

The National Illustrated Family Bible, *a beautiful family Bible published in Glasgow in the 1870's, included the Holy Bible with commentaries of Thomas Scott and Matthew Henry and other explanatory notes edited by Rev. John Eadie. Rev. Eadie (1810-1876) was a Scottish theologian and pastor. His many writings included Biblical Cyclopaedia, a condensation of Cruden's Concordance, Early Oriental History, and commentaries on St. Paul's epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Galatians. His preface to The National Illustrated Bible presents the importance of the Scriptures and the means of studying the Scriptures.*

Preface by Dr. Eadie.

The glory of our land is not only its profusion of Bibles, but its Protestant liberty of studying and diffusing sacred truth without molestation or hindrance. The Word of God is within the reach of every one, and neither the reading nor the circulation of it is by authority proscribed. This sacred privilege, won for us by the toil and blood of our fathers, is a prime element of our national greatness. That illustrious rank which our country occupies has been secured for it as much by its Christian institutions as by its scientific discoveries, maritime adventure, and mercantile enterprise. Its peace—its liberties—its social progress—its mechanical inventions—its means of mental culture and refinement—its numerous organisations for the relief of want, misery, disease, and old age—its myriads of ploughs, forges, looms, and ships—its vast power and extent of dominion—have really sprung from that impulse, dignity, industry, and self-respect, which Christianity creates or deepens among a people who receive it in its original purity and integrity. Christian civilisation necessarily leads to genuine and permanent greatness; for liberty, fraternity, and equality, in their highest and widest sense, can only flourish under the shadow of the Cross. While the Bible brings salvation to every one who receives it as the Word of God—and this is its great and primary mission—it also soothes and elevates the temporal condition of man. “The life that now is” is not beyond its sphere of salutary influence. The fruits of the “tree of life” refresh and satisfy the saved, but its “leaves” are, at the same time, “for the healing of the nations.” No wonder that our reflecting and pious people hold Scripture in such high veneration, and excel all other countries in their efforts to circulate it. No wonder that our English version, which “hath done great things for us,” should be prized so highly, and that in every Christian household there should be a copy—a large and loved one—familiarily and reverentially named the “FAMILY BIBLE.” No wonder that we should abhor and pity infidelity, for it is a wicked as well as a worthless creed, not less the foe of patriotism than the enemy of vital piety. The estimate in which we hold the Bible will always be a criterion of our ecclesiastical and national superiority.

The interests of true religion are threatened by two antagonists, very opposite in their nature, but ominously united in opposition to a simple and spiritual gospel. We do not allude to undisguised and honest skepticism and Popery, but to peculiar and seductive forms of both those malignant errors to be found within the pale of the Protestant Churches. The truth as it is in

Jesus is menaced by RITUALISM on the one hand, and RATIONALISM on the other. Alas! How many are there who place their hope of salvation in the observance of mere ceremonial and ecclesiastical routine!—who are deluded by the figment of sacramental efficacy, and the miserable deceit of baptismal regeneration!—who kneel before an altar without a sacrifice, and do homage to a priesthood without Divine right or consecration! This sad fascination has seized upon thousands, who are gradually taught to abhor Protestant truth—to sigh for a revival of the architecture and the sacerdotal forms of the Middle Ages—to anathematise the labours and heroism of the German, French, and British reformers, and at length to swell the number of those apostates over whose accession Popery is so jubilant and hopeful. How melancholy is such fanaticism! – as if the life and power of religion depended on the mystic virtue of water and wine, and not upon the imparted influence of the Holy Spirit—as if the acceptance of Christian worship depended on the shape and decorations of the house where it was offered, or on the tones, gestures, and robes of him who prays with and for the people! Were the Bible felt to be the sole and supreme rule of faith and practice, this silly and superstitious frippery would very soon be overthrown. The inspired volume tells us that there is only one great High Priest—Jesus, the Son of God; that no human priesthood can exist in His Church, save that of the universal “royal priesthood;” that every assumption of sacerdotal name and function on the part of the clergy is an unhallowed usurpation of Christ’s title and prerogative; and that the “true circumcision,” who “worship in the spirit,” are accepted everywhere—in the cave as well as the cathedral, on the misty side of the mountain as well as under the fretted roof, majestic dome, and massive pillars of a sanctuary “made with hands.” The great sin of ritualism is, that it places the Church in the room of the Saviour, encumbers the way of salvation with a servile and complex system of ceremonies, and so forgets the necessity of a living faith, in order to pardon, purity, and life; while it confounds the means and symbols of devotion with the possession of a devout spirit, identifies the sign with the thing signified, and contravenes Divine legislation by filling the house of God with the fruits and expedients of human authority. To the Bible, then, let us cling, as our only preservative against this fashionable form of error and mysticism. It will teach us that we are saved by the belief of the truth without any priestly intervention—that this belief not only brings us into a state of forgiveness and peace, but, by the aid of the Divine Spirit, quickens the soul, sanctifies the heart, purifies the motives, and regulates the whole life. A believer, under the influence of the grace of God, desire to feel and act as the Bible enjoins, submits in everything to the will of God, and naturally seeks in the Church only what its Divine Head has appointed to be in it—as the company of the Faithful.

Rationalism, on the other hand, makes no pretensions to superior piety. It only boasts of superior reason. It will not bow its stubborn heart to the truth of inspiration—it will not take the Bible to be the Word of God, and casts aside evangelical Christianity as slavery and a lie. Not that it assumes the language of open and unblushing infidelity, or declares Scripture to be a fable; but it takes away from the Bible its Divine authority, and deals with it as with any ancient book of human origin, subjecting it to ruthless and destructive criticism, and confining it within the limits of a narrow and deceptive philosophy. It admits the genius of the various writers of

the Bible, but denies their special and Divine commission, and therefore holds itself at liberty to question any statement, deny any conclusion, modify any argument, or resist any opinion which may be found in the writings of prophets and apostles; while, by its show of higher enlightenment and of boasted emancipation from prevailing prejudice, it seduces the unwary, and makes sad havoc among many of our young men, especially such of them as feel the pride of mental culture, and have had a little exercise in philosophical speculations. How shall we be preserved from these suicidal errors? Plainly, by taking the Bible for what it professes to be—the pure word of God. There is as much folly in attempting to reduce or modify this claim, as there is in openly denying it. To give the writers of the Bible the credit of genius, but to deny them the gift of inspiration, is a libel on their honesty—is to assign them a place among impostors; for they unanimously maintain that they were under the supernatural control and impulse of the Holy Spirit. Till their plenary inspiration shall be disproved, let us give them that credit to which they are entitled. Let us not, in the pride of intellectual insanity, oppose our ideas to theirs, and reject whatever is not in harmony with our own views and feelings. Surely such perversion is “doing despite to the Spirit of grace.” Our safety lies in believing that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God”—that “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” Our Bible is to us the collection of God’s oracles, telling us what to believe, what to do, and what to hope for. We will not be deprived of it by the “sleight of men;” we will not deify the intellect which God has given us; but we will continue to believe that the highest act of reason is the submission of faith to the teaching of the all-wise and all-true Spirit.

