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1922.

The 636th ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B,

THE CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, on Monday,
January 9th, 1922, at 4.30 p.m.

Lieut.-Colonel HOPE BIDDULPH, D.S.O., in the Chair.

Before opening the general business of the meeting the CHAIRMAN called on Lieut.-Colonel G. Mackinlay and Dr. A. T. Schofield to make announcements. The former referred to the great loss the Institute had sustained in the passing away of our honoured President, the Earl of Halsbury, in December last, after occupying the post with great wisdom and distinction for more than eighteen years. Colonel Mackinlay showed by instance how close Lord Halsbury's interest had been in the cause for which the Institute stands. An expression of sympathy with the Countess was put to the vote and carried unanimously. All in the meeting stood during the statement as a token of respect to the memory of our late President.

DR. SCHOFIELD spoke with regret of the loss of one of our Vice-Presidents, Professor H. Langhorne Orchard, who had constantly been with us and given great help to the Institute in many ways, both as a Member of Council and also as a speaker in our meetings.

LIEUT.-COLONEL MACKINLAY, acting Secretary for meeting, then read the Minutes of the last meeting, which were confirmed and signed.

The CHAIRMAN then introduced Miss Constance M. Maynard, First Principal of Westfield College, to read her paper on "The Bible in the Twentieth Century."

THE BIBLE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By
CONSTANCE L. MAYNARD. Mor. Sci. Tripos, Cambridge, and
First Principal of Westfield College, University of London.

IT is nearly fifty years ago that I entered Girton College, Cambridge, as a new student. To be permitted to enter the world of learning was delightful, my companions were friendly, and all was bright, save for one aspect, and that was the attitude toward religion. Brought up in a sincerely Christian home, already having seen the work of the Spirit of God in some of the village people, the change of atmosphere was almost indescribable. Doctrines I had supposed fixed and settled for ever by Divine authority were thrown into the melting-pot, and even the most elementary positions, such as the existence of a life beyond the grave, were questioned. Let me say in passing that with increasing numbers the tone has become very different. In every College, whether for men or women, there is an Agnostic body, but (thanks chiefly to the Student Christian Movement) there is also an organized Christian society, for anyone to join who will.

It is of times long past that I am speaking, when the controversy centred round the Bible, which I remember hearing described as "a hopelessly mutilated document." Germany has generally been at least forty years in front of England, whether for good or ill. Good in the Reformation, and also in the Evangelical Revival; evil in the onslaught of rationalistic ideas. These reached England about 1840, but were not fully translated and put into the hands of the reading public till the seventies. England's contribution on the scientific side also coincides, Darwin's *Origin of Species* coming out in 1859, and the *Descent of Man* in 1871. The total tumult was very great. The older among you will remember the outcries on both sides, and those who read and keep pace with the currents of critical thought will be aware that in great measure the storm has sunk to rest. In the beginning of this century a new method of attack was begun; the Bible, *i.e.*, the Inspiration of the Past, was left alone for every man to interpret as he will, and all forces were directed against the Inspiration of the Present, *i.e.*, the work of the Spirit of God in the heart of man. We are told that the wonders of Conversion can be imitated in the hypnotic trance, and that answers to Prayer are due to auto-suggestion, and so on. The position is one of extreme peril to our next generation, but I for one do not feel capable of dealing in public with the immense questions involved. Some among us tend to get belated in matters of thought, and I think it may be of real interest to trace the position of the Bible through the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, and see where we stand in face of the tests the future is sure to bring. There is so very much to say that, as both time and space are limited, I pray you have patience. To be brief is to appear dogmatic, and it is not easy to put the conclusions of a lifetime into a few sentences.

When these countless questions about the Bible were thronging round me, as formless and ubiquitous as a swarm of locusts, a little pamphlet fell into my hands that was a very great help. Dr. Christlieb of Bonn wrote a ponderous book called *Moderne Zweifel*, which was translated by a young relative of his, Dr. Weitbrecht Stanton, now of Mildmay. To encourage English readers to try to master so stiff a volume, the Introduction was published separately, and it was this that, by the goodness of God, fell into my hands, I think in the Long Vacation of 1874.

The summary of it that remained in my mind was this. Before fighting we must have reconnaissance. It may take long to subdue our enemies, but our first duty is to enumerate them and so make an estimate of the work that lies before us. Outcries are of no use. Our foes advance upon us in three main bands or regiments, thus:—

1. *Literary and Historical Criticism.*—This we need not fear. We have certainly made a good many mistakes as to dates and authorship of our sacred writings, e.g., we thought the Psalms were all written by David, and the book we call "Isaiah" was the work of one man. Learning is a valuable helper in all this division. It requires great care in handling, but we need not be afraid of the result. It does not touch the question of Inspiration.

2. *Scientific Criticism.*—This is an infinitely more difficult region. Not only does the account of the Creation need to be entirely remodelled, but the question of Miracle is at stake; the two great Christian miracles, the Incarnation and the Resurrection, are implicated. I bid you beware how you approach this subject.

3. *Ethical Criticism.*—This is the hardest of all. I do not think any of us can see the end of it, or even attempt to explain it. The divine approval of the mean character of Jacob, the exterminating wars of Joshua, the extraordinary tales in the book of the Judges, the existence of the imprecatory Psalms—we submit, we cannot explain how such as these can be the outcome of a God of perfect Goodness and Love. Here is a very strong enemy.

Such was the pamphlet; though I fear that in this summary I am giving you far more of the effect upon my own mind than the words of Dr. Christlieb. To some of you it may sound like the echoes of a past age, but to me it was a great satisfaction to find our enemies were not innumerable, but were in definite bands. Yet I could not fight, for I would not read. Where was the use of speaking to people at home, who checked all progress with the wards, "To doubt is to sin"? Where was the use of confiding in agnostic friends who said light-heartedly, "All life is change and progress. You thought one thing yesterday, why cannot you think another thing to-day, and perhaps another to-morrow?" This to my mind meant the death of the soul. Once I remember confiding in a German pastor, for I thought he would sympathize, but he turned his gentle eyes on me and said slowly, "And you would like to know all the different poisons by taste?"

