Dr. Burgon said: “In the front of any treatise on the Christian Ministry, must be placed the study of that much-neglected book, —the Bible.

It is the one revelation to man of God’s mind and will. Nothing which is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is “to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith.” All other books which relate to the science of Divinity, have grown directly out of this.

They are expositions of its teaching, or formularies of its doctrines; commentaries on its meaning, or exhortations based upon its precepts; treatises on its idiom, or discussions of its difficulties; unfoldings of its prophecies, or helps to its correct understanding.

They all point back to the Bible: appeal to it, refer to it, submit themselves to its decision. From this celestial armoury, the minister of CHRIST derives all his weapons.

At home and abroad, from what is here revealed he makes himself and others “wise unto salvation.”
THE PASTORAL OFFICE

ADDRESSED CHIEFLY TO CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS,
OR TO THOSE WHO HAVE RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN
THE CURE OF SOULS.

BY THE

REV. JOHN W. BURGON, M. A.

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AND FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE.

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Equidem vitæ perfectæ meipsum esse minime profiteor, cum de vitâ perfectâ alios moneo: sed potius cum hæc ad meos consacerdotes loqui audeo, simul cum illis cupio audire quæ loquor.
TO THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

SAMUEL, LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD,
CHANCELLOR OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER,
LORD HIGH ALMONER TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

My Lord,

It was declared by Hooker on a memorable occasion,—"I embrace willingly the ancient received course and conveniency of that discipline, which teacheth inferior degrees and orders in the Church of God to submit their writings to the same authority, from which their allowable dealings whatsoever in such affairs must receive approbation."—In the same dutiful spirit, I beg leave to submit these ensuing pages, (such as they are,) to your Lordship; humbly trusting that they will be generally approved. I offer them as a further instalment of a promise once made in your presence, that I would "be diligent in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same."
Not only because I was ordained by yourself to the Pastoral Office; and because I have enjoyed the blessing of ministering in the Diocese over which you preside; and because I am indebted for many a lesson of Pastoral earnestness to your own bright example; but also in token of personal regard, I have requested permission to inscribe this first page of my book with your Lordship's name: being, with sincere respect,

My Lord,

Your affectionate Servant,

And dutiful Son in Christ,

JOHN W. BURGON.
P R E F A C E.

THAT in the judgment of the Writer some such Treatise as this is very much wanted, must be obvious. He would not else have turned aside to undertake it: have devoted so considerable an amount of thought and labour to the subject: have resumed from time to time a task which has been often interrupted, and sometimes for a long period laid aside; and finally have brought to a close in 1864 what was originally commenced in 1856. Yet is he constrained to declare that after having cost him far more trouble than he ever thought possible, these pages go forth from his hands with an unusually slender amount of personal approval: so much easier is it to recognise a deficiency, than to supply it. May this Treatise soon be superseded by one in every respect better adapted to the wants of those for whose sake chiefly it was written!

The present adds another to the many works which have from time to time appeared on the duties of the Pastoral Office; and it aims at being more practically useful, as well as better adapted to the actual wants of the day, than its predecessors. If it shall be thought to require an apology, this will perhaps be most conveniently offered by stating how it came to pass that the work was originally undertaken. Frequently applied to by Candidates for Ordination, now for a list of Books,—now for some instruction as to the Duties of a Clergyman’s Calling: at one time, for advice as to the composition of Sermons,—at another, for hints about the preparation of Candidates for Confirmation:—the present writer at last drew up a few memoranda on each subject. He became more and more impressed with the utter want of preparation with which
most men enter on their sacred Office; and it was obvious to extend this remark to others beyond the sphere of his observation. In fine, these papers grew in his hands, until they had acquired a considerable bulk. He still persuaded himself, however, that there must exist somewhere in print the kind of help which men desiderated; and it was not until he had convinced himself of the contrary, that he ventured on so serious an undertaking as trying to remedy the deficiency.