Thus, the opposition which evangelical truth encounters only leads us the more to prize the Scriptures, and to reverence them as the embodiment of the mind and will of God. That religion which is based upon an intelligent faith in the “lively oracles” must be vigorous, healthful, and progressive—nurtured by “the sincere milk of the Word,” and strengthened by the promises and consolations of the Book of Life. It is as remote from sickly sentimentalism, on the one hand, as it is from mere literary enjoyment and aesthetical susceptibility on the other. Nor will it be a cold and miserable abstraction, without energy and comfort, but a principle whose influence reaches to the deep palaces of our nature, and is felt over the whole man in its refining and transforming results. Need we say that, especially in these days of “rebuke and blasphemy,” the Bible should be studied with the profounder care—in these days, not merely of loose theology and skeptical prevalence, but of renewed Popish aggression and virulence? Is it not enough to vindicate our Protestantism to know, that Popery loves not the Scriptures to be among her people, warns against the reading of them by the laity, and that pope after pope condemns and anathematizes their circulation? Our Scriptures are the legacy of the Reformation; and we feel a peculiar joy in knowing that, in consequence of Anglo-Saxon Protestantism and enterprise, the sun never sets on the English Bible.

And there is every reason that we should honour the Bible as the Word of God—a full and authentic revelation from Heaven. It is fully, tenderly, and wisely adapted to us, as any one

may discover by a careful study of the following statements, to which we beg our readers' candid and prayerful attention.

Every man who calmly reflects on his position and destiny is haunted by questions of deep and unutterable moment. Speculation upon his origin and prospects, his relations to the Great Power that made him, and to that dim and awful eternity that stretches out before him, must often fill him with anxious thought and inquiry. Indifference to these subjects is unnatural, and is not found in any unsophisticated bosom. Amidst many floating and mysterious themes, these questions will be found to occupy a palpable and prominent place in the secret and instinctive soliloquy of conscience:-- How shall I know the end of my creation, and be prepared to attain it? How shall I be enabled to glorify God on earth, and be qualified to enjoy Him in eternity? These interrogations may be easily and speedily answered by an unfallen being, but they are difficult and complex to an apostate creature; for he has to solve the prior question, Shall my guilt be pardoned? Shall the penalty I have incurred be remitted? Shall the lost harmony of my spiritual nature be restored, and communion re-established with the Source of life and happiness? And what oracle can answer these questions? The sinner himself dares not pronounce a judgment on them: the condemned culprit may not conjecture as to the probable exercise of the royal prerogative. The universe is myriad-tongued, but it sends no response to the troubled and foreboding soul. It proclaims the "eternal power and Godhead," but it sings not of mercy. The sky, in its brightness and beauty, teaches not the requisite truth. The verdure and loveliness of the earth are not charged with the important disclosure. God Himself must publish His own purposes toward our lost world, and embody the revelation in a new, definite, intelligible, and popular form. This blessed work He has done in the Holy Scriptures—that Book which has come down from heaven, and leads up to heaven, and which, though it has tarried so long in earth in the performance of its errand of mercy, has not lost the light and luster of its original birthplace.

The Bible comprises the counsels and purposes of God. It deals with loftiest truths and sublimest interests. It contains no information which man may gather for himself. It does not teach science, though it never contradicts it. The exercise of man's own power may bring him to knowledge of the physical works of God, and therefore such knowledge has not been gathered into the inspired volume; but his spiritual and eternal interests were of immediate moment, and God in mercy gave him a blessed revelation. Astronomy waited till the genius of Newton unfolded its sublimely simple laws; Chemistry rejoices in the names of Davy, Berzelius, and Liebig; but six thousand years had passed ere these philosophers appeared. How miserable would it have been for the world, if, up till the present century, men had worshipped an "unknown God," and Satan had enjoyed undisturbed supremacy over our guilty and distracted species! Therefore, no sooner had man fallen than hope was held out to him, for the promise of a Saviour was annexed to the terrible penalty. This earliest gospel, announcing the advent and victory of the woman's Seed, was the germ of all subsequent lessons.

The method of salvation is proof of the Divine origin of that Book which announces it. Originating in the tender and intense love of God, wrought out by the life and death of His son, and applied by the influences of His Spirit, what scheme can be so full of God? God pervades it. The truths it unfolds are the truths of God—the dignity it offers is the image of God—the happiness it presents is the favour of God—the might it imparts is the power of God—and the heaven it prepares for is the presence of God. Could fallen and ungodly man have pictured out such an enterprise? Are not all his dreams and inventions like himself—“of the earth, earthy?” The very idea of salvation is too big to have originated in a human intellect—the love displayed in it too warm and glowing to have been nursed in a created heart—and the energy put forth too stupendous to have been lodged in a mortal arm. The great doctrine of the Bible proves it to be, not of man, but of God.

The method, moreover, in which this salvation has been secured, is equally demonstrative of the Divine origin of the Book which describes it. The character of God is portrayed in all its loveliness and symmetry. No element of perfection is thrown into the shade. Not mercy alone is exhibited to the guilty—nor compassion alone to the wretched; but holiness preserves its untarnished radiance, and the claims of justice are fully satisfied. The government of the universe is not weakened though guilty men are forgiven. Under a human administration, if all offenders are pardoned, the law is virtually repealed; but under the plan of God, His law is confirmed in the pardon and recovery of transgressors, for Jesus has died “to satisfy Divine justice.” The majesty of the law has been fully vindicated in His obedience unto death. Such a process—saving the rebel while it glorifies the law he has broken—inflicting the penalty and yet sparing and blessing the actual transgressor—crushing evil and rescuing the evil-doer—blending equity with grace, majesty with love, and severity with goodness,—such an abnormal process can originate alone with Him who is “wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.” A book revealing salvation through the atonement of Christ proclaims at once its Divine authorship; for it tells that infinite power, guided by boundless wisdom, and prompted by eternal and unchanging love, has been put forth to achieve the deliverance of a fallen and guilty world.

