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FACTS FOR THE TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THEIR GREAT IMPORTANCE.

WE are told by the Author of the Sacred Volume, that he has magnified his word above all his name. Ps. 138 : 2. Then with what reverence should we open its pages ; with what earnestness should we study it. Coming, as it does, from the Author of all good, and containing his thoughts and mind, we may well expect to find within its pages all the necessary principles of culture and civilization, which, if planted in the human heart, will produce the fruit of joy, peace, and everlasting life. In the language of another, it has been truthfully said : —

“Well may it be styled the Book of books. No veneration of it can be too high, no attachment to it too deep, no attention to it too extensive.”—*Pulpit Cyclopaedia*, p. 16, ed. of 1872.

IT IS AN INSPIRED BOOK.

This is clearly stated by the Scriptures themselves. Thus : —

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17.

“The prevailing doctrine is that though error may be shown in the acts, and even in the oral utterances of the apostles, it cannot

have entered their written deliverances: that though the apostles were not infallible as men, they were made infallible as writers. . . . Never before has this doctrine in its purely scientific aspect been criticised so freely as now; and yet never before has the Bible stood so high in the reverence of the world as it stands at the present time."—*N. Y. Independent*, Nov. 18, 1880.

"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21.

"This view secures the Scriptures from all error, both as to the subjects spoken and the manner of expressing them. A uniformity of style and manner in the different writers was by no means essential to this kind of inspiration, which is called *plenary*, that is, *full*. The peculiar style of each writer, instead of being removed, was probably enriched and appropriated to his own design by the Holy Spirit."—*Theological Compend*, p. 16., ed. of 1839.

"The revelation man requires, God can supply. The Scriptures appear to contain such a revelation—a revelation worthy of their divine Author, and meeting all the moral exigencies of mankind."—*Pulpit Cyclopædia*, p. 12.

THE USE OF THE BIBLE.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. 119:105.

It matters not how dark may be one's moral surroundings, the word of God is able to reveal to him a path of light, and point out every obstacle in the way, that he may avoid them, and be able to keep in the "royal path of life." Thus Dr. Adam Clark, in his "*Clavis Biblica*" says:—

"From this word all doctrines must be derived and proved; and from it every man must learn his duty to God, to his neighbor, and to himself."—*Principles of Christian Religion*, par. 31.

"I use the Scriptures, not as an arsenal to be resorted to only for arms and weapons, . . . but as a matchless temple, where I delight to contemplate the beauty, the symmetry, and the magnificence of the structure; and to increase my awe and excite my devotion to the Deity there preached and adored."—*Boyle's Style of Scripture*, 3d Obj., 8.

"Especially make the Bible your study. Many get wisdom by books; but wisdom toward God is to be gotten out of God's book, and that by digging. Most men do but walk over the surface of it, and pick up here and there a flower; a few dig into it. Read other books to help you to read that book. Fetch your sermons from thence; the Volume of Inspiration is a full fountain, always overflowing, and has always something new."—*Matthew Henry*.

"An intimate acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures is a secure haven, and an impregnable bulwark, and an immovable tower, and imperishable glory, and impenetrable armor, and unfading joy, and perpetual delight, and whatever other excellence can be uttered."—*Chrysostom*.

"Hast thou ever heard
Of such a book? The author, God himself,
The subject, God and man, salvation, life
And death—eternal life, eternal death—
Dread words! whose meaning has no end, no bound.
Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord!"
—*Pollock's Course of Time*, p. 56.

Study it carefully,
Think of it prayerfully,
Deep in thy heart let its pure precepts dwell.
Slight not its history,
Ponder its mystery,
None can e'er prize it too fondly or well.
Accept the glad tidings,
The warnings and chidings,
Found in this volume of heavenly lore;
With faith that's unfeeling,
And love all-prevailing,
Trust in its promise of life evermore.
With fervent devotion
And thankful emotion,
Hear the blest welcome, respond to its call;
Life's purest oblation,
The heart's adoration,
Give to the Saviour, who died for us all.
May this message of love
From the Tribune above,
To all nations and kindreds be given,
'Till the ransomed shall raise—
Joyous anthems of praise—
Hallelujah! on earth and in heaven.