Writers on this subject seem strangely prone to overlook the special needs of those whom they address. Thus, when the present Treatise was in an advanced state, a work appeared which, from its title, (The Duties of the Parish Priest,) seemed likely to supersede the necessity for proceeding any farther. On examination, however, the learned and interesting volume alluded to was found to leave the ground still to a great extent unoccupied. Such an exact and critical knowledge of the Greek Testament as shall serve to elicit the choicest observations of a Bisceoe, a Middleton, a Scholefield, a Wordsworth:—such an "intimacy with the primitive Fathers" as shall enable a man to confute "the Infidel or Deist, the Arian or Socinian, the Puritan or Dissenter, and the Romanist;" as well as to render superfluous the study of recent liturgical writers: lastly, a knowledge of original Ecclesiastical records, beginning with Beda, whose history is to be illustrated from Anglo-Saxon Homilies and Canons; Wharton's Anglia Sacra; the mediæval treatises of Alcuin, Isidore, Walafrid Strabo, Rupertus, and the rest; "a Comparison without reserve of the Offices of the Prayer-Book of 1549, with those of the Missal and Breviary, Ritual and Pontifical": together with the entire English theological literature of the Reformation period:

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See Professor Blunt's ii, iii, iv. "Lectures on the Reading of the Parish Priest:" p. 29-130.
certainly be handled in a different spirit if we aspire to be
of real use to Candidates for the Pastoral Office.

With whatever success, it shall be a comfort to think that I
have thus attempted to remedy, even in an imperfect way, the
reproach which attaches to us as a Church of sending men into
the Ministry unprovided even with a plain Manual of elementary
Instruction. But indeed our entire practice requires to be
reconsidered and remodelled. Surely the method is even pre-
posterous, of committing the Cure of Souls to those who have
never had the slightest preparation for their difficult office, or
enjoyed any special teaching as to how it is to be rightly
discharged. No sooner has a youth graduated in Arts, than
he announces himself as a Candidate for Ordination; at the end
of a few months presents himself before the Bishop; and on the
very next Sunday, comes forward as a Professor of Divinity and
a Physician of Souls. Examined indeed as to his fitness, he has
been; and had he not displayed a fair amount of knowledge,
he certainly would not have been ordained. But is it not clear
that such an ordeal, from the very nature of the case, must be
in the highest degree unsatisfactory? The standard for the
examined is exceedingly low; and there is every reason why
the examining party should be exceedingly indulgent.

Thus suddenly introduced to an office beset with the gravest
difficulties, the newly ordained Shepherd of souls discovers at
leisure the extent of his shortcomings. He has to visit, to
catechize, to prepare Candidates for Confirmation, or for the
Lord’s Supper, and must trust throughout to the suggestions
of the moment for direction and help. It is his duty to be for
ever reading Services of which he does not know the history,
and which he has never studied. Above all, he is once, twice,
perhaps three times a week, expected to discourse publicly
about a Science of which as yet he does not know so much as
the grammar. The absolute barrenness of such teaching might
be foreseen. It manifestly becomes his part, as a matter of
prudence, to deal with generalities: to be rhetorical and vague,
instead of precise and instructive.
This "strange and well-nigh incredible custom which has prevailed among us, and is only beginning in the rarest instances to be broken through, (of our Clergy being admitted to their holy office without a shadow of training in the duties, but specially in the mind and habit proper to it, and essential to the well-being of the Church,")—must strike the most careless observer. I humbly hope that the day is not far distant when it may be generally deemed as ridiculous as to myself it seems that this most difficult and dangerous of all offices should be entered upon with less preparation than almost any other calling in the world. Professors of every branch of human learning are thought to require a long course of preliminary study. Physicians of the body are carefully trained for their function. By what strange infatuation is it expected that the Physician of souls should have an intuitive acquaintance with every department of his vocation? or judged reasonable that the teacher of Sacred Learning in a parish should sometimes know no more Divinity than some of the children in his own Sunday-school? Why, there is scarcely a trade or a handicraft but requires a prolonged apprenticeship. Is it expected that men will become Theologians suddenly, and by intuition?

