downward progress that public attention is excited, and public indignation aroused. The Church, (like its Divine Author,) may be outraged, and few will be found to remonstrate. The Creeds may be assailed, (especially "one unhappy Creed!"), and it is hinted that these are speculative matters, on which none should pronounce too dogmatically. But (thank God!) Englishmen yet love their Bible; and Common Sense is able to see that an uninspired Bible is *no Bible at all*. At the assault upon the Bible, therefore, as I said, an indignant outcry is raised,—as *now*.

Systematically to cope with such irreverence, such entire ignorance rather of all the questions at issue, from the pulpit, would be clearly impracticable. Men require to be taught "which be the first principles." They require to be educated in Divinity. And thus we come back to the fontal source of all the mischief of our own Day. We, in Oxford, give no systematic training to our Candidates for Holy Orders.

We do not even attempt it. Nay, incredible to relate, *we do not give them any training at all*. And the fatal consequences of this omission are to be seen on every side. A youth no sooner gets through "the Schools," and graduates in Arts, than he inquires for a Curacy. During the three months, perhaps six, of interval, he makes himself sufficiently acquainted with the Alphabet of Divinity to enable him to satisfy the very modest requirements of the Bishop's examination; after which he finds himself at once actively engaged in the Bishopric of souls and the profession of Theology. It is probable that the realities of the Ministerial calling, and the eminently practical nature of such an one's daily life, will keep *this* man from error. Not so his—more, shall I say, or less?—fortunate fellow-student; who, by hard self-relying labour, having obtained distinction in the Schools, finds himself in the enjoyment of a fellowship, and straightway engages in the work of tuition. This man, whose fellowship is his "title" for orders, studies Divinity, or neglects it, at pleasure: and if he studies it, he studies it in his own way. He has read a little of heathen Ethics with great care; or he has trained himself to the exactness of mathematical inference. With the purest idiom of ancient Greece he has also made himself very familiar. He is besides a Master of Arts. What need to add that such an one is not therefore a Master of *Divinity*? possesses no qualification which authorizes him to dogmatize about any one department of *Theological Science*?

The plain truth is, (and it is really better to speak plainly,) —the plain truth is, that the offensive Sermons one sometimes hears from the University pulpit,—the offensive

Essays and Reviews which have lately occasioned so much public scandal,—are the work of men who discuss that which they do not understand; profess that which they were never, at any time of their life, taught. Their method of handling a text is altogether unique and extraordinary. Their remarks concerning Divine things are even puerile. Their very citations of Scripture are incorrect. Their cool affectation of superiority of knowledge, their claim to intellectual power, would be laughable, were the subject less solemn and important. Speculations so feeble that they sound like the cries of an infant in the dark, are insinuated to be the sublime views of a bold and original thinker, who *"has by a Divine help been enabled to plant his foot somewhere beyond the waves of Time!"*—Doubts so badly expressed that they read like the confused utterance of one in his sleep, claim to be regarded as the legacy of one who is about to *"depart hence before the natural term, worn out with intellectual toil[14]!"* ... In a word,—Men who have never been taught and trained, but have grown up in a miserable self-evolved system of their own,—(with a little of Hegel, and a little of Schleiermacher, and a little of Strauss,)—cannot *but* trouble the peace of the Church. They deny her authority. (They are not aware of her claims.) They cavil at her Creeds. (They are not acquainted with their history.) They doubt the authenticity of the very Bible. (They know wondrous little about it.)—How did the Bible attain its actual shape? They cannot tell. How has it been guarded? They are careless to inquire. How does it come to us as 'the Bible,'—*the* Book of all books? It is best not to discuss a question which must infallibly bring forward *the Church* as "a witness

and a keeper of Holy Writ[15]." Men are even impatient to publish their private prejudice that it is to be interpreted like any other book; that it is inspired in no other sense than Sophocles and Plato. "The principle of private judgment," (it is said,) "puts Conscience between us and the Bible, making Conscience *the supreme interpreter*[16]." "Hence," it is said, "we use the Bible,—some consciously, some unconsciously,—not to override, but to evoke the voice of Conscience." (p.44.) "The Book of this Law," (as Hooker phrases it,) is dethroned; and Man usurps the vacant seat, and becomes a Law unto himself! GOD Himself is dethroned, in effect; and Man becomes his own god.