Thus there is in Scripture itself sufficient proof of its Divinity. It transcends human conception. It bears upon it the seal and impress of its authorship. It brings us the best gift of God—a salvation which satisfies all the wants and longings of the human bosom. Its God is worthy of faith and service—its law worth of homage—its Saviour worthy of imitation in His life and of confidence in His death. Every fear is banished, every wish is anticipated, and every hope is realised. There is peace on earth and glory in heaven—happiness in life and triumph in death. There is pardon from the guilt of sin, and emancipation from its thralldom, elevation of mind above the cares and trials of life—the possession of a serene and lovely temperament—and growing maturity for eternal blessedness. What nobler gift could God present, or man accept? Therefore the charter which confirms such a boon must be as Divine as the precious blessings which it pledges to believers.

It is not our purpose to enter into any account of the other evidences which prove the Bible to be from God. Suffice it to say, that they are numerous and impressive. There are miracles,—pure, holy, and Divine—the reality of which infidel sorcery is unable to disprove; and prophecies, the fulfilment of which is a matter of notoriety to every candid and observant mind. Then there are the harmony of all the parts of Scripture the originality of its doctrines, the sublimity of its style, the purity and power of its ethics, and the adaptation of its theology to an apostate race. What a “great cloud of witnesses” surrounds the Book of God! How many, too, have the “witness of the Spirit” within themselves, and know in their own experience that the Bible is from God!

“When one who holds communion with the skies
Has fill’d his urn where these pure waters rise,
And one moreingles with us meaner things,
‘Tis even as if an angel shook his wings—
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.”

We therefore take the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, to be the Word of God. We believe it to be all inspired and all profitable. The ideas are those of God, but its language is that of man. Like the glorious Mediator whom it reveals, it unites Divinity and humanity. It is God’s book, for He gave it; and man’s book, for it speaks his tongue, and appeals to his heart. Scripture would have no authority unless it were inspired, for the conscience bows to no master but God. Whatever He reveals, demands implicit credence. Let us listen to Jehovah! He speaks not in the tone of the seven thunders, but in the “still small voice.” Believe the Scriptures—search the Scriptures. Doubt not. Let your faith be without reserve and without hesitation. Blessed is he that believeth! And what inducements are there not to read the Bible? It proclaims, as we have said, a God worthy of homage, of love, of confidence, and of service. It tells of a salvation, rich, glorious, free, and complete. It promises grace so powerful to help, and points to the “Good Spirit” whose prompting, directing, controlling, and sealing influences are so necessary to our final perfection. It portrays unutterable and eternal felicity, and affirms that heaven is open, not to merit, but to faith—not to works, but to the pardoned and sanctified child of God.

The varieties of style in the Word of God are meant to allure us to it. Oh, it speaks in deep and varying music! Its sublime ideas are clothed in appropriate diction. It contains the simple, natural, and transparent histories of Moses—the succinct and stirring annals of the Hebrew commonwealth—the Book of Job, with its lofty conceptions and imagery—David, the sweet singer, whose harp still dispossesses the evil spirit—the Arcadian Muse of Solomon, breathing over the rich landscape the perfumed atmosphere of love—Isaiah, in his peerless majesty of song—Jeremiah, with sobbing bosom and weeping eye--- Ezekiel, rapt in grandeur and gloom—Daniel, with crowded visions of war, conquest, and empire—Hosea, with his startling rapidity and vehemence—Amos, in rustic vigour and luxuriance—Joel, in the might of

original genius—and Habakkuk, with his daring ardor and fire-winged minstrelsy. In the New Testament, we have in the four Evangelists a portraiture of Him who was clothed in the form and spake with the voice of humanity—of Him whose miracles were so numerous and beneficent, whose example was so pure and lovely, and whose death formed the expiation of human guilt; and we have also the boldness and fervour of Peter, the seraphic dignity and elevation of John, and the intellectual gifts, noble enthusiasm, and powerful eloquence of the Apostle of the Gentiles. What instruction, what stimulus, what majesty, what pathos, are blended together in Scripture! “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” When God speaks, and so speaks, oh, should not man listen with all earnestness and docility of spirit! “Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth.”

The Bible, moreover, is a perfect revelation. It needs no addition or supplement. The Apocrypha is superfluous. There is no saving truth which Scripture does not contain—no moral obligation which it does not unfold and enforce. Rom. X. 6-9—“The righteous which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above;) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again fro the dead.) But what saith it? The world is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the world of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” There needs no new revelation of the Spirit, nor are we to expect it. Neither are the traditions of the Church of parallel authority to inspiration. They cannot bind our conscience, and we cannot bow to them, as if they were of Divine origin or sanction. God’s words alone we recognise; Christ’s merit alone we trust to; the Spirit alone we implore to sanctify us.

Now, if the Bible had unlimited operation, what blessed effects would speedily and necessarily follow! Give the Word of God free course—let it dwell in every heart, and govern every transaction—let it regulate all intercourse, and be the law of all human enactments—and would there not be “days of heaven upon earth?” Were all men but aiming to be what God would have them to be, equity and love would everywhere prevail—slavery and war would cease—poverty and dissipation be unheard of—and civil polity would successfully work out the problem of the greatest happiness to the greatest number. Nations would form one vast brotherhood, without cherishing rival interests, or entering into ruinous projects of self-defence. The Church would be a scene of holy communion—second only to the intercourse and enjoyment of heaven! Then might it be said, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them.”

That happy time is coming. The influence of the Bible shall soon be felt in every land. It has now been translated into many languages. Its power grows with its age. “The Word of God liveth and abideth for ever.” The Divine promise is, “My word shall not return unto me void.” Were every parent who prizes his Family Bible to instruct his children in its principles, and seal his instructions with his tears and prayers, not only would his household after him “keep the way

of the Lord, to do justice and judgment,” but others around them would be impressed with the spectacle. For not only must we maintain, but we must diffuse the gospel. What better gift can we offer the nations than the Book of God? The Shasters, the Vedas, ay, and the Koran itself, are doomed to be dethroned before the living and victorious volume of truth.

“O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish’d bliss—which, who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh’d with prospect of the joy!
Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
And clothe all climes with beauty.....
One song employs all nations; and all cry,
‘Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!’
The dweller in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other—and the mountain-tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round!....
Come, then, and added to Thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
Thou who alone art worthy.....
Come, then, and added to Thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,
Due to Thy last and most effectual work,
Thy WORD fulfill’d—the conquest of a world!”