This is not a biography, and I will only add that I toiled along the road for many years, blind and dumb toward the speculative side (though one cannot be wholly deaf if one lives in the world of thought), but keeping eyes and tongue and hands fully occupied with the practical side of religion. Never did I omit reading the Bible, or trying to help others who knew less than myself, and when one sees the flame of a new life kindled in a young heart, and the whole being shoots heavenward like a sky-rocket, doubts sink into the background. Yet they remain,

deep-hidden. One would like to see as well as to feel and to touch.

Now that the dark tunnel is behind me, and I have run out into an atmosphere of light and freedom, it is possible that a statement may help. Some, who live secluded lives, may be content with the creed, "Fear not; only believe," which Bishop Light-foot found such a help in moments of difficulty; but those who are surrounded with the clamour of the world of Students must have some rational explanation to offer, must be able "to give a reason for the hope" that is in them, even though it be coupled with "fear" as well as meekness. So let me try.

The Bible has an outer shell as well as an inner kernel. Everything, while we are in this world, has a body as well as a soul; we as individuals have, and the Church of Christ has, and even our Lord had. Take the Bible down from your shelf and look at it like any other book: what is it about? It is a very ancient record, and it contains History, Legislation, Ethics, Poetry, Narratives, Proverbs, Parables, and almost every form of literature. Far, far more. These things are the mere channels of a Divine Revelation continued through centuries; they are the outer form of an immortal soul that can rule the whole world. Yes, true. But first admit that it has a body, and that here is a region where learning is a great help. What is a critic? In some people's minds he seems to be nothing but an anarchist, pulling down sacred things, and destroying everything he touches! An art critic is not so; it is true he may point out to you faked things and show that what you thought was a Raphael is not so, but he also can discover treasures where you cannot. A critic is an expert in one line of knowledge, whether history, archæology, philology, or anything else. He knows more than you and I do, and therefore should be listened to. In some things he brings forward corroborations of the Bible narrative; monuments and inscriptions are innumerable, and all to the good. But do you care so very much about these matters? I do not. They deal only with the shell. I do not want especially to know about Tiglath-pileser, and about the discovery of cylinders of cuniformal writing giving the history of Sargon, who is incidentally once mentioned in Isaiah. It is all right just in passing, but it does not go near the supreme truths I want to know. And it is exactly the same when their verdict seems to be adverse to our accepted ideas. Perhaps I may here bring forward the stock example, though doubtless you have heard it a score of times. Most critics say that it is about as likely that Moses wrote Deuteronomy as that *In Memoriam* was written by Spenser, who wrote *The Faerie Queene*. They are not quite all agreed, and it is pathetic to see how Christian people catch at the doubt, as though their life depended on it. I cannot make myself care about the date,

but to me it is beautiful to read how our Father in Heaven re-states His laws in terms of entreaty. The very young child needs short commands, "Come when I call you," "Don't touch the fire"; but the older child needs a glimpse of the heart of love that lies behind the rules, an explanation of the miseries of disobedience, and the joys of sympathy with the nobler aim and the wider scope of the parents. Though this view of a far later date seems to me better, because more in accordance with our experience, I am quite ready to leave it because it deals only with the shell; the important point is that the words are really there, an expression of hope and disappointment, of sympathy and longing, straight from the heart of God, incorporated in our Bible. But I pray you listen to this further expression of experience; if the critic goes beyond mere facts and gives you his conclusions, I say without hesitation that we will not accept them. No, not one of them, for *quâ critic* he can deal only with the outer shell. He misses out our chief witness. He cannot help it. He comes under our Lord's explanation that, unless the little flame of the Divine life is lighted within, a man cannot even "see the kingdom of God," not even know that it is there to be studied. St. Paul's version of the same solemn truth about "the natural man" is that "the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." These words may seem severe, but again and again does the agnostic set his seal to them by saying, "It isn't that I won't believe, it is that I can't. I have not the requisite data." The critic may go on to tell us that Genesis is by no means the first book to be written down, but is a comparatively late production, and that the Apocalypse is not the last; if he goes on to add, "Therefore the Bible is not reliable," then we may chase him from us without allowing him another word, exactly as Nehemiah did the son of Joiada the high priest, because he was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite. It is only lately that I see this division clearly between the work of Learning, and the work of the Spirit of God, and surely it leaves us a reasonable path to walk in! The critics cannot deal with more than the shell, the body; they must not touch the inner soul, because they have no experience of it, and so the judgment they pronounce is worth nothing. And even as to the arrangement of the books—a wonderful series written over a space of at least fifteen centuries—suppose all the sixty of them were bound in separate volumes, how should we place them? Surely it were wise to begin with the remote past, and to end with the remote future! That a critic may also be a sincere Christian is, thank Heaven! true, but then he takes another place, and we call his work Apologetics rather than Criticism, because they bring in a witness the world cannot recognize.

Only one century ago two of these apologists were read by thousands, and doubtless considered final, and these are Bishop Butler, who wrote the *Analogy*, and Paley, who inaugurated the argument from Design in Nature. Both of these have been rendered inefficient and put out of court by the advance of scientific discovery, and so doubtless it will be to the end of time. What satisfies the intellect of one generation will not satisfy that of another, but as our knowledge advances, we must advance also. As a Scottish minister once said to me, "The defences of Christianity are *not military, but naval.*" One, and only one, line of proof is secure, indisputable, eternal, incontrovertible, and that is the change in the human character wrought by the acceptance of Christ as the Saviour from sin; both from the debt of the past and the tyranny of the present. This change, this new life born within us by the work of the Holy Spirit, is spoken of many times in the Bible. Take one instance only; "Instead of the thorn," the selfish isolation that wards off other people, "shall come up the fir tree," the type of strong, unobtrusive usefulness; "instead of the brier," the catching, carping, irritating, ill-tempered spirit, "shall come up the myrtle tree," sweetness, fragrance, and bridal beauty: "and it shall be to the Lord for a name, and for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." If we work for the Kingdom of Heaven, this is our experience. In the depths of our own souls we know this change from the selfish to the altruistic position, from the bitter to the sweet, and in dealing with those under our charge, to see the spiritual miracle going on is the very joy and crown of our endeavour. Centuries come and go, and from the days of the Acts of the Apostles to the work of our Bible Classes or of the Mission-field of to-day, here is the one evidence for the truth of the Word of God that can never be disputed or gainsaid.