To cope systematically with all this from the University pulpit, as already remarked, is plainly impossible. The preacher must take up the question at some definite stage, and arrest the false teachers *there*. "That wicked,"—or rather "THE LAWLESS ONE," (ὁ ἄνομος, as he is called in 2 Thess. ii. 8,)—must be bound, hand and foot, *somewhere* in his career of lawlessness; and in these Sermons *the threshold of the Bible* has been chosen as the place for the conflict. My life for his life. I will slay or be slain on the very portal of Holy Scripture. With the young, you begin at the beginning,—"the Creed, the LORD'S Prayer, the Ten Commandments;" and they must be further instructed in the Church Catechism. But the foundation cannot be laid afresh with the full-grown. It is idle to talk about the authority of *the Church* to men who do not believe in the Bible. It is useless to dispute about Creeds with men who know nothing of the origin and history of Christianity. Reserving the *true* method of teaching for those who alone are capable of being taught,

we are constrained to argue with men of full age about *the Inspiration and Interpretation of the Bible*.—If in the ensuing Sermons the principles handled are so very elementary, it is because the available limits were so very narrow,—while the field over which Unbelief has spread itself, is so very broad.

III. When a few words have been added concerning the manner in which I have executed my task, this Preface shall be brought to a close.—If the style of the present SERMONS,—considering the auditory, and above all considering the subject,—shall be thought by competent judges not sufficiently dignified in parts, I will bow to their decision without remonstrance. Everybody can divine the defence which would be set up; but perhaps it may not be quite a valid defence. A man feels strongly and warmly; writes fast and freely; is determined to be clearly understood: is weary of the dignified conventionalities under which Scepticism loves to conceal itself when it comes abroad. Perhaps some expressions which may be permitted in delivery, ought to be remodelled when a Sermon is sent to the press.

But with regard to the ensuing PRELIMINARY REMARKS, I shall not so easily be persuaded to think that I am mistaken as to the style in which Essayists and Reviewers are to be dealt with[17]. Some respectable persons, I doubt not, will think my treatment of them harsh and uncharitable. I invite them to consider that we do not expect blasphemy from Ministers of the Gospel,—irreligion from the teachers of youth,—infidelity from the Professor's chair: nor are we called upon to tolerate it either. I have the misfortune to concur entirely with the verdict pronounced by the Bishop of Exeter on the subject of 'Essays and Reviews.' Let those who feel little

jealousy for GOD's honour measure out in grains their censure of a volume, the confessed tendency of which is to sap the foundation of Faith, and to introduce irreligion with a flood-tide. Such shall not, at all events, be *my* method. Private regard, if it is to weigh largely with him who stands up for GOD's Truth, should first have weighed a little with those by whom it has been most grievously outraged. It may suit these Authors to wrap up their shameful meaning in a cloud of words; but their Reviewer avails himself of that Christian liberty to which they themselves so systematically lay claim, mercilessly to uncover their baseness, and uncompromisingly to denounce it. If I may declare my mind freely, punctilious courtesy in dealing with such opinions, becomes a species of treason against Him after whose Name we are called, and whom we profess to serve. Seven men may combine to handle the things of GOD, it seems, in the most outrageous manner; while *themselves* are to be the objects of consideration, tenderness, respect! I cannot see their title to any consideration at all.