As the Commentary found in this volume has been selected from HENRY and SCOTT, our readers may be gratified by a few sentences taken from their respective Prefaces. As the Old Testament was composed by men who bear the generic names of prophets, we shall first present HENRY’s account of these inspired and extraordinary messengers:--

“Concerning the prophets of the Old Testament, observe—

“I. That they were all holy men. We are assured by the apostle, that ‘the prophecy came in old time by holy men of God,’ (and *men of God* they were commonly called, because they were devoted to him,) who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. They were men ‘subject to like passions as we are’—so Elijah, one of the greatest of them, is said to have been (Jam. V. 17)—but they were holy men; men that in the ‘temper of their minds, and the tenor of their lives, were examples of serious piety. Though there were many pretenders, that without warrant said, ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ when He sent them not—and some that prophesied in Christ’s name, but He never knew them, and they indeed were workers of iniquity, (Matt. Vii. 22,23)—and though the cursing, blaspheming lips of Balaam and Caiaphas, even then, when they actually designed mischief, were overruled to speak oracles—yet none were employed and commissioned to speak as prophets but those that had received the Spirit of grace and sanctification; for holiness becomes God’s house.

“The Jewish doctors universally agree in this rule, That the Spirit of prophecy never rests upon any but a holy and wise man, and one whose passions are allayed;* or, as others express it, an humble man, and a man of fortitude; one that has power to keep his sensual animal part in due subjection to religion and right reason. And some of them give this rule: That the Spirit of prophecy does not reside where there are either, on the one hand, grief

and melancholy, or, on the other hand, laughter and lightness of behavior, and impertinent, idle talk: and it is commonly observed by them, both from the musical instruments used in the schools of the prophets in Samuel's time, and from the instance of Elisha's call for a minstrel, (2 Kings iii. 15,) that the Divine presence does not reside with sadness, but with cheerfulness; and Elisha, they say, had not yet recovered himself from the sorrow he conceived at parting with Elijah. They have also a tradition, (but I know no ground for it,) that all the while Jacob mourned for Joseph, the Shechinah, or Holy Spirit, withdrew from him. Yet I believe, when David intimates that by his sin in the matter of Uriah he had lost the right Spirit and the free Spirit, (Ps. li. 10, 12)—which therefore he begs might be renewed in him, and restored to him—it was not because he was under grief, but because he was under guilt; and therefore, in order to the return of that right and free Spirit, he prays that God would create in him a clean heart.

“II. That they had all a full assurance in themselves of their Divine mission; and (though they could not always prevail to satisfy others) they were abundantly satisfied themselves, that what they delivered as from God, and in His name, was indeed from Him; and with the same assurance did the apostles speak of the Word of Life, as that which they had heard, and seen, and looked on, and which their hands had handled, (1 John i. 1.) Nathan spake from himself, when he encouraged David to build the temple, but afterward knew he spake from God, when, in His name, he forbade him to do it.

“God had various ways of making known to His prophets the messages they were to deliver to His people: it should seem ordinarily to have been by the ministry of angels. In the Apocalypse, Christ is expressly said to have signified by His angel to His servant John, (Rev i. 1.) It was sometimes done in a vision, when the prophet was awake; sometimes in a dream, when the prophet was asleep; and sometimes by a secret but strong impression upon the mind of the prophet. But Maimonides has laid down as a maxim, That all prophecy make itself known to the prophet that it is prophecy indeed; that is, says another of the rabbins, By the vigour and liveliness of the perception whereby he apprehends the thing propounded, (which Jeremiah intimates when he says, ‘The word of the Lord was a fire in my bones,’ Jer. XX. 9;) and therefore they always spake with great assurance, knowing they should be justified, (Isa. 1. 7.)

“III. That in their prophesying, both in receiving their message from God, and in delivering it to the people, they always kept possession of their own souls, (Dan. X. 8.) Though sometimes their bodily strength was overpowered by the abundance of the revelations, and their eyes dazzled with the visionary light, as in the instances of Daniel and John, (Rev. i. 17,) yet still their understanding remained with them, and the free exercise of their reason. This is excellently well expressed by a learned writer of our own:* ‘The prophetic Spirit, seating itself in the rational powers, as well as in the imagination, did never alienate the mind, but inform and enlighten it; and they that were actuated by it always maintained a clearness and consistency of reason, with strength and solidity of judgment. For ‘(says he afterwards) ‘God did not make use of idiots or fools to reveal His will by, but such whose intellectuals were entire and perfect; and He imprinted such a clear copy of His truth upon them as that it became their own sense, being digested fully into their understandings, so that they were able to deliver and represent it to others as truly as any can point forth his own thoughts.’ God's messengers were speaking men, not speaking trumpets.

“The Fathers frequently took notice of this difference between the prophets of the Lord and the false prophets—that the pretenders to prophecy (who either were actuated by an evil spirit, or were under the force of a heated imagination) underwent alienations of mind, and delivered what they had to say in the utmost agitation and disorder, as the Pythian prophetess, who delivered her infernal oracles with many antic gestures, tearing her hair, and foaming at the mouth. And by this rule they condemned the Montanists, who pretended to prophecy, in the second century, that what they said was in a way of ecstasy, not like rational men, but like men in a frenzy. Chrysostom, having described the furious, violent motions of the pretenders to prophecy, adds, ‘A true prophet does not do so; Sed mente sobria, et constant animi statu, et intelligens quod profert, omnia pronunciat—He understands what he utters, and utters it soberly and calmly.’ And Jerome, in his preface to his Commentaries upon Nahum,

observes that it is called ‘The Book of the Vision of Nahum; Non enim loquitur en ekstasei, sed est liber intelligentis omnia quoe loquitur—For he speaks not in an ecstasy, but as one who understands everything he says.’ And again, ‘Non ut amens loquitur propheta, nec in morem insanientum foeminarum dat sine mente sonum—The prophet speaks, not as an insane person, nor, like women wrought in fury, does he utter sound without sense.’

“IV. That they all aimed at one and the same thing, which was, to bring people to repent of their sins, and to return to God, and to do their duty to Him. This was the errand on which all God’s messengers were sent—to beat down sin, and to revive and advance serious piety; the burden of every song was, ‘Turn ye now every one from his evil way; amend your ways and your doings, and execute judgment between a man and his neighbor,’ (Jer. Vii. 3, 5.) (See Zech. Vii. 8, 9; viii. 16.) The scope and design of all their prophecies were, to enforce the precepts and sanctions of the law of Moses—the moral law, which is of universal and perpetual obligation. Here is nothing of the ceremonial institutes, of the carnal ordinances, that were imposed only ‘till the times of reformation,’ (Heb. Ix. 10.) Those were now waxing old, and ready to vanish away; but they make it their business to press the great and weighty matters of the law—judgment, mercy, and truth.