Let us pass on to the difficulties raised by Science, for to my own mind these stood first and chief. My rebellion was long and complete, for, for some twenty years, I would read nothing that bore on the subject on Evolution, nothing but Henry Drummond, to whom many of us are eternally grateful. However, one day some one suggested that this was not the first time Science and Religion had come into direct collision, and that in the conflict Science had always won, and yet Religion was eventually none the worse. It was like bringing a lamp into a dim twilight room, as my mind and memory at once supplied the historic instances. Think of the first and most crucial struggle of all, when the earth was discovered to be a free, rolling ball attendant on the sun. Dante's conceptions were so scriptural, so satisfactory, while under the new light the words *up* and *down* lost their meaning. The Apostles' Creed itself, as well as all Scripture, speaks of up to heaven, and down to hell, and if the localities

of heaven and hell are taken away from popular conception, the reality of them soon follows. I confess to feeling decided sympathy with the Pope and the Cardinals; they all had a look through Galileo's telescope, they saw the four moons of Jupiter like a little diagram of the planetary system hanging up on the wall of heaven for all to see, they listened to the arguments, but they considered themselves the guardians of the Faith, and they decreed that these things *must not be*, and they wrote down that it was to be a part of the Catholic faith for ever that the earth was fixed and central, for anything less than this contradicted the whole tenor of the Bible. It was not till 1835 that heliocentric books were taken off the *Index*.

The next conflict is coupled with the name of Sir Isaac Newton. His great work was not merely the discovery of the law of gravitation, but that every department of Nature, Light, Sound, and all else, was under the strict reign of law. Witchcraft, and a thousand superstitions fell at one stroke, and again there was an outcry that this view of the order of the world did away with both the power of Satan and the power of God, and tended to blank materialism. Yet Newton's discoveries have triumphed. The next battle was only a hundred years ago; Geology awoke and demanded *time*. Not a single week in the year 4004 B.C. but it cried out for thousands and millions of years, and would not be denied, so plain was the evidence of the rocks. The folly of the outcries against this claim makes us profoundly ashamed of ourselves, but there stands the documentary testimony to our stubborn blindness. Fifty years after this the doctrine of Evolution was propounded—that creation is not sudden but very gradual, and that life begins in its lowest forms and works upward. Now with such a past history as we have behind us, was it wise that these theories were met with a violent denial? that sermons were preached and pamphlets were written by the hundreds, bringing forward torrents of abuse, or endeavouring to make the whole subject ridiculous? I myself remember such in plenty. Do we wish the three former conquests undone, and the conceptions of Space, Law and Time put back to where they stood five hundred years ago? Certainly not. Has not Religion gained rather than lost by them? "But," you add, "this discovery is so uncertain, and many things disprove it." Well, perhaps you do not realize that the observed motion of the planets in the sky seemed to disprove the Copernican theory over and over again for a hundred and fifty years. Always wrong; the precalculated place and the actual place never coincided, till astronomers were nearly in despair. Copernicus had made the radical mistake of thinking the planetary orbits were circles; Kepler, a century and a half later, discovered they were ellipses, and the whole theory fell into beautiful and permanent order. We are waiting

for our Kepler, but meanwhile we can no more go back to the catastrophic view of Creation than the astronomers of those days could forsake Copernicus and go back to the old Ptolemaic theories. That is impossible.

This is hardly the place to enter on this vast subject, but because it was to my own life the very watershed, the cross-roads, the division of thought, which, if accepted, all else followed naturally, I may perhaps be excused for dwelling for a few moments on the magnificent record in Genesis i. There it lies before us, a firm framework of truth, patient of interpretation, like ruled lines that we may fill in by our ignorance or our knowledge as we will. Milton filled it in with brilliant and grotesque designs, picturing full-grown lions and sheep coming clambering out of the earth, and we may fill it in with our Science. It bears both equally well, for the Bible was not given to save us trouble by teaching us Natural Science.

If you read the ancient Cosmogonies of other lands, whether Hindu, Chaldean, Greek, or Scandinavian, you will find they cannot go beyond the first sentence without falling into errors, most of them absurd enough and even the best of them wholly insufficient, while in this our scanty record given us by the Spirit of God, the narrative is carried through to the very close, true and unblemished by even the least mistake.

Israel knew no more Science than any other nation, and conceived of the solid earth as floating on an abyss of water, with sun, moon and stars set in a crystal dome above; yet the Spirit of God has guided the hand of the scribe to steer between his mental errors into the narrow safety of truth.

In the first verse you have what Science demands as the five necessary presuppositions of Creation—

1. Time—In the beginning.
2. Force—God.
3. Energy—Created.
4. Space—The heavens.
5. Matter—And the earth.

The first day's work is the sweeping together of the wreaths of cosmic dust into fiery streams; heat is not observable to a spectator, so it is only the Light that is mentioned. The second day's work is the completion of the shape of the earth, when the dateless, formless ages are over, and the records of Geology can begin to tell their tale. Thus it goes on; the whole of the inorganic world is in good working order before life is introduced, and of the two great forms of life, it is that of the vegetable that first reaches to size and power. Of animal life, it is the lower and cold-blooded forms that prevail first, and only

at the very end of the Creation Period do the warm-blooded creatures appear, man, both male and female, being made at the same time. This is only the physical fact of sex, the mental and spiritual differences between man and woman coming on the scene later.

Then, again, observe how the purpose of the whole is brought forward as existing before the completion, "And God said . . . and God made"—and this formula is repeated eleven times in all, giving us a hint of the duration of time, as well as of an aim kept steadily in view. In four seconds a man may say deliberately, "I will build myself a house," and it may take him four years to accomplish his design. There are over 30 million seconds in a year, so the work takes 30 million times longer than the speaking. Also look at the sparing use of the word "create." To *make* is to modify existing materials, but to *create* is to originate. Now, there are three great bewildering questions in our minds—How did Matter, as we know it, come into being? How did Vitality spring out of the inorganic world? How did Man come out of the world of animal vitality? The gap in each case is unfathomable. See how the word "create" is reserved for these three gaps alone, and all else comes under the heading "made." The answer to our questions is in no mechanical process unfolding itself, but lies with God and God only, "Author and Finisher."