It will be found, it is hoped, that when these writers have the courage to descend to argument, *there* I have gladly met them on their own ground, and sought to refute them: but *to reason* is no part of their plan. Unsupported dicta on every subject on which they treat: doubts promiscuously insinuated, but never once openly and honestly maintained: cool assumptions of intellectual superiority for themselves and their infidel allies: contemptuous allusions to the names which the respectable part of mankind agrees to hold in honour: foul imputations against the honesty of the Clergy: —*this* is all their method! The favourite *cant* of these writers

is, that no one should shrink from free discussion, or fear the results of Criticism. Why then do not they themselves criticize? Why do not *they* reason? Charity herself after weighing these Essays carefully has no alternative but to assume that the Authors either have not the courage, or that they lack the ability, to descend to a free discussion, and risk all on a stand-up fight. A kind of guerilla warfare: half a dozen arrows, and a hasty retreat: *such* is their mode of attack! But this method, though it may occasion annoyance, is quite unworthy of an honest inquirer, and never can be decisive of anything. It is the cowardly expedient of men who shrink from scrutiny, and dread exposure. Nothing so easy, for example, as to repeat the old commonplace about "irreconcilable discrepancies" in the "Synoptical Gospels:" but why, instead, are we not told, *which these irreconcilable discrepancies are?* For my own part, I freely renew in this place the challenge I gave in my Illrd Sermon[18]. Let any one of these Gentlemen publicly and definitely lay his finger on one or more of these contradictory statements in the Gospels, during term-time; and within a week I hereby undertake publicly to refute him in the Divinity School of this University: and our peers shall be our judges.

Gentlemen who come abroad in the fashion above described, have no right to complain if they encounter rough usage on the road. When Critics are clamorous for the "free handling" of Divine Truth, they must not be surprised to find themselves freely handled too. If free discussion is to be the order of the day, then let there be free discussion of "Essays and Reviews," *as well as of* THE BIBLE. Six Clergymen

of the Church of England who enter upon a crusade against the Faith of the Church of England must not be astonished if they are looked upon in the light of immoral characters, and treated as such. Accordingly, I have handled *them* just as freely as *they* have handled the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists of CHRIST.

I cannot therefore pretend to offer anything in extenuation of the style in which I have examined the statements of these Essayists and Reviewers. Perfectly sensible as I am of the gracefulness of highly courteous language in controversial writing, I will not so far violate my own conviction of what is right as to bandy compliments on such an occasion as *this*. This is no literary misunderstanding, or I could have been amicable enough: no private or personal matter, or I could have flung it from me with unconcern. No other than an attempt to destroy Man's dearest hopes, is this infamous book: no other than an insult, the grossest imaginable, offered to the Majesty of Heaven; an attack, the more foul because it is so insidious, against the Everlasting Gospel of JESUS CHRIST. In such a cause I will *not* so far give in to the smooth fashion of a supple and indifferent age, as to pay these seven writers a single compliment which they will care to accept. The most foolish composition of the seven is Dr. Temple's; the most mischievous is Professor Jowett's: but the germ of the last Essay is contained in the first; the foolishness of the first Essay is abundantly shared by the last: while the evidence of correspondence of sentiment between the two writers is unmistakable. The most unphilosophical Essay, (where *all* are unphilosophical,) is Professor Powell's: the most insolent,

Dr. Williams': the most immoral, Mr. Wilson's: the most shallow, Mr. Goodwin's; the most irrelevant, Mr. Pattison's. Not one of these writers shews himself capable of recognizing the true logical result of his own opinions: of drawing from his own premisses their one inevitable issue. Not one of them has had the manliness to *speak out*, and to *say plainly* what he means. They seem to deny the Divinity of CHRIST, and the Personality of the HOLY GHOST: but how reluctant is a reader to believe that they really *mean* it! Quite inevitable is it that these clerical critics must choose between two alternatives. Either they hold opinions which make it impossible that they should retain Orders in the Church of England, and yet be honest men; or they have expressed themselves with such culpable inaccuracy and ambiguity, as shews that they are altogether incompetent to handle the Science of Theology.—Gladly would one give them the benefit of a third alternative: but I see not that any remains.

