

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_churchman\\_os.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php)

THE  
CHURCHMAN

NOVEMBER, 1894.

ART. I.—THE PRESENT POSITION OF OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM IN ENGLAND.

FROM the point of view of one who looks upon the questions connected with the authority of the books of the Old Testament with no pretensions to be a "Biblical critic," but who desires to be *au courant* with the general drift of critical opinion in England on these subjects, it cannot be fairly said that the last year or two has shown any marked advance in strengthening the position of the destructive or "analytical" school of critics; nor that, on the other hand, they have received anything like a final or decisive defeat. The contest seems still to partake of the character of a drawn battle: each party must keep within its own lines, must rest content with the arguments which its ablest champions have already advanced, and which seem to them to have sufficient weight to turn the balance in one direction or the other.

Many religious persons, it is to be feared, are somewhat disturbed in their minds by the thought that the Bible should be the subject of "criticism" at all. It is to them, in all its parts, the "Word of God," given to mankind by Divine inspiration, and containing a progressive and continuous revelation of the mind and will of God; they cannot bear that it should be analyzed and discussed like any ordinary human composition. But such persons are asked to remember, first, that this criticism is no new thing; it has existed in some form or other from the first; and many of the difficulties and objections by which "advanced" critics now seek to overthrow the authority of Scripture are, in their germ, almost as old as Christianity itself. Secondly, they cannot shut their eyes to the fact that, however Divine the *origin* of these sacred writings, the *authors* of them, in the usual sense of that term, are human, and must, like all other authors, have their works tested by the judgment and experience of those accustomed to deal critically

with other literature. The contention of the conservative school is not that critics have employed the usual methods in treating the books of the Bible, but that they have employed those methods wrongly and unfairly; that their conclusions are not warranted by the data which they themselves furnish. It, would, however, in the view of the present writer, be better for the lovers of the Bible frankly to acknowledge with what a large margin of imperfection and error, due to whatever cause, the books of the Old Testament have, in fact, come down to us; how much exaggeration, ambiguity, and contradiction is to be found in the details of some of those books; how impossible it is, on either side, to establish with regard to the authorship of some of them, or of parts of some of them, any theory which shall not have, somewhere or other, its weak point, its defective side. A familiar instance of the kind of error referred to is the extraordinary exaggeration with regard to *numbers* which is frequently to be found in some, if not all, of the historical books of the Old Testament. One example will be sufficient:

In 1 Kings xx. 30 we read that, after the Syrians had been defeated by Ahab, "the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and there a wall fell upon *twenty and seven thousand* of the men that were left." It is surely impossible to suppose that anyone will maintain the destruction of 27,000 men by the fall of a wall to be an actual historical fact. The explanation given by Canon Rawlinson in the orthodox "Speaker's Commentary" is in the highest degree artificial and unsatisfactory; and even the ordinary device of dividing the number given by ten will hardly bring the record within the limits of probability. But it is not because the analytical critics have dwelt on blemishes such as this, or innumerable others in the books of the Old Testament, that we find fault with them; it is because, on grounds which we hold to be insufficient, they have brought down the actual existence of the books, as written documents, to so late a date as to impair their credibility and authenticity.

Among the more prominent contributions to the subject before us which have recently appeared must be reckoned the work of Professor Sayce, bearing the curious and misleading title "The Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments." Those who turn to this volume expecting to find any strong confirmation of the conservative or "traditional" view of the Old Testament Scriptures will find themselves woefully disappointed. So far is this from being the case, that the committee of the S.P.C.K., the publishers of the book, evidently mistrusting the offspring which they are introducing to the world, not only prefix to it an apologetic or self-defensive preface of their own, besides that of the author, but guard themselves by a special note against the imputation of being

supposed to accept the author's conclusions with regard to the age and canonical authority of the Book of Daniel. Why, under the circumstances, the Committee did not leave the book to be issued by some other publishing firm in the ordinary way, and to stand on its own merits, is a mystery which perhaps will never be explained.

It is true, Professor Sayce has abundantly shown, by the "verdict of the monuments," that former rationalistic theories about the non-existence of written documents among the Hebrews, and their total lack of education and civilization until many centuries after the age of Moses, must now be finally abandoned. It is now conclusively proved that such documents, of brick or clay, existed not only in the time of Moses, but even in all probability in the time of Abraham; and this has given the final *quietus* to many a self-confident assumption, rather than proof, that the older history in Genesis could not have existed in a written form till several thousands of years after the events it professes to relate.<sup>1</sup> "So far from its being improbable that the Israelites of the age of the Exodus were acquainted with writing, it is extremely improbable that they were not. . . . Schools and libraries must, in fact, have existed everywhere, and the art of writing and reading must have been as widely spread as it was in Europe before the days of the penny post." "The subject-matter" of part of the tenth chapter of Genesis "is in full accordance with the discoveries of archæological research, and may easily have been derived from documents older than the age of Moses" (pp. 45, 51, 152).