It is tempting to go into further details, but we must pass on to Prof. Christlieb's third division of difficulty. This he considered most formidable, and yet we find that the questions solve themselves if once we admit the principle of gradual or evolutionary creation, for this surely applies to the mind and character of mankind as well as to the powers of his body. It is at this point that the parallel between the individual and the race is eminently instructive, and certain bright little diagrams illustrative of our long-past history are ever in our nurseries. When the age of actual infancy, the period of passivity, is past, we come into the age of self-will, when the babe grasps at everything, and is more prone to destroy than to build. Of this period we have hints in the evil of the world before the Flood, and in the old tyrannies of brute force such as Nineveh and Babylon. From five years old onward comes the age of chatter, the enchanted time of real childhood, when imagination is vivid, and the word "Why?" is ever on our lips. Here we have the brilliant Greek, with his fairy-tales and his love of adventure; and in the Bible we have the beautiful figure of Abraham, the good and happy child at home living under no strict rule, but in direct and complete communication with his Father. We must all revert to the type of Abraham, and this is why spiritually he is called the "father of the faithful." But looked at historically, as soon

as the family develops into a nation the boy must go to school; sometimes this may appear to be a step downward, but it is inevitable. Then we have Sinai and the giving of the Law. Next comes the more silent period of adolescence, when we can begin to explain the reasons that lie behind the commands, and to show the noble purposes we have at heart for our sons; and these remonstrances and entreaties are represented by the Prophets.

With the vivid pictures of childhood always before us, with the nursery and the schoolroom for ever reminding us of what Ethical Immaturity involves, surely, surely, we need not stumble over the strange stories of the book of Judges and elsewhere. We can admit the misconception that to us at first seems shocking, that our God with his heart of love to all mankind was, to begin with, thought of as a tribal deity, with Baal or Dagon (equally real, but evil powers) entering into conflict with Him. We who are fathers and mothers, spiritually if not physically, know how to praise exceedingly imperfect work if it is an advance on the work of the day before. We may call a bit of sewing "very good," when, judged by our own standard, it is very poor indeed. The father may keep in his pocket a letter from his son at school, and count it a treasure, though it is blotted and misspelt, because it is by far the best yet accomplished, and expressive of thought and of affection. We need not go very far back, either, to see why the character of Jacob is approved and the deed of Jael praised, for we are still in Ethical Immaturity, though at a later stage. Only one century ago there was slavery. The conscience of mankind was not awaked to this great evil. St. Paul went to stay with Philemon in a house full of slaves, and this indifference went on for eighteen hundred years. The seed was sown—"There is neither bond nor free, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus"—but it lay long dormant. Did God not bless His people while this blot remained upon them? He blessed them abundantly, because He never confuses immaturity with sin. Sin is "to know the better and choose the worse," as St. Paul explains with the utmost clearness of illustration, and it is sin and only sin that meets with condemnation. We too may be blind. To the evils of Drink and the conditions under which Labour exists our eyes are but half opened, and a century hence people will stand in this room and wonder at us.

When we study these things, we begin to see how beautiful is the Bible, how inspired from end to end—pitiful to our low estate, kind to ignorance and misconception, unflinchingly stern on sin, with a standard that is never lowered. To Abraham God said, "Walk before Me and be thou perfect," *i. e.*, let your deeds keep pace with your knowledge of Me; and nothing higher can be aimed at in our Lord's own words, "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." No need for

excuses and apologies for our Bible. If I had space we should see how the cruel exterminating wars and the bitter words of the imprecatory Psalms are all explained, and how, given the circumstances, these are the best things that could have been recorded for our instruction and our encouragement.

The great principle is that we are never to judge a thing, whether a plan, a work, or a person, by the primary stages—the inception—but only by the final stage—the completion. If you look at a statue half made, it may seem to you very poor and rough, but if you are a sculptor you may see the perfect form in the block. If you are planting out an orchard, you ask to see and taste the ripened apple before you make your decision as to the trees. If you are writing the life of a man, and summing up his character, you do not put against him the screams and rebellions of his infancy. Our God has been infinitely tender with our age-long immaturity, and has never been so far in front of us that we cannot understand Him. As soon as He could, He sent us His Son, the perfect Word of God, the translation of the eternal Heart of the Father into a series of words and deeds, such as we can understand. Jesus of Nazareth lived for us, and then suffered and died for us, and is now in the place of power sending the regenerative Spirit to all who come to Him. That is our present position, and it is full of hope, for it holds out a prospect of completion. We are to go on “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” No possible conception can go beyond that.

We have now spent enough thought on the three classes of objection brought against the Bible—the Literary and Historical, the Scientific, and the Ethical. There is, as I have already mentioned, a fourth class, the Psychological, but this is aimed at the work of the Spirit of God in the heart of man rather than at the letter of the Bible. We may leave it aside as beyond the limits of our present discussion.

Let us now turn to the entirely positive and constructive side of our subject.

As early as 1852, a good twenty years before my day, there was an undergraduate of Oxford, who wrote these simple lines:—

“ I have a life in Christ to live,
 But ere I live it must I wait
 Till learning can full answer give
 To this or that book's date?
 I have a life in Christ to live,
 I have a death in Christ to die;
 And must I wait till science give
 All doubts a full reply?”

Thirty years later I knew that man as the Principal of St. Andrews University, John Shairp. I was too diffident in my youth to converse with him, but it is evident to me now that he took exactly the position I am trying to explain, that of giving attention to the proposals of experts, and yet treating them all as secondary—less than secondary, almost negligible—because they touch the shell only. Our interest lies in the living kernel inside the shell, the immortal soul that dwells in the body, and of that we need full and complete corroboration given to us each individually. The issues that hang on it are immense, eternal, and we need a very strong proof before we can accept it as our guide through life. Have we this complete verification? I think we may say with confidence, *We have*, and need not fear to publish to all the world that we have found the truth.