If it should be thought strange that one thinking so meanly of 'Essays and Reviews' should have produced a yet larger volume in reply to them, it must suffice to point out that the refutation of a fallacy is almost of necessity the ampler writing.—Or again, if it be remarked that by far the largest part of what I have written is directed against the hundred pages of Professor Jowett, the explanation is still obvious. For not only does that concluding Essay of his bring to a terribly practical issue the speculative doubts and difficulties which had been started by all his predecessors; (namely, doubts as to (1)the relation in which the Bible stands to Man;—(2)the nature of Prophecy;—(3)the reality of

Miracles;—(4)the worth of Creeds and formularies;—(5)the authenticity of Genesis;—(6)the basis on which Revelation is by the Church of England supposed to rest;)—by proposing that we should henceforth regard the Bible as a book *no otherwise inspired than Sophocles and Plato*:—not only does Professor Jowett's essay discharge this fatal office; but his style is somewhat peculiar; and what he says, cannot always be effectually disposed of by a few words. Let me explain.

There is a certain form of fallacy of statement in which this Gentleman's writings abound, which calls aloud for notice and signal reprobation. He has a marvellous aptitude, (one would fain hope through some intellectual infirmity,) of connecting together in the same sentence two or three clauses; one or two of which shall be true as Heaven, while the other is false as Hell. The reply to such a sentence is impossible, without many words,—far more than Mr. Jowett's sentences commonly deserve.—Sometimes he strings together several heads of thought; of which enumeration the kindest thing which can be said is that it betrays an utter want of intellectual perspective. To unravel even a part of this tangled web so as to expose its argumentative worthlessness, soon fills a page.... But there is another kind of fallacy which the same gentleman wields with immense effect, and in the use of which he is a great master; which, because it was absolutely impossible to handle it fitly in the proper place, shall be briefly adverted to, here. I proceed to describe it not without indignation; for I am profoundly struck by the intellectual perversity, not to say the moral

obliquity, which has so entirely made this vile instrument its own.

The fallacy then is of this nature. When Professor Jowett would put forth something especially deserving of reprehension,—some sentiment or opinion which he either knows, or ought to know, that the whole Church will resent with unqualified abhorrence,—he assumes a plaintive manner, and puts himself into an interesting attitude; sometimes even folds his hands, as if in prayer. He then begins by (1)throwing out a remark of real beauty, and so conciliating for himself an indulgent hearing; or (2)he goes off on some Moral question, and so defeats attention; or (3)he delivers himself of some undeniable truth, and so disarms censure; or (4)he says something of an entirely equivocal kind, and so leaves his reader at fault. Candour, of course, gives him the benefit of the doubt. It is not till the sentence is well advanced, or till it is examined by the fatal light of its context, that one is shewn what the ambiguous writer really was intending. A cloven foot appears at last; but it is instantly withdrawn, with a shuffle; and you experience a scowl or a sneer, as the case may be, for your extreme unkindness in inquiring whether it was not a cloven foot you saw?... Meanwhile, the learned Professor has gone off *in alia omnia*, with a look of earnestness which challenges respect, and a vagueness of diction which at once discourages pursuit and defeats inquiry. The fish invariably ends by disappearing in a cloud of his own ink.

It shall suffice to have said thus much. These pages must now be suffered to go forth; not without a hearty aspiration that a blessing may attend them from Him *sine Quo nihil est*

validum, nihil sanctum; and that what was intended for the strength and help of those who want helping and strengthening, (I am thinking particularly of what has been offered on the subject of Inspiration,) may not prove misleading or perplexing to any.

Oriel, June 24th, 1861.

Footnote

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[1] The reader is invited to refer to the passages cited in the present volume, at pp. lxxxvii. and lxxxviii.

[2] See p.47 to p.50. Also Appendix (B.)

[3] In illustration of what is meant, may be particularized a highly objectionable Sermon which Dr. Temple preached before the University some years ago, and which occasioned no small offence to many who heard it,—as all in Oxford well remember. It was almost as unsound as the same writer's Essay "On the Education of the World," which, to the best of my remembrance, it strongly resembled.—A printed Sermon by Dr. Temple may also be referred to, "preached on Act-Sunday, July 1, 1860, before the University of Oxford, during the Meeting of the British Association," entitled "*The present Relations of Science to Religion.*"—Professor Jowett's handling of the Doctrine of the Atonement, needs only to be referred to.