“V. That ‘they all bare witness to Jesus Christ,’ and had an eye to Him. God’s raising up the ‘horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,’ was consonant to, and in the pursuance of, what ‘he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began,’ (Luke i. 69, 70.) They prophesied of the grace that should come to us; and it was the Spirit of Christ in them, one and the same Spirit, that testified beforehand the ‘sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow,’ (1 Pet. i. 10, 11.) Christ was then made known, and yet comparatively hid, in the predictions of the prophets, as before in the types of the ceremonial law. And the learned Huetius* observes it is really admirable, that so many persons, in different ages, should conspire with one consent, as it were, to foretell, some one particular, and others another, concerning Christ, all which had at length their full accomplishment sin Him—‘Ab ipsis mundi incunabulis, per quatuor annorum millia, uno ore venturum Christum praedixernt viri complures, in ejusque ortu, vita, virtutibus, rebus gestis, morte, ac tota denique oikonomia praemonstranda consenserunt—From the earliest period of time, for four thousand years, a great number of men have predicted the advent of Christ, and presented a harmonious statement of His birth, life, character, actions, and death, and of that economy which He came to establish.’

“VI. That these prophets were generally hated and abused in their several generations by those that lived with them. Stephen challenges his judges to produce an instance to the contrary: ‘Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?’ Yea, and as it should seem, for this reason, because ‘they showed before of the coming of the Just One,’ (Acts vii. 52.) Some there were that trembled at the Word of God in their mouths, but by the most they were ridiculed and despised, and (as ministers are now by profane people) made a jest of, (Hos. Ix. 7.) The prophet was the fool in the play: ‘Wherefore came this mad fellow unto thee?’ (2 Kings ix. 11,) said one of the captains concerning one of the sons of the prophets. The Gentiles never treated their false prophets so ill as the Jews did their true prophets, but, on the contrary, had them always sin veneration. The Jews’ mocking of the messengers of the Lord, killing of the prophets, and stoning of them that were sent unto them, was as amazing, unaccountable an instance of the enmity that is in the carnal mind against God, as any that can be produced. And this makes their rejection of Christ’s gospel the less strange, that the Spirit of prophecy, which for many ages was so much the glory of Israel, in every age met with so much opposition; and there were those that ‘always resisted the Holy Ghost’ in the prophets, and ‘turned that glory into shame,’ (Acts vii. 51.) But this was it that was the measure-filling sin of Israel, that brought upon them both their first destruction by the Chaldeans, and their final ruin by the Romans, (2 Chron. Xxxvi. 16.)

“VII. That though men slighted these prophets, God owned them, and put honour upon them. As they were men of God, His immediate servants and His messengers, so He always shewed Himself ‘the Lord God of the holy prophets,’ (Rev. xxii. 6,) stood by them and strengthened them, and by His Spirit they were full of power; and those that slighted them, when they had lost them, were made to know, to their confusion, that ‘a prophet had been among them.’ What was said of one of the primitive fathers of the prophets was true of them all---‘The Lord was with them,

and did let none of their words fall to the ground,' (1 Sam. iiii. 19.) What they said by way of warning and encouragement, for the enforcing of their calls to repentance and reformation, was to be understood conditionally. When God spake by them, either, on the one hand, to build and to plant, or, on the other hand, to pluck up and pull down, the change of the people's way might produce a change of God's way, (Jer. xviii. 7-10;) such was Jonah's prophecy of Ninevah's ruin within forty days; or God might sometimes be better than His word in granting a reprieve. But what they said by way of prediction of a particular matter, and as a sign, did always come to pass exactly as it was foretold; yes, and the general predictions, sooner or later, 'took hold' even of those that would fain have gotten clear of them, (Zech. i. 6;) for this is that which God glories in, that 'he confirms the word of his servants,' and 'performs the counsel of his messengers,' (Isa. xlv. 26.)"

Concerning the great successors of the prophets—the apostles—from whom proceeded the writings of the New Testament, SCOTT thus speaks: --

"Should it be granted that our Lord's own words demonstrate the whole Old Testament to be 'given by inspiration from God,' as far as men reverence and believe His testimony, yet does it follow that the books of the New Testament admit of the same kind of proof from the words of Christ Himself? Let us briefly examine this subject also. It is not, indeed, practicable to adduce so large a body of evidence as hath been brought in the former case; nor is it necessary: yet I apprehend that the argument may, in a short compass, be made very conclusive. When Peter confessed Jesus to be 'the Christ, the Son of the Living God,' He answered, 'I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on the earth shall be loosed in heaven.' Peter had spoken in the name of other apostles, as well as in his own; and it is generally allowed that the answer includes them also. Indeed, this appears by another passage of similar import, in which they were all addressed.

"If it be allowed that this absolute promise was given exclusively to the apostles, we must next inquire how they could exercise this power of binding or loosing, especially after their decease, except by their doctrine? And where must the Church, or the world, look for that doctrine, if not in their writings? Should we suppose that the exercise of this exclusive authority was confined to the short time of their continuance on earth, then the Church has ever since been left destitute of any rule, either for censures or absolutions, even of a declarative nature; and also of all criteria for the discrimination of true Christians from other men, either for the purpose of self-examination or for the regulation of our conduct towards 'the household of faith,' and the world around us; but if this promise was not exclusively made to the apostles, nor the authority given by it intended to be exercised according to their doctrine, the consequence must be, either that they are, in every age, ministers of religion possessed of this absolute power of binding and loosing, or that the words of Christ have not received their accomplishment. And as it does not seem to accord with the prevailing sentiments of this age, to invest ministers of any kind or description with such an infallible and final authority, we may, I apprehend, be allowed to conclude, that the promise was made exclusively to the apostles, and was fulfilled when they were inspired by the Holy Spirit, to deliver that doctrine to the Church, according to which the state of all men, in respect of acceptance or condemnation, is and will be finally decided. If this be allowed, it will inevitably follow, that our Lord's express testimony proves that their writings are a Divine revelation; for in them, especially, they delivered to the Church what they received from the Lord, and these have been, and will be to all subsequent generations, exclusively 'the doctrine of Christ.'

"The night before His crucifixion, our blessed Saviour repeatedly promised to send to His apostles 'the Spirit of truth, who should guide them into all truth,' and 'shew them things to come;' who should 'teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said unto them;' and who 'should receive of his, and shew it to them.' There is a subordinate sense, in which these promises are, in a measure, accomplished to all true Christians; but the persons who advance doubts respecting the Divine authority of the books contained in the New Testament, will scarcely deny that they are addressed in a vastly superior sense to the apostles and those immediately connected with them. Now the Spirit was given to them, as well as to others, 'to profit withal;' and it is

undeniable that genuine Christianity, without unremitted miracles, could be delivered down to future ages for the profit of mankind only by writings, in which it should be stated without error or corrupt mixture, and preserved as a sacred deposit in the Church from generation to generation. What, then, could the Holy Spirit, promised in such strong expressions to the apostles, be so rationally supposed to do for them as to guide their minds, when they dedicated those writings, by which it was evidently the design of Providence that the doctrine of Christ should be perpetuated in the Church? Indeed, either they did deliver the doctrine of their Lord and Master pure and uncorrupted to mankind, or they did not: if they did not, the revelation which God made of Himself by His well-beloved Son has answered very little purpose, as no man, without a new revelation, properly so called, can, or ever could, distinguish the truths of Christ from the errors of the apostles; but if they did deliver their doctrine pure and uncorrupted to mankind, why should we maintain that they were preserved from error when preaching the gospel, in which one generation of men alone was immediately concerned, and yet left to fall into errors in their writings, in which all future ages and nations were most deeply interested? If, when they were brought before governors for a testimony to them, ‘it was not they that spoke, but the Holy Spirit who spake by them;’ we may surely conclude, that what they wrote for a testimony to all future ages and nations was arranged under the same efficacious teaching and superintendency.