But in all this is not Professor Sayce only slaying the slain, as regards, at least, the position of the higher criticism in this country? The best representatives of that criticism amongst ourselves are much too sagacious to commit themselves to such assertions as that writing was unknown in the days of Moses; and its most popular champion, Dr. Driver, has shown clearly that the corrections or alterations which he would have to make if all Professor Sayce's conclusions were established would be extremely few and unimportant.<sup>2</sup>

So far, then, Professor Sayce has given us very little which we did not possess already; but, on the other hand, he has endeavoured to take away much which some of us supposed we *did* possess. He uncompromisingly deposes the Books of Esther and Daniel from the rank of canonical to that of apocryphal books. "Only one conclusion seems to be possible:

<sup>1</sup> As assumed, *e.g.*, by Mr. W. E. Addis, "Documents of the Hexateuch": "If we put aside a few fragments of ancient song, the earliest document cannot be much earlier than the ninth century before Christ, and is, therefore, posterior by many centuries to the time of Moses."

<sup>2</sup> See *Contemporary Review*, March, 1894.

the story of Esther is an example of Jewish Haggadah which has been founded upon one of those semi-historical tales of which the Persian chronicles seem to have been full" (p. 475). "It is with good reason that the Book of Daniel has been excluded from the historical books of the Old Testament in the Jewish Canon, and classed along with the Hagiographa" (p. 532).

Although, in the view of the present writer, such treatment of these books is by no means so damaging to our reverence for Holy Scripture as many of the conclusions of analytical critics with regard to the earlier books of the Old Testament, yet it will undoubtedly be a shock to many who may have turned to this volume, attracted by its title, and hoping to find in its pages some confirmation of what they had been taught in childhood of the unity and solidarity of the many books which we include under the comprehensive name of Bible.

Professor Sayce's book is disappointing, too, in other respects. The writer's well-known rashness of conjecture as to the origin of the names of places, persons, deities, etc., reappears with unpleasant frequency, and culminates in a bold attempt to assign an entirely new site for Mount Sinai (p. 263, *seqq.*). The book is, moreover, coloured throughout by the intense "Babylonianism" of the author. To Babylon is to be referred the origin of all ancient Oriental religion; by the test of Babylonian inscriptions the statements of Biblical writers must stand or fall; although it does not seem more difficult to suppose that a Babylonian monarch may have lied on a monument, than that a Biblical writer may have been mistaken in a date or a fact. Monumental fiction has died hard, if, indeed, it be dead at all. It has only been within quite recent times that the reproach has been removed from among ourselves that,

London's column, pointing to the skies,  
Like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies.

Another not unimportant contribution to these discussions has been made by an article on "Old Testament Criticism" in the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1894. The writer is evidently a man of ability and knowledge, and writes with the confidence which such knowledge and such ability supply. But his "verdict" (to borrow Professor Sayce's expression) is satisfactory to neither party in the controversy. A considerable part of the article is taken up with an elaborate attempt to explode altogether the "Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch." "The result" (says the reviewer) "of our inquiry for a definite and authoritative tradition asserting the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is, that we do not find such a tradition either in the pre-Christian period, or in the teaching of our Lord. What

we do find is, that, side by side with other traditions asserting different origins, there sprang up in the course of the three centuries preceding the Christian era a habit of speaking first of one part and gradually of the whole of the five books of the Law as the work of the great law-giver, Moses; but there is no evidence that it was intended by this to assert that the books were, in our modern sense, written by Moses." Is not the writer here "beating the air," as Professor Driver says of those whose arguments he considers beside the point? Who has maintained that the books of the Pentateuch were written by Moses "in our modern sense"—*i.e.*, as Milton wrote "Paradise Lost," or Macaulay the "History of England"? Genesis certainly cannot have been so written; and with regard to the remaining four books, all that is meant by "Mosaic authorship" is that these books contain in the main, and with no large subsequent alterations or additions, the substance of what was written either in the life-time of Moses, and with his knowledge and sanction, or so soon after as to have the weight and authority of contemporaneous record, as the history and laws of the Israelites up to their entrance into Canaan.