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION.

"Whoso readeth, let him understand." Matt. 24:15.
"No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation [impulse]." 2 Peter 1:20. That is, no prophecy is to be interpreted by one's own knowledge, or invention, which would be the offspring of calculation or conjecture. In other words, no interpretation of prophecy is to be made by the mere private impulse of one's own mind. No one unaided (relying on his

own private judgment), is competent to give an exposition of prophecy. Its meaning should be ascertained by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." 1 Cor. 2 : 13.

"The allegorical sense is commonly uncertain, and by no means safe to build our faith upon; for it usually depends on human opinion and conjecture only. . . . Therefore Origen, Jerome, and similar of the Fathers are to be avoided, with the whole of that Alexandrian school, which formerly abounded in this species of interpretation. For, later writers unhappily following their too-much-praised and prevailing example, it has come to pass that men make just what they please of the Scriptures, until some accommodate the word of God to the most extravagant absurdities."—*Luther's Annotations on Deut., chap. 1, p. 55.*

This was the cause of all the great errors which crept into the early Church. Speaking of those who propagated these errors, Mosheim says :—

"They all attributed a double sense to the words of Scripture; the one obvious and literal, the other hidden and mysterious, which lay concealed, as it were, under the veil of the outward letter. The former they treated with the utmost neglect, and turned the whole force of their genius and application to unfold the latter; or, in other words, they were more studious to darken the Scriptures with their idle fictions than to investigate their true and natural sense."—*Church History, cent. 2, chap. 3, par. 5.*

"There is, in fact, but one and the same method of interpretation common to all books, whatever be their subject. And the same grammatical principles and precepts ought to be the common guide in the interpretation of all. . . . Theologians are right, therefore, when they affirm the literal sense, or that which is derived from the knowledge of words, to be the only true one; for that mystical sense, which indeed is incorrectly called a sense, belongs altogether to the thing, and not to the words."—*Prof. J. A. Ernesti, in Biblical Repertory, vol. 3, pp. 125, 131.*

"Without all controversy, the literal meaning is that which God would have first understood. By not attending to this, heresies, false doctrines, and errors of all kinds have been propagated and multiplied in the world. Remember you are called, not only to explain the things of God, but also the words of God. The meaning of the thing is found in the word."—*Dr. Clarke, in Coke's Preachers' Manual, p. 86.*

"All ingenious and unprejudiced persons will grant me this position, that there is no method of removing difficulties more secure than that of an accurate interpretation derived from the words of the

texts themselves, and from their true and legitimate meaning, and depending upon no hypothesis."—*Rosenmuller, quoted in Cox's Immanuel Enthroned, p. 70.*

"Let the Christian reader's first object always be to find out the literal meaning of the word of God; for this, and this alone, is the whole foundation of faith and of Christian theology. It is the very substance of Christianity."—*Martin Luther, quoted in Milner's History, vol. 5, p. 460.*

"Even metaphors and parables prove nothing; they only illustrate, and are never allowed to be produced in support of any doctrine. This is a maxim in theology to which all polemic divines are obliged to bow."—*Coke's Preachers' Manual, p. 90.*

"The Spirit of God does not communicate to the mind of even a teachable, obedient, and devout Christian, any doctrine or meaning of Scripture which is not contained already in Scripture itself. He makes men wise up to what is written, but not beyond it. When Christ opened the understanding of his apostles, it was 'that they might understand the Scriptures.'"—*Dr. Joseph Angus, in Bible Hand-Book, p. 178.*

The Bible has been given in language adapted to the wants of those for whose use it was intended, and must therefore be understood, in all cases except where figures and symbols are known to be used, in exactly the same way that such expressions would be received if found in any other book. Concerning the use of language, Prof. C. E. Stowe, in his excellent work, "History of the Books of the Bible," has the following :—

