

**THE ERRORS OF THE BIBLE
DEMONSTRATED BY THE TRUTHS
OF NATURE; OR, MAN'S ONLY
INFALLIBLE RULE OF FAITH AND
PRACTICE**

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The Errors of the Bible Demonstrated by the Truths of Nature; Or, Man's Only Infallible Rule of Faith and Practice by Henry C. Wright

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HENRY C. WRIGHT

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Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. — *FACT.*

BOSTON:
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14 BROMFIELD STREET.
1858.

P R E F A C E .

THE author of the following pages has no apology to make for publishing them. His conclusions respecting the origin, authority, and influence of the Bible are the result of long and patient research, and mature observation. Twelve years of his life were spent in an earnest study of that book, in the languages in which it purports to have been written, conscientiously believing that in searching it he should find eternal life. His great desire was to learn from it, if possible, how to perfect himself in all goodness, and bring himself into harmony with the laws of Nature and of Nature's God.

He found the Bible to abound in moral precepts as pure as ever came from human lips; and in as stern rebukes of evil-doing, and as earnest appeals to sympathy and conscience, as can be found on the records of this world. The spirit, the teachings and life, of the gentle JESUS, the martyr of Calvary, have, for the most part, ever found an echo in his heart. His soul can no more reject the principles of love and forgiveness, as they were

illustrated in his life and death, than it can reject its own consciousness of existence. But the Bible, *as a whole*, is received by Christendom as infallible truth,—as man's only rule of faith and practice. *This* view of that book has been the source of a vast amount of crime and suffering. It is against this idea, so fearfully fruitful of evil to man, that the following work is aimed. It is the deep and earnest conviction of the author, that the Bible, thus received, has ever been an enemy to human progress in knowledge and goodness. There is not a crime which has not been systematically and openly perpetrated under its sanctions.

As a book of authority, to decide what is true and false in principle, and right and wrong in practice, the author regards it as he does any other book. Not one of the Evangelists pretends to be inspired of God, and incapable of mistakes, as a writer of the life of Jesus. Why should we claim for them an infallibility which they never claimed for themselves? No doctrine is true or false, no practice is right or wrong, because it is sanctioned or condemned by the Bible. He reads that book as he does others, regarding it simply as a human production; assuming that it may err, and feeling free to reject whatever he deems to be false and wrong. Whatever he would reject if found in "The Liberator," or in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," he would reject when found in the Bible. Whatever he would reject as untrue and unjust when said or done by

William Lloyd Garrison or Harriet Beecher Stowe, he would reject as untrue and unjust if said or done by Jesus Christ.

It is said, if we reject any part of the Bible, we must reject the whole, because it must all stand or fall together. The remark is simply absurd. As if it should be said, that truth and falsehood, wisdom and folly, are so blended, that one cannot be believed and practised without the other. If a man believes it is right to love enemies and forgive injuries, he must also believe it is right to hate them and seek revenge. The argument runs thus: if there are two dishes on the table, one of poison, the other of wholesome food, we cannot eat the one unless we eat the other!

The author has spoken of the Bible and Jesus plainly, but in sincerity and fidelity to his own convictions. The freedom of his remarks may seem impious to those who regard and worship Jesus as God. He regards him as a man, and thinks and speaks of him as a man; feeling as free to sit in judgment on his words and acts as he does on those of other men. As an act of justice he demands that what he has said of Jesus and the Bible shall be judged from his own stand-point, and not from the stand-point of those whose views differ widely from his own.

There are sincere, honest, and able men in the churches and the priesthood. The author has noticed many instances in which he thinks the Bible is opposed to the fixed, eternal principles of Love, Mercy, Justice and Equity. Can

they answer his argument, and show that, in all the cases specified, the book is in harmony with the divine attributes? The cry of "infidelity" is no argument, and all reflecting minds are coming to see that it is not. There is the record. Certain actions are said to have been commanded or approved by God. DID THE JUST AND LOVING AUTHOR OF OUR BEING ACTUALLY ENJOIN OR APPROVE ALL THE BIBLE SAYS HE DID? If he did, there are men in the priesthood and church competent to prove the fact. Will they attempt it? Many, whose minds are filled with painful doubts, will wait anxiously for a reply. If no satisfactory answer be given, many sincere and earnest spirits will conclude none can be given. Their doubts will yield to a certain conviction THAT NATURE IS THE ONLY REVELATION OF GOD TO MAN.

THE AUTHOR.

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