One of our central texts is this: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday (in history), and to-day (in experience), and for ever (beyond the solemn portal of the grave)." Here we have the three divisions of time. The critic may point out that the records of the past are unreliable, and the spiritist may show us such a weak, unworthy future that we would rather not have it at all. No one can touch the present; it is all our own. Let us, I pray you, guard the present as our supreme treasure. Immaturity is no barrier. We cannot banish from life more wrong than is pointed out to us by the warning of the Holy Spirit, but this, coupled with prayer, effects all that we need. Under the present rule of Christ the shackles are struck from our hands, and the gates begin to open before us. What we know of His work now is the true criterion of the recorded pages of the Son of Man, and the vision of the King on the Throne. If we hear His guiding voice to-day, and see the miracles He is working in the world of the human character, we need fear nothing whatever; here we have reasonable ground for belief in the Gospel narrative in the past, and in the wonders of the unknown future.

Let me give an illustration. Suppose you are a student reading Roscoe's *Chemistry*, and you find there a curious fact, namely, that there are two white liquids which if poured together form a scarlet solid. How do you treat such information? Do you say, "It is contrary to all experience; mere fairy-tales; impossible!" Then you will never learn any chemistry. The subject is sealed to you for ever. Do you say, "Professor Roscoe knows far more than I do, and I believe every word from cover to cover. Even if it told me things far more wonderful than that I would believe them?" With such a temper of mind you would certainly learn some chemistry, but it would not be of an intelligent sort, not enough to help other people. For the moment let the book represent the Bible. The unbeliever rejects it entirely

because it does not come within the range of his experience, and the traditionalist believer accepts it entirely without examination, on the bare authority of the name on the title page. I myself have heard a good man say, "If the Bible told me that Jonah swallowed the whale, I would believe it," and if anyone else wants to enquire of such a mind for the truth, he can do nothing but hand them the book, and say, "Read this, and believe it. Everything you need is here." This is not the best temper of mind for a Christian or a student of chemistry either. The ideal student would say, "How wonderful! It is hard to believe such a thing is a fact! Let me go up to the laboratory and verify it!" He goes up, shuts himself in, prepares the material and makes the great venture. Nothing happens. Does he throw the book down and say, "There, I've done with it. I was afraid it was all lies and delusions, and now I see that it is." No, he lays the blame not on the book but on himself, saying, "What can I have done wrong?" He reads the instructions over again, discovers the mistake, and tries once more. If he is but a beginner this may happen several times, but his faith in the book remains unshaken. It is present experience is the test. He says, "Others have attained this result, so why may not I?" and with still more exact obedience he follows every detail. Surely when at last the little scarlet lump lies in the test-tube before his eyes, he may exclaim with assurance, "I have found the truth!" It is the experience of the immediate present that is the proof of the validity of the recorded page of the past, and the foundation of confidence for the future.

The most important part of life is this bringing conviction to our own selves. The words in the Bible stand sure, expressed in many different ways, that the Lord will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him, but our eyes are blind and our hearts are stubborn, and it is hard to stand at the foot of the Cross and wait. But let this new flame be lighted within, and we are free to look around us and see how wonders of the same kind are going on in the hearts of others. A good part of the work is left to the living voice of the Church of Christ, but even this is useless unless it is backed up by the words of the Bible. Look at our vast fields of Missionary work, read the annual report of the Bible Society, or the Scripture Gift Mission, enquire what the Army Scripture Readers are doing, or the Ranyard Nurses, or the men of the London City Mission, or any other such Christian agencies, and you will find that the Bible itself is the "power-house" from which they can draw their force. It may be somewhat crudely treated, but as long as there is not an intentional rejection of the light given us, as long as the Holy Spirit is obeyed in all simplicity, the blessing of God will always follow this faithful recurrence to the words He has given us.

If we turn to the more educated minds, we must be yet more careful. The generation immediately below our own is just now costing us acute anxiety by its rebellion against a final authority, whether in Church, or State, or Bible, or Home, and we can only help it by following the more personal clue. The recorded words of our Lord may have absolute authority for us who know Him, but those who do not must never be faced with a quotation as final. If you are merely "shocked" at their questioning, you will shut them up into silence. These souls are worth the winning, and I do pray you to spare them the dark tunnel through which I walked for so many years. Read the books they read, face the questions they have to face, and if this is not possible to you, put your weight on the type of conduct that can be produced by faith, for this is the one witness that from age to age never wears out. Meanwhile I pray you to make as few mistakes as you can, even in dealing with the outer shell of our beloved Book.

The Bible is like the field of corn which yields us daily bread. The husk and the straw must not be offered in place of the living kernel, the food of the soul, and yet we must always remember that straw and chaff are absolutely indispensable for the growth of the grain within, and should not be spoken of slightly, but treated with respect.

There is a good illustration in the Fourth Gospel of how we are apt to pay for every mistake we make. Philip, filled with enthusiasm, says to Nathaniel, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." This short sermon has in it five statements, and two of them are errors. Had Philip said, "Jesus of Bethlehem, the son of David," all would have gone smoothly, and the triumphant shout, "We found Him!" would have produced the desired effect; but, alas, error is more active and blatant than truth, and Nathaniel, who knew his Bible well, stumbles over the word "Nazareth." Philip is checked barely for an instant. He knows that his conviction is not founded on rational and intellectual grounds offered by the past, but that sight, hearing, touch in the immediate present all have something to do with the result on his own heart. Philip is very wise. He feels sure that somehow or other the obtrusive Nazareth will be brought into harmony with the promised Bethlehem, for, after all, these are only outward conditions, and the core of the message he is so eager to deliver remains intact:—"We have found Jesus, long foretold, and now really here." So, without contending, or denying, or arguing, he only says, "Come and see," sure that on the same personal data the same conclusion would be reached by his friend. And it was reached, for at a bound Nathaniel outran

his leader, and gave the first witness to the true position of our Lord. Nazareth and Joseph could wait, to be cleared up later on.