"The Bible is not given to us in any celestial or superhuman language. If it had been, it would have been of no use to us; for every book intended for men must be given to them in the language of men. But every human language is of necessity, and from the very nature of the case, an imperfect language. No human language has exactly one word and only one for each distinct idea. In every known language, the same word is used to indicate different things, and different words are used to indicate the same thing. In every human language each word has more than one meaning, and each thing has generally more than one name. The boy is learning his letters; the merchant is writing his letters; Dr. Johnson was a man of letters. In these three sentences the same word, *letters*, is used to designate three perfectly distinct and most widely divergent things; yet nobody mistakes, or nobody need mistake; for the connection in each case shows the meaning. . . . In the first stanza of Grey's Ode on Spring, there are no less than eight words used in their figurative instead of their literal sense. Yet who mistakes?

“Lo, where the *rosy-bosomed* Hours,
 Fair Venus' train, appear,
 Disclose the *long-expecting* flowers,
 And *wake* the *purple* year:
 The attic warbler *pours* her throat
 Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
 The untaught harmony of spring;
 While *whispering* pleasures as they fly,
 Cool zephyrs through the clear-blue sky
 Their gathered fragrance *fling*.”

“In all these cases men can mistake if they choose. . . . All this is as true of the Bible as of any other book, and no more so.”
 — Pages 15–17.

CATHOLICS ADMIT THE PROTESTANT BIBLE TO BE RELIABLE.

The eminent Archbishop Hendric, in the introduction to his translation of the New Testament, alludes to the Protestant version as follows:—

“In adopting occasionally the words and phrases of the Protestant version, I have followed the example of others who have from time to time revised the Rheinish translation. It is not to be regretted that while we point to errors that need correction, we acknowledge excellencies which we are free to imitate, thus diminishing the asperity of censure by the tribute which we willingly render to literary merit.”

Bishop Doyle, one of the ablest of Roman Catholic prelates, when asked before a committee of the House of Lords, whether he considered the authorized version of the Scriptures of that character which would warrant them being called the gospel of the Devil, he replied:—

“I have said before, God forbid that I should so consider it; for, though it has many errors, I consider it as one of the noblest works, and one of the ablest translations, that has ever been produced.”

THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES STILL IN FORCE.

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” Rom. 15:4.

The fact that our Saviour mentioned the cases of Sodom and Gomorrah as examples to be shunned

(Matt. 10:15), is evidence that he desired his followers to read the Old Testament, since the history of those cities is not repeated in the New Testament. His reference, also, to Jonah and Nineveh (Matt. 12:41) is so brief that we could never receive much benefit from it, unless their history in the Old Testament could be read.

Much of the prophecy of Daniel has its fulfillment in the Christian age, and some of it in the present generation. It were folly to say that any portion of the Bible has lost its force before it has met its fulfillment; for then how would that portion become of any benefit to the generation to whom it was alone directed, and to whom only it was possible for it to be of any advantage? In that case, the early Church would not have known when to flee from Judea and Jerusalem, as directed (Matt. 24:15, 16), and would consequently have been involved in the destruction of that city.

We are told by the Lord to “Remember Lot's wife.” Luke 17:32. But the only knowledge to be obtained concerning her is through the Old Testament Scriptures. These words of the Saviour are, then, a virtual command to read the Old Testament. Why should we not do so, since the great apostle to the Gentiles has said that these Scriptures are able to make us “wise unto salvation,” through faith in the Lord Jesus? 2 Tim. 3:15. The Scriptures referred to in this case were those which Timothy, then a minister of the gospel, had known *from a child*. These were none other than the Old Testament Scriptures.

The apostle James exhorts all to take the prophets as an example of suffering and patience. James 5:10. It is plain that this cannot be done without reading the account of those sufferings which is found in the Old Testament. In short, no part of the Old Testament can be safely rejected; for in it are the foundations of the New Testament. The rejection, therefore, of the Old Testament necessarily leads to the rejection of the New, since the latter ratifies in the fullest manner the historical statements, enactments,

and religious institutions of the former, and founds its work of redemption on them.