“Our Lord, just before His ascension, renewed, as it were, and ratified, His commission to the apostles: ‘All power,’ says He, ‘is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.’ ‘GO ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.’ But none, those alone expected to whom the apostles personally preached, can have any concern in this important declaration, unless the doctrine of Christ, delivered to the apostles, may be *certainly* found in their writings. Our Lord, just before His crucifixion, intercedes for His whole future Church in these words—‘Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me *through their word*;’ and, indeed, all real Christians of every age have believed in Him, not so much through the word of the ministers who preached to them, as through that of the apostles, by which their doctrine must be tried; from which, if sound, it is deduced; and to which it is properly their custom so make an unreserved appeal. In this sense, St Paul says that believers are ‘build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone:’ for the Old Testament, written by the prophets, and the New by the apostles, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, contain that doctrine, which is the foundation of the faith and hope of the whole Church, as resting on Christ, and united in Him into a holy temple, ‘an habitation of God through the Spirit.’

“The several books of the New Testament were written by the apostles themselves—excepting the Gospels Mark and Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles; and these were penned by the attendants of the apostles, and under their immediate inspection, and consequently were equally authenticated by them as if they had themselves written them. If any should object, that Paul was not one of those apostles to whom Christ gave His express testimony, and yet he wrote a great part of the epistles; it may be answered, first, That there is no alternative between denying all the facts recorded concerning him, or allowed his apostolical authority in its fullest extent; or that ‘he was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles:’ and, secondly, That Peter has attested his epistles to be a part of the Scriptures, calling him ‘our beloved brother Paul.’ If, therefore, our Lord’s own words authenticate the writings of the other apostles as a Divine revelation, Peter, who in some respects might be called the chief of the apostles, authenticates by Divine inspiration the writings of his beloved brother Paul.

“Finally, the only portion of Scripture of which our Lord can in any sense be called the writer, is that which contains the epistles to the seven churches in Asia, which He dictated to the apostle John, as His amanuensis. All His discourses (as well as His miracles, and the events of His life, death, resurrection, and ascension) were written, not by Himself, but by the evangelists, two of whom were not apostles. What greater assurance, then, have we that

they recorded faithfully His words, than that the apostles faithfully delivered His doctrine to mankind? If the evangelists were not inspired, in recording His words, we are not infallibly sure that He spoke what they ascribe to Him: and why should we allow the Divine inspiration of His historians, in recording His words, and yet doubt the Divine inspiration of His apostles, in communicating His doctrine to the Church and to the world?"

It would greatly exceed our space to go into a minute and detailed analysis of the merits of the two Commentaries from which our selections have been made. Very unlike in many respects, they have still many kindred beauties. Both are characterised by profound reverence for the Word of God—earnest desire to enter into its meaning and spirit—an experimental and prolonged acquaintance with the salvation it reveals—and an intense and prayerful solicitude for the eternal welfare of the readers. Both have been appreciated by the Churches, and are often spoken of as if they were twin productions. Matthew Henry began his Commentary in the year 1704, when he was a minister in Chester; and in November 1706 was published the first volume, containing the Exposition of the Pentateuch; in 1708, the second volume, comprising the Historical Books; in 1710, the third volume, including the Poetical Books; and the fourth, finishing the Old Testament, appeared in 1712. By this time the author had removed to Hackney; still, by the middle of 1714, the first volume on the New Testament, embracing the Gospels and the Acts, had been prepared and issued. Some progress also had been made in the composition of the last volume of the Work, when death interrupted his labours, and the Expositor passed into that world of light and joy where the presence of the Great Teacher supersedes such labours. He died suddenly, of apoplexy, 22d June 1714, at Nantwich, during a missionary tour. Though the Exposition was continued by several of his friends, who had the advantage of his notes, yet we miss the master spirit. The toils of those ten years in preparing such a laborious work must have been great and continuous, but his heart was in it. His prayer was surely answered—"God, by His grace, grant me to fill up time, to be busy while working-time lasts." His incessant progress in the work may be gathered from an incidental record in his diary. The reference is to the birth of a daughter—"Between two and three o'clock this morning, while my wife was ill, I retired to my study to seek God for her and my children. Being willing to redeem time, I did a little at my Exposition." The spirit in which the Commentary was written is apparent from many entries in his diary:--*July 19*—"Through the good hand of my God, I finished Genesis. The Lord still go on with me." *May 27*—"Studied, preparing to begin Joshua in the help of God." *April 10*—"Began the fourth volume. *Christo auspice pergo*. I humbly begged the Divine assistance, and go forth in the strength of the Lord God." *April 17*—"Finished Acts, and with it the fifth volume. Blessed be God that has helped me and spared me. All the praise be to God." Surely an Exposition so begun and so prosecuted must have been baptized "into the Spirit of Christ." Every page bears witness. His own views and feelings in originating and carrying on his great work are told by himself with unaffected modesty and simplicity:--

"The ministers of Christ are ministers to the Spirit for the good of the Church; their business is to open and apply the Scripture—thence they must fetch their knowledge, thence their doctrines, devotions, directions, and admonitions, and thence their very language and expression. Expounding the Scriptures was the most usual way of preaching in the first and purest ages of the Church. What have the Levites to do but to teach Jacob the law, (Deut.

Xxxiii. 10;) not only to read it, but to ‘give the sense, and cause them to understand the reading?’ (Neh. Viii. 8.) ‘How shall they do this, except some man guide them?’ (Acts viii. 31.) As ministers would hardly be believed without Bibles to back them, so Bibles would hardly be understood without ministers to explain them; but if, having both, we perish in ignorance and unbelief, our blood will be upon our own heads.

“Many helps, I know, we have of this kind in our own language, which we have a great deal of reason to value, and to be very thankful to God for; but the Scripture is a subject that can never be exhausted. ‘*Semper habet aliquid relegendibus*—However frequently we read it, we shall always meet with something new.’ When David had amassed a vast treasure for the building of the temple, yet saith he to Solomon, ‘Though mayest add thereto,’ (1 Chron. Xxii. 14.) Such a treasure is Scripture-knowledge; it is still capable of increase, till we come all to the perfect man.