Here we close. Truth is one because God is one. The same God who created the world of matter gave us His Son into the world of the soul. He who so carefully formed the mind of man, with all its desires after rationality, perfection, and eternity, also put into our hands the Bible as we have it to-day. We must always seek for the Unification of our knowledge, for we cannot believe two contradictory things. We can therefore be grateful to the experts for their searching examination into every nook and corner of the varied regions on which the Bible touches, for every bit of true discovery brings the Unification nearer; but we ever remember that only the Spirit of God who wrote this Book can read it, that the Bible not only *was*, but *is* inspired, and will never lose its power. It is in this thought that we come on the extraordinary value of the present. The rule is, "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." The critic may handle ably enough the blade and the preparatory outer form, the ear of straw, but if he suggests that is the whole, his judgment is spiritually worthless, for he proves himself blind to the treasure within. It is the "full corn *in the ear*," the ever-new and ever-working life that lies hidden inside, that is received into the heart and changes the conduct. All else is but means to this end. Here is the one proof that never fails while the centuries come and go. When our eyes are opened and we know Christ as our Saviour and King, we see Him like a lighthouse in the middle of history, throwing His long beams backward over the obscure and painful details of the past, as well as forward over the unknown future. There is nothing to fear either way. We came from the lowest, and we are, by His grace, to rise to the highest. But His chief work lies ever in the present. "To-day if ye will hear His voice," and the only time over which we have control is *to-day*. "Behold, now is the day of salvation," and our personal history is one prolonged *now*. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." The appeal to the human will to exert itself is made both by the divine ever-present Spirit and by the living Church that walks the earth in all humility, and by these voices God fulfils His great purpose for mankind, that of "bringing many sons unto glory," and gathering around His Throne "a great multitude that no man can number."

DISCUSSION.

Lt.-Col. BIDDULPH said, with reference to a God of Love and the Imprecatory Psalms: The Divine Unity forbids us to regard the Almighty in any single attribute at the expense of His other attributes. Thus, if His love be taken regardless of His holiness, justice, and hatred of sin, we should not get the God of Revelation. At

His first coming our Lord Jesus Christ displayed pre-eminently the love of God; but "the day of vengeance of our God" is reserved for His second coming.

"The Bible has an outer shell as well as an inner kernel."

If science may at times appear to kill the shell, it still leaves the kernel unscathed. The Bible speaks primarily to man's heart, rather than to his intellect. To the Christian it is not of consequence whether the life of the present world is thought to be the result of evolution through long ages, or was brought in by the Divine fiat, as an act of creation after a period of chaos. But whichever view be held, there is no doubt that man is not the result of evolution, for "God created man in His own Image." I find it best to take Gen. I. literally, including the six days; but this does not forbid an interval between verses 1 and 2 as vast as any geologist may require, and which can contain all the speculations of science, for the Bible passes over it in silence. The mere fact that science alters or amends its theories every few years, and requires fresh handbooks continually, while the Bible stands for all time, should be sufficient to indicate the unreliability of the former when it opposes revelation.

Dr. SCHOFIELD thanked Miss Maynard for her valuable and charming paper that left such a delightful taste behind it. With reference to the disputed unity of authorship of Isaiah, he remarked that the first half of Isaiah has God's people for its subject, the second half the coming Messiah; and that a chief difficulty in supposing dual authorship is that the man who wrote chapters 40 to 66 could possibly have remained unnamed and unknown. With reference to Gen. I. he said:—

Its great value is that it is absolutely unscientific. Had it been otherwise and written in the science of its time, it would certainly have to be amended and altered at least every 50 years.

Dr. Schofield said: I put this years ago to Canon Driver, who pointed out that the writer probably thought the firmament was an inverted copper bowl over the earth with small holes for the rain, and other apertures for sun, moon and stars. I asked him, "If I grant that this probably represented the last word of the science of his day, of which he must have been as proud as we are of ours to-day, how is it he says nothing about it in the chapter? What power restrained him from writing scientifically, and what mind guided him to using instead, broad words without definition that stand for the science of all ages?"

Mr. W. HOSTE wrote:—

Our thanks are due to Miss Maynard for her most interesting reminiscences. This is not the first time that Girton, at least, has justified her existence to the Victoria Institute. I was reminded in reading the paper, of Pascal's remark, "Le

cœur a des raisons, que la raison ne connaît pas." Would not the title of the paper have been more fittingly "Thoughts in the 20th Century on the Bible"? At any rate the Bible, like the sun, is the same as ever, and holds serenely on its way in spite of storms. As for the Imprecatory Psalms and similar difficulties, does not Augustine's dictum explain much, "Distinguish the dispensations and you harmonise the verities." I nowhere find that God approved of the mean character of Jacob. God loved Jacob because he valued spiritual blessings, but his meanness brought him through many a trying chastening at the hand of God. It really puzzles me how anyone can read such passages as Leviticus 18, 24, 25, and Chap. 20, 23, also Deut. 18, 12, in their context and yet find an insuperable ethical difficulty in the extermination of the Canaanites. The question of the future destiny of all is nowhere raised. It was good for the world at large that such a hideous moral cesspool should be hygienically and drastically dealt with. Experts, especially those who go out of their province, are the worst of witnesses. Their triumphs in their proper domain are apt to engender a certain dogmatism, which is very impatient of a contrary opinion. In the Dreyfus case M. Bertillon, who had made a name for himself as the inventor of the criminal anthropometric system, undertook as a professed expert of orthography to prove on a black board in open court in Paris that Dreyfus had written the "Bordereau." Doubtless he fully believed in his own infallibility. as the higher critics seem to do in theirs, and thousands of Frenchmen, hypnotised by his reputation in other spheres, did not believe he could be wrong, and accepted his conclusions; but it was afterwards proved that Capt. Dreyfus did not write a letter of the famous document. The reverse is, I believe, true of Deuteronomy; it is one of the foundation books of the Bible. No other book is more often quoted in the New Testament, no other so often in the Old. It is woven into the very warp and woof of the Scriptures, and if Moses did not write it, as is asserted all through, then the whole book is a patent forgery. According to the lecturer all these things are the shell merely, but I cannot think the illustration very happy; though, of course, the kernel is the essential. Experience teaches that though you may find many a bad kernel in a good shell, you never find a good kernel in a rotten shell.

MR. HOSTE concluded by quoting Professor G. DANA's testimony to the profoundly philosophical character of the first chapter of Genesis.