"You have a good many people saying, 'I don't believe in the Old Testament; I believe in the New.' My friends, they are inseparable. A scarlet thread runs through the two, and binds them together."—*D. L. Moody, in Sermons, Addresses, and Prayers, p. 154.*

"The Bible, or the Old and New Testaments in Hebrew and Greek, contains a full and perfect revelation of God and his will, adapted to man as he now is."—*A. Campbell's Christian System, p. 15.*

"The New Testament is not to supercede the Old, but to be its complement. So Jesus, says, . . . I am come not to silence the Old Testament, but to show its divine original, by adding to it that which is its complement, its perfection, and its fullness—the New Testament."—*Cummings's Scripture Readings, pp. 35, 36.*

"Seeing the same language runs through the whole, and is set in such a variety of lights that one part is well adapted to illustrate another, . . . it follows that to understand the sense of the Spirit in the New, it is essentially necessary that we understand its sense in the Old Testament."—*Dr. A. Clarke, in Preface to Book of Romans.*

"We take the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, as the foundation of all Christian union and communion."—*A. Campbell's Christian System, p. 12.*

"By eight hundred and eighty-nine quotations and allusions to the Old Testament in the pages of the New, the two portions of the Bible are so interwoven that they become like the two sides of a twofold carpet. If we cut the threads of one side, we have destroyed the other also. If the Old Testament records are not reliable, neither are the words of Christ who confirmed them."—*Wilbur F. Crafts, in Must The Old Testament Go? p. 39.*

"We cannot agree with those who say that 'there is a radical difference between the Old Testament and the New in their ethical standpoints, that of the Old Testament being exterior, the New, interior; the Old Testament dealing with conduct, the New, with character; one prescribing rules, the other, principles; the first regulating the life, the second breathing into the soul a new spirit.' In these words truth is sacrificed to antithesis. Moses most emphatically declared that obedience to God's law required not only external morality, but also *love*. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;' and the key-texts of the poetic books of the Bible are, 'Create in me a clean heart, . . . and renew a right spirit within me,' and, 'Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.' . . . The Old Testament as well as the New continually puts religion into these three words,—Love, Trust, and Obey."—*Ibid, pp. 79, 80.*

TRADITION AGAINST THE BIBLE.

"Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" Matt. 15:3.

"Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Verse 6.

"Traditions were laws, or precepts of men, which they [the Jews] said had been handed down by word of mouth from past generations. . . . They were often treated as of more authority than the laws of God."—*Note on Matt. 15:2, in American Tract Society's New Testament.*

"From being transcribers and exponents of the law, they [the Jews] supplied, after the captivity, the place of the prophets and the inspired oracles, which had ceased, and from them arose those glosses and interpretations which our Lord rebukes under the term of traditions."—*Oxford S. S. Teacher's Bible, art, Jewish Sects and Parties.*

"The Talmuds are two in number, and consist of two parts, namely, the Mishna and the Gemara, which were committed to writing by Rabbi Jehudah, surnamed Hakkadosh, or the Holy, about the middle of the second century. On this there are extant two commentaries by the Jews, called Gemara, that is, perfection; namely, that of Jerusalem, which was compiled in the third or fourth century, and that of Babylon, compiled in the sixth century. When the Mishna, or text, and the Gemara, or commentary, accompany each other, they are called the Talmuds, and accordingly as the Jewish or Babylonish commentary accompanies the Mishna, it is called the Jewish or Babylonish Talmud."—*Horne's Introduction, vol. 1, sec. 3.*

HOW THE EARLY CHURCH WAS CORRUPTED.

In an address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, the apostle Paul said:—

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20:28-30.