The writer concludes the passage from which we are quoting with the following words: "A churchman of the second or third century would have been little troubled if he had been told that what Tatian, one of his own bishops, had done in producing a harmony, a diatessaron, of the four Gospels, this an Ezra or other scribe had done in producing the 'Law of Moses' by harmonizing four or more records which had been received in his time." The comparison suggested seems a singularly infelicitous one, for the stubborn fact remains that the scribe did not produce a harmony or diatessaron; on the contrary, he left a large number of discrepancies or contradictions which it would have been the first object of a harmonist to remove. One of the strongest arguments against the theory of very late redactors, having plenary power to make the Old Testament Scriptures what they pleased, is that no attempt has been made either to soften down the dark stories of cruelty and lust which disfigure the lives of some biblical patriarchs or heroes, or to present in a collected and consistent form the "Mosaic" legislation; the "codifier," if such there was, having done his work in a singularly imperfect manner. But that "Ezra or another scribe" (not harmonized, but) collected and arranged the sacred writings of the Jews in their present form, is a tradition which possesses every feature of probability.

One question, however, remains: if the tradition of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (whether in the sense above explained, or in the sense in which a Rabbi of our Lord's time would have taken it), existed in the third century B.C.,

how did it arise? Traditions do not grow up, like mushrooms, in a single night. Ezra himself may possibly have been living at the beginning of the fourth century; how was it that in the third century the tradition had already assumed the form that Ezra was the collector or editor only, not the harmonist or codifier—still less, as the extreme critics of the analytical school would have us believe, that writers later than Ezra were the authors and inventors—of the “Books of Moses”? We seem, after all, to be shut up between two conclusions: either an acceptance of the early date and Mosaic authority, if not authorship, of the Pentateuch; or the theory of an elaborate system of fraud and falsification (the writer we are quoting imperiously warns us off the term “forgery”), by which unknown writers or redactors in the latest ages of Israel’s history palmed off inventions of their own as having the stamp of the great legislator’s approval.

But if the Quarterly Reviewer thus wages war against belief in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and so far joins hands with the analytical critics, in the latter part of his article he reverses the part of Balaam, and, having been called upon to bless these confederated forces, he altogether curses them. The essence of the critical system referred to is the analysis of the historical books of the Old Testament into a number of documents or sources—what number has never yet been, and is never likely to be, settled—which the critic, by certain criteria of his own, accurately distinguishes from each other, even to the bisection of a single sentence; just as the chemist, by similar analysis, distinguishes gases or other substances from each other. But the Reviewer will have none of this analyzing process. His arguments need not be summarized; the most obvious of them is the fact that neither as to the number, order or character of the documents or sources is there any pretence of agreement among the critics themselves. Accordingly, he concludes as follows: “If we ask how far the ‘analytical’ theory is consistent with the facts, it seems clear that only one answer can be given. We may admit that there is much to be said for it, that this has been said with conspicuous ability, and, except in rare instances, with conspicuous fairness; that this ability and fairness have won the admiration of many who have competent knowledge of one side of the question, and of some who have competent knowledge of both; but we must add that there is much, very much, to be said *per contra*, and that in its main contention the case is NOT PROVEN, is not, indeed, in the present state of our knowledge provable.”

The readers of the CHURCHMAN will probably be glad to know that such an opinion has been pronounced by a judge who seems competent to his task. There lurks, however, in

the last sentence a suspicious element. The analytical theory, says the writer, is not provable *in the present state of our knowledge*. But why should it be provable in any future state of our knowledge? Writers on this subject sometimes speak as if the Old Testament Scriptures were some newly-discovered Egyptian or Babylonian inscription, respecting which its discoverers may say, "Parts are wanting—some are defaced or broken off—there are *lacunæ* which we can only conjecturally fill up—words occur which puzzle us, but on which other inscriptions hereafter to be unearthed may be expected to throw light—give us time, and we shall be able to tell you more." But this cannot be said of the Old Testament Scriptures. They have been before the world unchanged for many centuries; their language is as well understood by at least some hundreds of competent scholars in Europe and America as Greek or Latin by some thousands; their contents have been read, commented on, criticised, by some of the acutest minds of this and former centuries. Archæology or philology may here and there elucidate an obscure expression, may confirm or invalidate a fragment of history. But it seems unreasonable to expect that any large addition to our knowledge can be looked for from any source. We may safely assume that, if the Reviewer is right in his contention that the analytical theory is not proven or provable in the present, it will never be proved in the future.