“If any desire to know how so mean and obscure a person as I am, who in learning, judgment, felicity of expression, and all advantage for such a service, am *less than the least* of all my Master’s servants, came to venture upon so great a work, I can give no other account of it than this:-- It has long been my practice, what little time I had to spare in my study, from the constant preparation for the pulpit, to spend it in drawing up expositions upon some parts of the New Testament, not so much for my own use, as purely for my own entertainment, because I knew not how to employ my thoughts and time more to my satisfactions. ‘*Trahit sua quemque voluptas*—Every man that studies hath some beloved study, which is his delight above any other;’ and this is mine. It is that learning which it was my happiness from a child to be trained up in by my ever-honoured father, whose memory must always be very dear and precious to me: he often reminded me that a good textuary is a good divine; and that I should read other books with this in my eye, that I might be the better able to understand and apply Scripture.

“But we are concerned not only to understand what we read, but to improve it to some good purpose; and, in order thereunto, to be affected with it, and to receive the impression of it. The Word of God is designed to be not only a ‘light to our eyes,’ the entertaining subject of our contemplation, but a ‘light to our feet’ and a ‘lamp to our paths,’ (Ps. Cxix. 106,) to direct us in the way of our duty, and to prevent our turning aside into any by-way. We must therefore, in searching the Scriptures, inquire not only ‘What is this?’ but ‘What is this to us?’ What use may we make of it? How heavenly life which, by the grace of God, we are resolved to live? Inquiries of this kind I have here aimed to answer.

“When the stone is rolled from the well’s mouth by a critical explication of the text, still there are those who would both drink themselves, and water their flocks; but they complain that the ‘well is deep,’ and ‘they have nothing to draw.’ How, then, shall they come by this living water? Some such may perhaps find a bucket here, or water drawn to their hands; and pleased enough shall I be with this office of the Gibeonites, to ‘draw water for the congregation of the Lord,’ out of those wells of salvation.

“That which I aim in the exposition is, to give what I thought the genuine sense, and to make it as plain as I could to ordinary capacities, not troubling my readers with the different sentiments of expositors.”

No one who has read Henry’s Commentary can doubt the author’s success in his work. His own ideal has been, to a marvelous extent, realised. He ‘served his own generation,” and he has left a precious legacy to the Churches. The Commentary is marked by many peculiar and blended excellencies. We might refer to its simplicity, spirituality, and pregnancy of meaning—its fulness and variety of illustration—its deep and exquisite pathos—its racy humour—its pungent and powerful appeals—its homely and unaffected imagery—its quaint and striking allusions—its pervading practical applications—its terse and sententious epigrams—its wondrous insight into the working of human motive and passion—its shrewd remarks upon the

character and circumstances of society, and its felicitous appropriation of those miscellaneous stores with which long study and experience had enriched the mind of the Expositor. Maxims of prudence, as well as of piety, are to be found in the comment and notes—maxims so happily phrased as to merit the currency of proverbs. Legal terms are often curiously inlaid with the best effect; shewing that his early studies at Gray's Inn had not been without advantage. The book as a whole, has few parallels among uninspired productions.

SCOTT's Commentary was produced amidst disadvantages under which many men would have sunk. His mind was not of the same elastic character as Henry's, but it was endowed with great powers of application. Scott does not sparkle, but he is always judicious. His Exposition is a very equal production. There is scarce a paragraph of which you can say that in it he excels himself. Sobriety of thought distinguishes all his writings, and occasionally much information is condensed into a small compass. His illustrations are compact and weighty; and his treatment of infidel objections is usually powerful and conclusive. He pours forth his strength on such arguments, and wins a decided victory. And he never forgets to reason, and reason well, with Socinian heretics; for his own experience qualified him for the work, as may be seen in his spiritual biography, "THE FORCE OF TRUTH." His aim was to be eminently practical, though many of his criticisms indicate acuteness and erudition. The "Practical Observations" are therefore very carefully composed, and the truths of Scripture are brought to bear with ingenious and pointed fidelity on the maxim and institutions, as well as the men and manners, of modern times. While preceding expositors were carefully studied by him, yet he calmly thought out every point for himself, and delighted in independent investigation. Everywhere there appears an honest desire to find out, not merely a sense which may be plausible, but to find out the *sense* of Scripture. His strict adherence to evangelical truth was not an official, but a passionate attachment with him; and that he was "ready to give an answer to every man that asked a reason of the hope that was in him," was evinced in his manly and comprehensive reply to a dignitary of his own Church—Bishop Tomline.

Few books have commanded so large and so constant a sale as Scott's Commentary. The first edition, which was begun in 1788, and was published in numbers, consisted of five thousand copies; the second edition, in 1805, was one of two thousand; an edition of similar size was published in 1810; a fourth, of three thousand copies, in 1812; and another was stereotyped in 1822, the revision of which was the last and cherished work of the author, and he had four times engaged in a similar service. Many issues have been made since his death, and thousands of copies have also been sold in the United States of America. During the author's lifetime, the sales amounted to nearly 200, 000 pounds. Scott's Commentary thus continues to "praise him in the gates." The first edition was written to the demands of the press, "in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling," and amidst the external discomfort of a limited income and a growing family. The publication led him, moreover, into pecuniary embarrassment; but its popularity at length relieved him of all such anxiety. Revised, and re-revised from time to time by the

studious author, it presents us with his best and most matured thoughts, opinions, and criticism. Of the aim and character of his own labour he thus writes:

“It is in no degree the design of this publication to detract from the merit of former commentators, or to intimate that anything will here be added which has never before been advanced; but the author having for many years made the Bible his daily and principal study, and having bestowed great pains to satisfy his own mind as to the meaning of most parts of Scripture, and the practical use which should be made of them—and supposing, also, that his talent chiefly lies in speaking plainly and intelligibly to persons of ordinary capacity and information—he adopts this method of communicating his views of Divine truth, in connection with the Scriptures themselves, from which he has deduced them.