As to how corruption came into the early Church, we are told that—

"When the apostles were dead, then the Church was gradually spotted and corrupted, as in her doctrine, so also in her worship, an infinity of ceremonies by degrees insensibly sliding in."—*Hegesippus, book 3, chap. 32.*

"From Adrian [A. D. 117] to Justinian, . . . few institutions either human or divine, were permitted to stand on their former basis."—*Gibbon's Rome, chap. 44, par. 7.*

"Toward the latter end of the second century, most of the churches assumed a new form, the first simplicity disappeared; and insensibly, as the old disciples retired to their graves, their children, along with new converts, both Jews and Gentiles, came forward and new-modeled the cause."—*Robinson's History of Baptism, book 2, chap. 1, sec. 1.*

"Clement of Alexandria is almost the only extant writer of the early ages who adheres to common sense and apostolic Christianity, through and through."—*Anti-Christ Exposed, pp. 104, 113.*

THE EARLY FATHERS UNRELIABLE.

"The fact that deadly falsehoods were circulated in the Church by some men, and believed by multitudes, is itself a most important historic truth; and to suppress such a truth, instead of being a merit, is a fault which should rather crimson the cheek and set on fire the conscience of a modest and honest historian. It is itself but a tacit repetition of the crime of pious frauds which so deeply stained, not only heathen morality, but the early though not the primitive character of the Church."—*Ralph Emerson, D. D., in Bibliotheca Sacra, May, 1844.*

"The testimony of good and wise men is entitled to high consideration. But we do not ultimately and securely settle a point which they profess to believe, until we have ascertained the grounds on which they believe. The same principles of evidence are common to them and to ourselves; if, therefore, they have believed on just principles, we must be capable of perceiving these."—*Tappan's Logic, p. 33.*

The celebrated John Dailié of Paris, in his work on the "Right Use of the Fathers," says of their writings:—

"There is so great a confusion in the most part of these books of which we speak, that it is a very difficult thing truly to discover who were their authors, and what is their meaning and sense. The first difficulty proceeds from the infinite number of forged books, which are falsely attributed to the ancient Fathers; the same having also happened in all kinds of learning and sciences; insomuch that the learned at this day are sufficiently puzzled to discover, both in philosophy and humanity, which are forged and supposititious pieces, and which are true and legitimate. But this abuse has not existed anywhere more grossly, and taken to itself more liberty, than in the ecclesiastical writers."—*p. 33.*

"But suppose that you have, by long and judicious investigation, separated the true and genuine writings of the Fathers from the spurious and forged; there would yet rest upon you a second task, the result of which is likely to prove much more doubtful, and more replete with difficulty, than the former. For it would behoove you, in the next place, in reading over those authors which you acknowledge as legitimate, to distinguish what is the author's own, and what has been foisted in by another hand; and also to restore to your author whatsoever either by time or fraud has been taken away, and to take out of him whatsoever has been added by either of these two. Otherwise you will never be able to assure yourself that you have discovered, out of these books, what the true and proper meaning and sense of your author has been; considering the great alterations that in various ways they may have suffered at different times."—*Ibid, pp. 55, 56.*

Concerning the value of the productions of the Fathers, Dupin, a celebrated Roman Catholic historian, says:—

"It is a surprising thing to consider how many spurious books we find in antiquity; nay, even in the first ages of the Church."

Of these early writings Dr. A. Clarke says:—

"But of these we may safely say that there is not a truth in the most orthodox creed that cannot be proved by their authority; nor a heresy that has disgraced the Romish Church that may not challenge them as its abettors. In points of doctrine, *their authority is with me nothing. The word of God alone contains my creed.* On a number of points I can go to the Greek and Latin Fathers of the Church to know what they believed, and what the people of their respective communions believed; but after all this, I must return to God's word to know what he would have me to believe."—*Comments on Proverbs 8.*

Martin Luther confirms the above by the following terse statement:—

"When God's word is by the *Fathers* expounded, construed, and glossed, then, in my judgment, it is even as when one strains milk through a coal-sack, which must needs spoil and make the milk black. God's word of itself is pure, clean, bright, and clear; but through the doctrines, books, and writings of the Fathers, it is darkened, falsified, and spoiled."—*Table Talk, p. 228.*