LIEUT.-COL. MACKINLAY said:—

A most valuable paper. I am in hearty agreement with its general trend as far as I understand it. Our warm thanks are due to the author for her careful description of the condition of a young Christian, taught to shrink from the consideration of

modernist ideas, but afterwards, in maturity, investigating for herself the current thoughts which spring up around us.

I am in hearty sympathy with her remark (p. 44), that you won't win those who have leanings to destructive criticism and agnosticism if you are simply shocked. Sympathy, experience, and wisdom should be freely and wisely employed.

Many minds, especially young ones, are apt to blindly follow the teaching of some respected leader without the exercise of any thought or judgment themselves. This is true both for Christians and for unbelievers. Some remain in this condition all their lives, but others, as they grow older, take the trouble to investigate for themselves. I often think it would be a great gain if more Christian leaders were themselves much more deeply taught than most of them are at present, in science and in the methods of modern thought. They would then be able to lend a helping hand to those in intellectual difficulties and lead them out of dark tunnels (pp. 34 and 44). Miss Maynard has thought for herself and (under divine guidance) with faith more firmly established. It is the aim and object of the Victoria Institute to help all of us to do the same.

Some of her statements are, however, surely too sweeping for strict accuracy; for instance (p. 37) "Witchcraft and a thousand superstitions" have not all fallen, even now. Science cannot truly be found to have always won (p. 37). Miss Maynard's want of care (p. 34) for the evidences of monuments and inscriptions will hardly, I think, commend itself to most thoughtful minds. How can a *thing* (p. 34) be said to have a soul? Would not the word *spirit* be more correct than *soul* on pp. 33, 36, and 42? And the words *two transparent and colourless liquids* than *two white liquids* (p. 42)?

The simile of the kernel and the husk, or shell, so frequently used (pp. 34, 35, 36, 44) in the paper before us seems to be an unfortunate one to use, because it lends itself to the popular dictum that the Bible only *contains* the word of God (the kernel) mixed up with much of man's fallible work (the husk). Our author, however, apparently guards herself (pp. 43, 45) against this interpretation by her statement that the Bible *is* the word of God; by which she means, I take it, that all in it, both kernel and husk, is indeed the word of God; but if this is her meaning it does not seem to be a happy expression that part of the word of God is *husk* or *shell*!

I do not feel sure that our author (pp. 33, 37) has given the best explanation of the difficulties raised by ethical criticism, nor do I feel convinced that a fair comparison can be made between the human race in its earlier stages and a present-day child.

I quite agree that specialists and critics have their uses, but they also have their limitations, chiefly consisting of a certain

narrowness of visage as any experienced barrister will tell you. I quite agree that it is most unwise to trust to their conclusions blindly.

Miss Maynard is certainly on solid ground when she tells us that no arguments and no learning will convince and convert an unbeliever as according to the Scripture which she quotes. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him (1 Cor. II. 14, p. 35). She is also right in saying that the attack in warfare is more successful than the defence—for that, I suppose, is the meaning (p.36), of her Scottish parson's remark about the military and naval defence. As she rightly says, the facts of conversion, of lives changed from darkness to light, from misery and selfishness to happiness and love, are the "evidences for the truth of the word of God which can never be disputed or gainsaid" (p. 37).

MR. THEODORE ROBERTS felt they were all greatly indebted to Miss Maynard for her very interesting paper, with which he was in substantial agreement. As regards the creation, he was in agreement with the paper and not with the Chairman. He believed that each of the days in Genesis I. was intended to represent a period of time during which God acted in a particular way, like the millennial day of Christ's reign. Seeing that the sun and moon were not brought in until the fourth day, he could not conceive how the earlier days could possibly represent periods of twenty-four hours each. He was anxious that it should be made very clear that the truth of Christianity did not depend upon the disproof of evolution or whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch or not. For him the Resurrection of our Lord was the one sufficient proof of the truth of the Christian revelation. As regards the Higher Critics, he considered their theories as the result of isolated study in a closet, and thus lacking in the common sense which rubbing shoulders with their fellow men would have produced. He pointed out that the naturalness of the story of Joseph and his brethren disproved the finely spun theories of the critics as to its origin in Babylonian myths.

MR. T. A. GILLESPIE said: I am very glad to express my sincere appreciation of the most interesting paper which has been read to us. It brings to my mind the expressive way in which our late and esteemed member, Professor Langhorne Orchard, referred to the critic of Scripture, and in passing I feel constrained to say how much he will be missed at our meetings; for his marked humility of spirit and keen spiritual perception was certainly a treasure; the Society is the poorer to-day by his home call. He said any person who attempts to criticise the Bible must be the possessor of three qualifications, viz., (1) a reverent spirit, (2) an unbiassed mind, (3) an adequate scholarship—yea, and a fourth

more important still, he must be spiritual, and this to my mind is absolutely essential if any notice is to be taken of the critic; and it is here where I think Miss Maynard has been misunderstood—in her repeated reference to the outer shell and inner kernel of the Bible, for surely the critic who has not that divine life she speaks of on page 35 can only deal with the precious truths of Scripture superficially, as these things are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. I don't think Miss Maynard had any idea of dividing up the Word of God, although it might appear so by the way in which she has expressed herself.

I was pleased the Chairman spoke of the imprecatory Psalms, as the critic entirely loses sight of the fact that when these were written there was no revelation of a final judgment. These Old Testament utterances teach us how thankful we ought to be that we are living in the light of the Gospel and under the law of Love. At the same time proving clearly that God's righteous judgment will overtake the impenitent sinner.

MR. COLLETT remarked that the word "discerner" in Heb. xii. 4 is really "critic," and shows that the Bible is intended to criticise us. Not many years ago we were told that Moses could not possibly have written the Pentateuch, because writing was not known in his days. It is now well known that the art of writing was practised hundreds of years before Moses was born. Mr. Collett said that he instinctively shrank from the use of such words as "husk," "straw" and "chaff" to describe any part of God's Holy Word. He argued from Exodus xx. 9 to 11 that the days of creation ought to be taken as periods of 24 hours; and from John xii. 38 and 40 that the fifty-third and sixth chapters of Isaiah respectively quoted must have the same author.