[4] Page 80 to 82.

[5] "To the Reader," prefixed to *Essays and Reviews*.

[6] 'Neo-Christianity' in the *Westminster Review*, No. 36.—How true is what follows:—"The Bible is one; and it is too late now to propose to divide it. We shall only point out that the *moral value of the Gospel teaching becomes suspicious* when the whole miraculous element is discarded.

"We certainly do think that the Gospels assert a miraculous Incarnation, Resurrection, and Ascension; and that the Epistles teach Original Sin, and a

vicarious Sacrifice. If this be doubted by our authors, it is sufficient for us to say that such is the impression they have created on all ages of Christians."

"We desire that if the Bible, or any part of it be retained as Holy Writ, it be defended as a miraculous gift to Man, and not by distorting the principles of modern Science. Let the Essayists be assured that there exists *no middle course*; that there is no Inspiration more than is natural, yet not supernatural; *no Theology which can abandon its doctrines and retain its authority.*"

Lastly, with what sickening and almost Satanic power, does the same writer invite the Essayists and Reviewers to make shipwreck of their souls in the following terrible passage. And yet, who sees not that *on their principles* absolute and professed unbelief is *inevitable*? He says:—"How long shall this last? Until men have the courage to bury their dead convictions out of sight, and the greater courage to form new. All honour to these writers for the boldness with which they have, at great risk, urged their opinions. *But what is wanted is strength* not merely to face the world, but *to face one's own conclusions*. We know the cost. It must be endured. Let each who has thought and felt for himself, ask himself first what he *does not* believe, and then, if wise or needful, avow it. Next let him ask himself what he *does* believe, and pursue it to its true and full conclusions. Neither loose accommodation nor sonorous principles will long give them rest. It is of as little use to surrender the more glaring contradictions of Science as it is to evaporate discredited doctrine into a few vague precepts. That end will not be attained by our authors by subliming Religion into an emotion, and making an armistice with Science. It will not be obtained by any unreal adaptation; *nor by this, which is, of all recent adaptations*, at once the most able, the most earnest, and *the most suicidal.*"

[7] The Bishop of Exeter to Dr. Temple.

[8] The Bishop of Manchester exactly expressed the general opinion, when he said,—"Nor will I for a single moment, however my personal feelings might interfere, conceal my deliberate conviction that every partner in that work is equally guilty."—(*Guardian*, Ap. 10, 1861, p.341.) But the most faithful language of all came from the Bishop of Exeter in his crushing reply to an inquiry put to him by Dr. Temple. "I avow that I hold every one of the seven persons acting together for such an object to be alike responsible for the several acts of every individual among them in executing their avowed common purpose."

[9] A letter from Dr. Rowland Williams, which has appeared in the newspapers, contains the following language with reference to the American reprint of "Essays and Reviews:"—"I confess myself personally gratified that my own work, and that of my far more distinguished coadjutors, with whom it is sufficient honour for me to be included in the same volume, should have

obtained the honour of a reprint in another hemisphere. Still more would I hail the circumstance as an auspicious token of the sympathy which should prevail between kindred nations, as regards subjects of the highest import, and as a sign of the prospects of Christian freedom beyond the Atlantic....

"I have not yet discovered any community or individual possessing the right to cast the first stone at those who interpret the Bible in freedom, and who subordinate its letter to its spirit, or its parts to its whole. Even if Holy Scripture were, as is popularly fancied, the foundation,—and not, as I believe, the expression and the memorial,—of Religious Truth in man, it would be absurd to render it honours essentially different from those which it claims for itself, or to make it a master, where it claims only to be a servant."

[10] Serm. V.

[11] See Sermon VII.

[12] *Essays and Reviews*, p.166.

[13] See p.clxxvii. to p.clxxxiii.

[14] Mr. Jowett in *Essays and Reviews*, p.433.

[15] Article XX.

[16] *Essays and Reviews*, p.45.

[17] It should perhaps be stated that the edition of "Essays and Reviews" which I have employed is *the Third* (1860.)

[18] pp.72-3.

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