Speaking of the Fathers in his "History of Interpretation," Archdeacon Farrar says:—

"There are but few of them whose pages are not rife with errors, — errors of method, errors of fact, errors of history, of grammar,

and even of doctrine. This is the language of simple truth, not of slighting disparagement."—*Pages 162, 139.*

Just how this corruption of the truth was brought about is well stated by Dr. Cox. He says:—

"In the early ages of the Church, the writings of the Fathers were corrupted without scruple, to serve the purposes of contending sects. The truth is, that the practice of vitiating these holy writings, and even of forging whole treatises and letters, detracts materially from the value of all that has come down to us as the productions of the Fathers."—*Cox's Literature, etc., vol. 1, p. 123.*

Neander also says:—

"The writings of the so-called Apostolic Fathers have unhappily, for the most part, come down to us in a condition very little worthy of confidence, partly because under the name of these men, so highly venerated in the Church, writings were early forged for the purpose of giving authority to particular opinions or principles; and partly because their own writings which were extant, became interpolated in subservience to a Jewish hierarchical interest, which aimed to crush the free spirit of the gospel."—*History of the Christian Religion and Church, vol. 1, p. 657.*

With the foregoing facts before us, it is not wonderful that in due time there should follow so many soul-destroying doctrines as were later developed in the Catholic Church. The *Chronological Anzeiger* of Reyner, gives the following sketch of the introduction of many of the foolish practices of the Roman Church:—

"The use of holy water was introduced in the year 120; penance, in 157; monks appeared in 348; the Latin mass, in 391; extreme unction, in 550; purgatory, in 593; the invocation of Mary and the saints, in 715; kissing the feet of the pope, in 809; the canonization of saints and the beatification of the blessed, in 893; blessing bells, in 1000; the celibacy of priests, in 1015; indulgences, in 1119; dispensations, in 1200; the elevation of the host, in 1200; the inquisition, in 1204; oral confession, in 1215; the immaculate conception, in 1860; infallibility, in 1870."

THE WAY ERRORS ARE STILL PERPETUATED.

Says Alexander Campbell:—

"No one need ask, Why, then, so early introduced and so long in practice, and why believed by so many great, and learned, and excellent men? Ah me! what profane tenets, what fatal aberrations

from the sacred Scriptures may not be maintained and defended in this way! . . . If great, and learned, and reverend names can authenticate tradition, silence demurs, and satisfy weak consciences, there is not an error in popery nor an imagination in the ramblings of monkish fanaticism and religious buffoonery that may not be favorably regarded, and cherished with a profound and worshipful respect. But we have not so learned Christ."—*Christian Baptism, p. 246.*

This matter was set forth by Rev. Lyman Abbott in this way:—

"There are many instances in which the Biblical commentators appear to have derived their ideas respecting Scripture teaching from previous scholars in the same field; the same thought is often traceable from generation to generation, from ancient Father to English divine, and thence to our latest Sunday-school commentary. And sometimes, just as counterfeit bills pass unquestioned because they are well worn, erroneous interpretations pass current in the Christian Church, without ever being subjected to a careful scrutiny; because each new student takes it for granted that the student who has preceded him, and from whom he receives the interpretation, has done this work of investigation, and he only needs to report the results."—*Christian Union.*

Another writer speaks thus:—

"Many of our religious teachers, who are set for the defense of the truth, rely more upon the authority of tradition than upon the word of God to justify their positions, and enforce the doctrines they teach; and so they hand down their interpretations from one generation to another. Indeed it has already come to pass that in some of our great organic Church bodies, a man is regarded as heretical or sound according as he agrees or disagrees with the book of the Church, which is not the *book of God*, but, like the Mishna of the Jews, is a digest of the traditions of the elders, and of the interpretations they have decided to put upon the Scriptures. And when a man is tried for heresy, he is tried by their church-book, and not allowed to appeal to the word of God."—*The Life Everlasting, pp. 100, 101.*

HOW TRADITIONS SHOULD BE TREATED.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:21.