THE REV. A. CRAIG ROBINSON expressed cordial agreement with many of the sentiments of Miss Maynard's paper, but thought that she treats too lightly the consequences which were bound to follow, and as a matter of fact have followed, the rationalistic theories of German critics, which have made infinitely more difficult all evangelical work at home or in the mission field. He then detailed three striking arguments for believing in the early date of the Pentateuch.

Dr. D. ANDERSON-BERRY writes:—

Sir,—When I read the paper for the first time I was charmed by the beauty of its language, the rhythm of its sentences, the balance of its thoughts, and the exquisiteness of its style. Instead of criticising the author's views, and probably being mistaken, I would state my own belief.

Miss Maynard speaks of passing through a dark tunnel. I on my part fell into a dark pit when I cast my beliefs into the melting-pot kept a-bubbling by the flames of hell. I cannot here enter on the causes. Sufficient to say that I learned why the

religions of the world depict a cruel God, Whom to propitiate sacrifices are offered, even human. Christianity alone offers to the race something different.

But then Christianity is not a religion. It is a revelation and a faith—a revelation whose author is God, and whose subject is Himself.

I believe in the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. To me it is the Word of God, a revelation of Himself. Putting forward no explanation as to inspiration, I hold this book to be this revelation, not merely to contain a revelation.

God's revelation is a light that shows not only the greatness of its source but displays the squalor of the place into which it shines. The former explains the kernel, the latter the husk. We would never have thought the conduct of the people in the Old Testament cruel, treacherous, etc., but for this Light. Civilisation would not make us look askance at them, for, human nature being always the same, their conduct can be matched—yes, overmatched.

The author speaks of experts. As long as they confine themselves to the bringing out of facts which, but for their skill and special knowledge, might remain unnoticed, all is well. It is when they come to deductions, opinions, suppositions, and so forth, that we get contradictions. Of this Miss Maynard gives us a specimen.

Deuteronomy, the experts tell us, is a book written much later. But there are many experts that say just the reverse—higher critics, such as Van Bohlen, Vater, Vatke and Reuss. And a greater than any critic, even St. Paul himself, in his Epistle to the Romans, bases arguments on quotations from Deuteronomy, and expressly quotes from it as being from the pen of Moses. I might refer to St. Peter and Stephen as well as to our Lord Himself, but time forbids.

As to evolution. Well, I was a student when Darwin was fascinating my world. But to be true to science you must go the full length of evolution. The "ascent of man"? Well, one smiles and thinks of its author as a modern Issachar! You must go back to the first nebulousity so tenuous that a few million cubic miles of it weighs but a grain.

Out of this by slow processes and under strict law this world has come! And what a wonderful world! Read Fabre's books. The man whom Darwin himself called "that incomparable observer"! I take my stand humbly as becomes me in the presence of such a mind and believe him when he gently gibes at the evolutionist. Here is what he says about the logarithmic curve known to you for its mathematical expression and wonderful attributes. "We find it," says he, "in the spiral of a snail-shell, in the chaplet of a spider's thread, as perfect in the world of atoms as in the world of immensities. And this universal geometry tells us of a

Universal Geometrician, Whose divine compass has measured all things. I prefer that as explanation of the logarithmic curve of the nautilus and the garden spiders, to the worm screwing up the tip of its tail.

As to being gentle with the rising generation . . . the Bible that was good enough for me in the darkest hour of my life, they in their hour of need will find equally good. God has spoken, and He asks to be believed.

I would close in the words of our late learned President, the Earl of Halsbury: "I don't like the modern criticism," said Lord Halsbury, "and I will not admit to being influenced by it in the least. To me the Bible is inspired, and if I believed anything else, I should die a miserable man."

MISS MAYNARD, in reply, said: The reception of my paper has been very kind.

The imprecatory Psalms have been mentioned, but not, I think, explained. There are two lessons our Divine Creator sets before man to learn—to hate sin, and to love the sinner. In dealing with immaturity, which would be taught first? To a young child, *to love* means both to caress and to imitate, and this is very unsafe. The wise plan is to begin with the hatred of sin and get that firmly established, and this to an immature mind means condemnation of the man who sins. That is a phase which cannot be helped. Only Christ can fully separate between man and sin, which He makes as clear as the separation between man and disease. Then comes in the reign of the Gospel, with the preaching of unending, unwearied love toward the sinner. In the imprecatory Psalms you see *half* the lesson being well learned. The hatred of sin is complete, the love to the sinner is still hidden in the future.

The question of pseudonymity was touched upon, and it was argued that it is not in human nature to give away magnificent productions of the spirit and the pen, and sign them with another man's name. This was adduced to cover the authorship of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, from the 40th chapter onward, and the majority of the Psalms. Now it may seem strange, but this was not the feeling of antiquity, and authors delighted in signing their work by the name of the great master they were following. I believe there are more than twenty spurious "Dialogues of Plato," borrowing the names of the speakers and all else, and the treatises signed *Galen* may be counted by the hundred. This surely may explain in part at least the authorship of the Pentateuch.

It was brought forward that our Lord during His Temptation quoted no other book but Deuteronomy, and that this was a guarantee of its Inspiration. Most certainly it is, but that does not include the date. There it stands, a part of our Bible for ever, a beautiful

tender, gentle restatement of the Laws of Sinai, in the terms of expostulation and entreaty, sent through some unknown prophet of Israel, when the early childhood of our race was over, and adolescence that can be reasoned with had taken its place.

It was well remarked by Mr. Roberts and by others as well, that scientific discoveries (whether eventually proved right or wrong), and questions of authorship and date such as the origin of the Pentateuch, are not the foundation of the Faith we hold. I believe with Mr. Gillespie that before the critic can be of any help in the personal salvation of man, he must himself be a partaker of the spiritual life, new born within. And yet, admitting these matters to the full, I still think it desirable that the older and more experienced minds should study the verdicts of criticism, and not leave them wholly to the judgment of the young and crude minds around us. The tide of secular thought and discovery is mounting, and cannot possibly be checked, and we must meet it with understanding and not with blank hostility. We are quite safe, we are on the winning side. The confession of Christ as God is the rock on which the whole Church is built, and we have the promise that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it.