Another indication of the disturbance of men's minds within the Church of England by the demands of the new criticism is to be found in the attitude of the body which represents the extreme or advanced High Church party—the English Church Union. That attitude, indeed, so far as any collective decision of the whole body is concerned, is one of inaction. A majority of the members supported the view of the Council, that this was not a matter in which it was wise for the E.C.U. to meddle. The "Catholic" doctrines or practices, which it is the special object of that society to support or encourage, are only very remotely connected with such questions as the authorship of Deuteronomy, or the historical existence of Abraham. But anyone who glances at the correspondence columns of the *Church Times* will be aware how persistently the Rev. Hugh Ryves Baker, of Woolwich, and others, have expressed their conviction that this silence on the part of the E.C.U. is a betrayal of the principles on which it was founded, and inimical to the objects for which it exists. It is clear, therefore, that at least a minority of this powerful High Church organization believe that the party which it represents is bound to speak out, and to speak strongly, on the new criticism. Nor is this view altogether unreasonable. A High Churchman in close



accord and sympathy with analytical criticism is as much out of his element as an Evangelical in a similar position; those who inherit the traditions of Pusey and Keble, as much as those who look to Venn or Simeon as their spiritual ancestors. The premature capitulation made by Mr. Gore in "Lux Mundi," which has placed those who look to him for guidance in so singularly awkward a position, was evidently made with considerable reluctance. He more than once speaks of the "concessions" which have to be made to the modern critical school, when, *e.g.*, we are asked to regard the whole biblical history before Abraham as belonging to the same class as the early Greek myths, or to doubt the historical character of events which our Lord Himself apparently believed to have actually happened. Now, this is the language of one who thinks himself compelled by the clearness of the evidence to admit conclusions which he would otherwise have been glad to avoid. The High Churchman does not *welcome* the results of analytical criticism, he could not do so with any pretence of adhering to his own principles; but some representatives of his party have felt themselves forced to come to terms with those of a very different school, and to throw overboard a large and important part of what were once considered their distinctive principles in order to save the rest; a process which is called "attempting to put the Catholic faith into its right relation to modern intellectual and moral problems" ("Lux Mundi," Preface).

The fact is that the party which welcomes the results of destructive criticism is not any section of the "Anglo-Catholic" element in our Church; it is a very different "school of thought"—that which eliminates from its so-called Christianity every distinctive element of the Catholic Faith, and of which the *coryphæus* is the Hon. and Rev. W. H. Fremantle, Canon of Canterbury. It is well to recall that nearly eight years ago this writer in the *Fortnightly Review* expounded what he proposed to call the "New Reformation," and in doing so made a clean sweep of historical Christianity. The Divinity and Incarnation of Christ, Creation, except as "a negative rather than a positive idea," miracles, and even the personality of God, are all treated as little better than obsolete and untenable beliefs. On the last-named point Canon Fremantle tells us that "the theologians of the future will carefully draw from the processes of human life, as that which is highest in the moral scale, their inferences as to the nature of the Supreme Power," and "will feel able to speak of God as just and loving, since the Supreme Power *ex hypothesi* includes mankind, the leading portion of the world, with all its noblest ideals." Whether this last sentence involves Pantheism or Positivism we feel unable to say. At all events, it is a singular gloss on

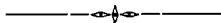
words with which Canon Fremantle must be familiar: "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."

Now, that *this* is the party which will welcome all the conclusions of the most destructive School of Biblical Critics is clear from the fact that Canon Fremantle not only regards all those conclusions as established beyond question with regard to the Old Testament, but carries his besom of destruction uncompromisingly into the New Testament also. Thus he speaks of "the diminished historical value which it is found necessary to ascribe to the Acts of the Apostles," and "the dubious character of the later epistles ascribed to St. Paul." Leaving a few fragments of the Gospels as genuine, he adds that "the main lines of this criticism acquire a greater certainty and acceptance every year" (an assertion which the few years that have intervened have already done much to refute), and that, with regard to our Lord, we have "to gain from books subject to the same incidents as other forms of literature, and written by men who imperfectly understood Him, our consciousness of the value of His life, His character, His teaching, and of His relation to mankind and to God." Should Canon Fremantle be reminded of the recorded promise of Christ to His apostles—"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John xiv. 26)—he has his answer ready: the Gospel ascribed to St. John was probably "wholly composed in the second century by some disciple or successor of St. John."