The theory advocated by some that because the Church has taught certain doctrines for many generations, they must therefore be true, meets the rebuke it deserves in the following:—

“To have been a thousand years wrong, will not make us right for one single hour! or else the pagans should have kept to their creed.”—*D'Aubigne's Reformation, book 8, chap. 14, par. 14.*

“An error is not the better for being common, nor truth the worse for having lain neglected; and if it were put to vote anywhere in the world, I doubt, as things are managed, whether truth would have the majority, at least while the authority of men, and not the examination of things, must be its measure.”—*Locke's Essay on Human Understanding, book 4, chap. 3, sec. 6, note. (Appendix No. IX.)*

“The antiquity of an opinion, if that be not founded on a revelation from God, is no evidence of its truth; for there are many ungodly opinions which are more than a thousand years old. And as to great men and great names, we find them enrolled and arranged on each side of all controversies.”—*Dr. A. Clarke, in Introduction to Solomon's Songs.*

“The plea of ancient tradition is the strength of popery and the weakness of Protestantism. We advocate, not ancient, but *original* Christianity. The plea of high antiquity or tradition has long been the bulwark of error. It cleaves to its beloved mother, *tradition*, hoary tradition, with an affection that increases as she becomes old and feeble. Errorists of all schools are exceedingly devout and dutiful so far as the precept, ‘Honor thy father and thy mother,’ is concerned.”—*Campbell's Christian Baptism, book 2, chap. 2, p. 233.*

“To avoid being imposed upon, we ought to treat tradition as we do a notorious and known liar, to whom we give no credit, unless what he says is confirmed to us by some person of undoubted veracity. . . . False and lying traditions are of an early date, and the greatest men have, out of a pious credulity, suffered themselves to be imposed upon by them.”—*Bower's History of the Popes, vol. 1, pp. 1, 3.*

“The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of the Protestants! Nor is it of any account in the estimation of the genuine Protestant, *how early* a doctrine originated, if it is not found in the Bible. . . . He who receives a single doctrine upon the mere authority of tradition, let him be called by what name he will, by so doing steps down from the Protestant rock, passes over the line which separates Protestantism from popery, and can give no valid reason why he should not receive all the earlier doctrines and ceremonies of Romanism upon the same authority.”—*Dowling's History of Romanism, book 2, chap. 1.*

Said Ecolampadius, the friend of Zwingle: “If we quote the Fathers, it is only to free our doctrine from the reproach of novelty, and not to support our cause by their authority.”—*D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, Book XIII.*

Of this D'Aubigne says: “No better definition can be given of the legitimate use of the Doctors of the Church.”—*Ibid.*

CHAPTER II.

THE PROPHETIC SYMBOLS.

THE OBJECT OF PROPHECY.

“Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” Amos. 3:7.

A revelation is the secret of God, communicated to a prophet, not for his benefit alone, but for the use of all the world. “Those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.” Deut. 29:29. When the secret of God has been made known to others through the prophet, it then becomes a prophecy, and belongs to every son of Adam as a legacy from heaven. As a prophecy, it is no longer a secret, but a revelation for man to profit by, that he may be informed regarding the future, and thus be prepared to meet any emergency which may occur in his day, that has been foretold by prophecy. For this reason, a blessing is pronounced on those who read prophecy. Rev. 1:3. See also 2 Chron. 20:20. But a blessing cannot be received in reading or hearing a matter that is not understood, because there is no light in that to the mind. It is therefore certain that prophecy is designed to be understood, that light and comfort may be received in its contemplation.

When a prophecy is demonstrated to be fulfilled, such a fact strengthens faith in God's word; for it has also been demonstrated that when the prophecy was delivered ages before its fulfillment, it had been previously known to some one, as a secret, and was revealed to man from some higher source than the mind of man. This higher source is thus revealed to be an intelli-