“Some comments are far too learned for common people, and some too voluminous; while others are too compendious to admit either any adequate explanation or application of the several subjects which fall under consideration. Some are in very few hands, and not likely to be more generally read; and others, however excellent, are to numbers antiquated, through that fastidiousness which disrelishes the style and manner of former, and perhaps better, times. Were the present attempt, therefore, made almost entirely upon the plan of former expositions, it would not, if duly executed, be found supernumerary. But, in arranging old truths, the author purposes to adopt something of a new method. Not indeed entirely new; for Brown’s *Self-Interpreting Bible* suggested the idea; and the improvement son Doddridge’s *Family Expositor of the New Testament* were proposed as, in some respects, models for imitation. He has often remarked that some persons so confine their interpretation of Scripture to its meaning and use, with respect of those who were immediately addressed, as to leave the reader in doubt whether he is at all concerned in it, or can derive any instruction from it; while others so immediately and abruptly apply to the persons whom they address the passages which they undertake to explain and enforce, without inquiring whether they be, in character and situation, similar to those whom the prophets and apostles spoke or wrote, that their instructions seem rather more like an immediate revelation from God, than the explanation and practical improvement of a revelation given many ages ago. As this must be unsatisfactory to men of reflection, and as it is frequently connected with inattention to the primary meaning of the passage, (if it be not a fanciful misinterpretation of it,) numbers are ready to conclude that the Scriptures have no precise meaning in themselves, but may be modeled almost to anything by men of lively imaginations and superior ingenuity. It therefore occurred to the author, that one remedy of these evils (if not the best remedy) would be, to keep the two parts distinct; and first to explain in the notes the primary meaning, as addressed to the writer’s contemporaries; and then, in practical observations, to shew what we may learn from each passage, allowing for all difference in circumstances, and in every other respect. It is, indeed, far more easy to form a plan of this kind than duly to execute it;’ but this has been the purpose of the present attempt.”

It is now the place to say a few words as to the principles on which the Commentary found in this volume has been compiled. Had we blended the two expositions of Henry and Scott, their characteristic excellencies would have disappeared in such an indiscriminate amalgamation; and had we re-written a continuous comment out of their bulky volumes, justice would not have been done to the respective authors, and their special opinions would have lost the zest and flavor of their own idiom and composition. It was therefore judged best that the views of each commentator, so far as given, should be given in his own words, and that his name should be attached to the excerpt. Our space could not contain a large quantity of matter, but we have endeavoured to illustrate the most important and interesting paragraphs of the various chapters. What we deemed of superior excellence in Scott or Henry has been preferred, and verses of more weight or difficulty than others have been usually chosen for formal illustration; so that, with the addition of the very numerous and useful notes printed between the columns, the

reader will have a commentary much fuller by far than he may be disposed to anticipate. And that large and interesting class especially, in reference to whom this publication was originally designated the WORKING MAN'S FAMILY BIBLE, will find that their advantage has been consulted in the choice of materials. Leisure is denied them for extended reading and study. The original tomes of Henry and Scott may be found by them to be too ponderous for successful and thorough perusal; and may we not say to them, that such portions of these authors as are of most interest to them are here collected, and that the selections are of such an extent as to occupy all the time they can ordinarily give to the domestic reading of the Word of God? To enable them to perceive what portion of the chapter is illustrated, the verses are usually marked, and a brief title is also given as a heading to the various extracts.

In a word, let those into whose hands this Edition of the Bible may come, thank God for His oracles. Whatever their position in society, let them delight themselves in the law of God. They will find that obedience to it lightens the cares and lessens the burdens of life; that it sweetens the scantiest fare, and confers a species of exalted and glowing happiness which the gifts of the world are unable to bestow: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." He who has imbibed the spirit of the Bible, will feel himself independent of external circumstances—for "the good man is satisfied from himself." He sleeps on a soft pillow who has a "conscience purged from dead works to server the living God." He who has God's oracles written on his heart, is wise beyond the teaching of human science—is an enfranchised citizen of no mean commonwealth, and a chartered heir of no vulgar or transient possession. O that all among us were humble and prayerful students of the Divine Word—that every parent made it the grand text-book of his household instructions—and that every one of our youth, "from a child," was acquainted with the Holy Scriptures! Then should many disturbing elements in society be rectified under the equitable and benignant reign of Christianity. "The finest of the wheat," and "honey out of the rock," are the samples of its plenty; the kid slumbering in the bosom of the leopard, is the symbol of its peace; and the labourer reposing under the shade of his "vine and fig-tree," is the image of its security and contentment. O that every family in our nation were thus a nursery for heaven! Then, indeed, we should be called "Hephzibah, and our land Beulah."

We have no higher reward than that our labours should, in some degree, be instrumental in reviving or increasing the love and practice of domestic tuition and devotion, and that the thousands of families who have expressed their anxious desire to have this copy of Scripture, may feel themselves summoned, by the possession of it, to make their FAMILY BIBLE the daily assistant and companion of their ministrations at the family altar. Such a result is worth laboring for—is worth praying for. "Establish Thou the work of our hands upon us." We cannot despond in so good a cause. Our faith is in "Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." And were our anticipations crowned with the blessings, would not a brighter and holier career be entered on by our nation—all its pursuits and enjoyments "sanctified by the Word of God in prayer"—its diadem a crown of righteousness—its senate enriched with wisdom

and patriotism—its tribunals scenes of cheap and speedy justice—its nobles adorned with the insignia of true nobility—its power armed in the case of a catholic philanthropy—its wealth neither adored nor abused—its industry blessed with a healthful activity and a genial satisfaction—all its ranks attached by living and reciprocal sympathies—and its Churches united, chivalrous, and successful in gaining the spiritual conquest of the world? “Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good, and our land shall yield her increase. Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps.”

The sale of thirty-six thousand copies of the previous folio edition within seven years, is a proof that the book has met a deep and extensive want, especially among the classes for whom it was originally intended. Thousands of working men have now got possession of a cherished Family Bible, and the avidity with which they have purchased it is surely a good omen—a hopeful proof that they appreciate it, and will read and study it with their households. The present edition, in more convenient quarto size, has been thoroughly revised, many alterations have been made, a large quantity of additional matter from Henry and Scott has been introduced, new prefaces have been prefixed to the various books, several thousands of new brief notes, selected by a competent judge from a great variety of sources, have been inserted between the columns, the marginal references have been carefully examined and collated, and the whole work, text and commentary, has been so well read and supervised by a gentleman of singular accuracy and patience, that it may be safely warranted as one of the most correct editions of the Holy Scriptures ever printed. The brief notes referred to would fill six ordinary octavos. It was sometimes objected to the last edition, that each page, whatever its contents or comparative value, had at the foot a uniform amount of commentary, or that a chapter of proper name sin Chronicles had quite the same as a chapter in Romans or Hebrews; such an objection can no longer apply, as any one may see, for the commentary is appended in such proportions—in longer or shorter quantity—as the text seemed to require. May not a circulation equal to that of its predecessor be anticipated for it? And may not the fulfillment of the Divine promise as to the Divine Word be relied on,--
IT SHALL NOT RETURN UNTO ME VOID; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it?”

JOHN EADIE.