This pronouncement of Canon Fremantle called forth from the late Dean Burgon, in the following month (April, 1887), a vehement protest, characterized by that writer's well-known grotesque violence, and winding up his charges with these words: "Shocking to relate, therefore, *you deny every article in the Creed!*" When a Canon of Canterbury, and one who takes a somewhat prominent part in Church matters, can sit complacently for seven years under the imputation of "denying every article in the Creed," we feel that we are on the "downward grade" with a vengeance. And *this*, be it remembered, is the only party in our Church which can accept heartily and *ex animo* the criticism which leaves both the Testaments largely made up of legendary and unhistorical matter.

A. COLCHESTER.

(To be concluded.)



## ART. II.—THE NEW EDUCATIONAL TEST.

THOSE among us who are old enough to remember the Gorham controversy, as it originated and was gradually developed to the great peril of our Church, will recall, as its most conspicuous and most menacing incident, the so-called Synod of Exeter, and the new test it proposed—viz., the rigid definition of the article of the Creed of Constantinople, in which we confess our belief in the “one baptism for the remission of sins,” on the interpretation of which the mind of the Church had been long divided. While giving clear expression to her doctrines in her public formularies, our Church has ever been cautious to avoid any definition of the terms in which they are conceived which might limit the just rights of her separate members, and to preserve such a latitude to their meaning as to give scope to the exercise of a wise and enlightened discrimination. In this she follows the example of spiritual wisdom set by the sacred writers, who do not unnecessarily define the meanings of the terms which they employ in expressing or illustrating the doctrines of Christianity. They rather teach the meaning of them by describing their results upon the life of the disciple than by defining their critical interpretation; for their object, and the very “object of our religion” (as Leibnitz justly affirms) “is rather to inspire holiness into the will than to pour into the understanding draughts of hidden truth.” No reasonable man can doubt that this should be also our object, not only in our pastoral work, but also, and specially, in the education of the young.

The Bishop of Exeter in his controversy with Mr. Gorham lost sight of this great aim. Both held with equal firmness of conviction and confession the articles of the Creed; but the Bishop was not satisfied with this unity of belief, but required Mr. Gorham to accept his definition of the terms in which it was conceived, imposing by this means a new test. In exact imitation of this fatal precedent, the advocates of the new educational test, unsatisfied with their acceptance of the Scriptures would force upon the teachers a commentary of their own upon the sacred text, breaking up the compact whose establishment had been so beneficial as fully and effectually as the Bishop broke up the pact which the Church had formed with the individual disciple, on the faith of which he entered the sacred society. The Synod of Exeter proclaimed the necessity of “declaring its firm adherence to the Nicene Creed,” meaning hereby its own definition of the terms used in the Creed. In the same manner the movement party in the religious educa-

tion question deem it necessary that the teachers should declare their belief in the Scriptures, meaning thereby their own deductions from the Scriptures; for they had already accepted the Scriptures as fully, and we may trust as honestly, as Mr. Gorham had accepted the Creed.

In an unpublished letter I addressed to the late venerable Dr. Lushington, of which he expressed his entire approval, I asked, Whence can arise the necessity which the Bishop and his Synod plead? Against those who receive not the Creed there might arise such a necessity, but as against those who receive it, their meaning can only be this: "We deem it necessary to declare our adherence to the Creed in some sense which the Creed does not sufficiently or naturally express." In the same manner the agitators on the present occasion declare it necessary to explain the Scriptures in a certain sense and in certain terms which they would impose upon the teachers, although they have accepted the Scriptures as unreservedly as Mr. Gorham accepted the Creed. The Synod proceeded to explain their sense of the Creed by an elaborate definition, which, as I observed further, "was as virtual an addition to the Creed as an explanatory schedule would be to an Act of Parliament." This equivalence of a definition to a creed was pointed out with great pertinence by the Bishop of Forli in the Council of Florence, "for," as he urged, "it touches the subject-matter of the Creed." From this conviction the Council of Chalcedon declared, when urged to add to the Creed a word then deemed actually necessary to the orthodox explanation of it, "We will make no exposition in writing. There is a canon (*i.e.*, of Ephesus) which declares that which is already set forth to be sufficient." A canon of a far higher authority has fixed the limits of our belief—the canon of Scripture itself.

But another very important question here arises, to which we may briefly allude. The Apostles' Creed constitutes the foundation of the great compact made between the Church and her individual members, the breach of which on either side would dissolve it altogether. The baptized person, whether infant or adult, is received into the Church on the profession of the grand and simple truths and facts on which his salvation depends. The same compact is entered into between the Church and the individual even in the Roman Church, and the great Western Creed comprises all its conditions. It cannot but appear that the attempt to force upon the young who have been thus freely admitted into the Catholic Church any articles of faith or points of religious instruction beyond these, is disturbing the most sacred bond which can exist between the Church and her children. In my work on Romanism (p. 47), referring to the baptismal formula of the Roman Church, I

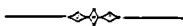
observe: "We recognise here a mutual compact on the part of the child received into the Church and the Church herself, which is incapable of alteration or addition without a breach of the covenant by either of the contracting parties. Such a violation of the compact, by a new condition or a new test, would be held by every legal tribunal in the world to release the party against whom it was enforced from every obligation imposed upon him by the original agreement. The compact between the parties clearly marks out the limits of necessary faith on the one side and of stipulated obedience on the other."

The creed has the unique and inimitable merit that it presents every necessary truth of Christianity in the simplest and most persuasive form to the least instructed and the narrowest intellects, and that it preserves the order and course of the Divine revelation, and of the great events of the life of Christ. To the minds of the young the Divinity of our Lord is better proved by the works of His power than by the most elaborate of the definitions of orthodoxy, while the Personality of the Holy Ghost is best taught in the language in which the first promise of His advent was given, and in the narrative of the manner in which that promise was first fulfilled.

But if the compact should be broken and the confidence of the Nonconformists in our Church seriously shaken, more fatal consequences than those which more immediately present themselves would very soon appear. The child who is prematurely taught the deepest mysteries of our faith will be prematurely led to the knowledge of the painful and humiliating controversies which arose out of them. We shall but stir up the ashes of these fires, which we believe too rashly to be entirely spent, by substituting an artificial and technical dogmatism for a natural and practical demonstration. It would seem that the necessity for this reticence led the Western Church in her baptismal office to make the simpler creed the foundation of it, and not to invite the young and unprepared mind to enter into the deeper mysteries of the union of the two natures in Christ, or of the Procession of the Holy Ghost. These they left to grow up out of the simpler teachings of the Evangelists, as they grew up from the first. It was an evil day which rendered philosophical definitions and Aristotelic distinctions a necessity. It will be a more fatal day for the Church when human definitions are substituted for Divine teachings, and religion begins to be taught *aristotelicé non piscatorie*. The sufficiency of the Scriptures is not only the doctrine of the Scriptures themselves, but also of our own Article. We shall not easily err if we "give ourselves up to be taught by the pure and living precept of God's Word, which, without more additions, nay, with a

forbidding of them, hath within itself the promise of eternal life, the end of all our wearisome labours and all our sustaining hopes."<sup>1</sup>

ROBERT C. JENKINS.



ART. III.—THE VALIDITY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN SUCCESSION.

THERE are two separate and distinct questions connected with the problem of the Reunion of the Churches which are capable of being discussed quite independently of one another. The one is that of the Reunion of the members of the several Churches—the Reunion of the *laity*; the other is that of the recognition of the *officers* of those Churches by the separate organizations, in the matter of the interchange of pulpits, the administration of Sacraments, and the official status that is conveyed by the fact of such ministers being qualified and regularly constituted officers of any particular Church. It would be quite possible for either of these two separate aspects of the question to be brought within the sphere of practical politics without the other being considered at all. There might be a real Reunion of the laity of the churches without any discussion of the question of Orders, and there might be a recognition (or otherwise) of the Orders of the various classes of ministers without furthering the Reunion of the laity of the Churches in any way whatever. So since most people, when they speak or write of the problem of Reunion, confine their purview to the latter question, and think that, when it is settled, the whole matter has come to a definite and satisfactory conclusion, it is, perhaps, worth while to point out that the two sides of the question are separable. Tempting as this phase of the problem is, I only mention it to pass it by and to proceed to the more immediate special topic of my paper, namely, the Validity of the Presbyterian Succession.

And let me say very clearly at the outset that the task that I have set before myself is a limited one. I am only going to state what the lawyers call an A B C case. I am not going to advocate a cause. My own view of the question is rather different from the view that I shall now present; but since my own view does not matter, and the view that I shall state is that held by a large body of men within the limits of the Church of England, in essence by the Church of Rome, and in principle by many of the prominent ministers of the Church of Scotland, it is one that is worth while considering, because it

---

<sup>1</sup> Milton: Prose Works.