The complaint is of long standing: yet has no practical answer been hitherto given to it, except by the setting up of a few Diocesan Theological Colleges,—Institutions which claim our generous sympathy, and deserve to have a place in our prayers. They found an able advocate a century and a half ago in the person of Robert Nelson. Among the (upwards of twenty-five) "Ways and Methods of doing good" enumerated at the end of his Address to Persons of Quality and Estate, (London, 1715,) he specifies,—"Setting up Colleges or Seminaries for the Candidates of Holy Orders." On this subject, the pious and enlightened writer says,—"For all Candidates of Divinity, it hath been much wished by many that there were some proper Seminaries; where, after an academical education

b Freeman's Principles of Divine Service, i. 397.
first laid in one or other of our Universities, they might not only be fully instructed in the art of Preaching, but in all other parts of their duty; and more especially, how to perform all the public Offices with a becoming gravity and devotion. We have indeed very noble foundations for the encouragement of Theological Science; but there seems to be somewhat further yet required, beyond the common method which is taken in the Colleges......... Nothing would be likely to give a greater increase, in the opinion of the best and ablest friends to our Holy Religion, than the foundation of such Apostolical Seminaries in every diocese, under the immediate direction of the Bishop thereof e."—A little later, Bp. Wilkins called attention to "the abrupt and overhasty manner" in which men ventured upon the Pastoral Office; remarking that this "would be counted a very preposterous course in other mattersd."—But the complaint dates from far. Bp. Pearson, addressing the University of Cambridge in 1668, said: "Illud, Academici, nos proprius tangit, ne ea ipsa, de quibus expostulamus et querimur, nobis haud immerito imputari possint. Quid tot hominum millia ab Ecclesiæ communione defecisse adeo indignamur? Nonne hoc quicquid est, eorum negligentiae atque inertiae tribuendum, quorum curae et tutelae commissi sunt? Non solent homines a rectâ viâ satis admoniti declinare atque deflectere...... Exponitis quotannis, vel potius protruditis, adolescentes gradibus academicis ornatos, publicisque testimoniiis munitos, sed sæpe minima rerum scientia præditos, ... Theologia studiis ne leviter quidem tinctos, sacrís tamen ordinibus statim inhiantes.... Quem illi ab Ecclesiâ jam secedentem retinebunt? quem ante egressum revocabunt e?"

This is not exactly the proper place for discussing how a great and acknowledged deficiency in our system, (if system ours can be called,) is to be remedied. Diocesan Theological Colleges are

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e P. 122–8.—See more, on the same subject, in Nelson's Life of Bull, § v. p. 16-18.

d See below, p. 172–3.
clearly not the only conceivable remedy. Equally certain is it that we possess at our Universities the machinery needful for achieving what we wish. Two observations are all that I will further venture to make, in passing, on this difficult subject. The one,—That any material narrowing of the platform which is now (or, till last month was) required for the first degree in Arts, —is much to be deprecated. The other,—That we may not, in fairness, overlook the admirable preparation for the Pastoral Office which has been all along obtainable in such parishes as Kidderminster; —and which, practically, is the training enjoyed by not a few of our Clergy. It will still remain undeniable that besides this practical initiation into the Ministerial function, men stand in need of distinct Theological training; require to have sound principles instilled into them, and to be guided to a correct appreciation of Holy Scripture. Without at least one year spent in the exclusive study of Divinity, I see not how any one can be thought fit to undertake the Teacher’s office,—to proclaim himself, in fact, a Professor of Sacred Science.

The strange prevalence of lax and unsound notions respecting Divine things; the shallow Scepticism which is so much in favour and fashion; the disposition which is abroad to break down the ancient bulwarks of the Faith; the conspicuous hostility of persons in power towards the Church; the intense secularity of the Age, which infects the counsels even of those who profess attachment to the Church, and her ordinances:—all these things have conspired to make me do what I could towards keeping alive in the minds of my Brethren of the Clergy a truer appreciation of their position, and of their consequent Duties.—It will distress me if I shall be thought to have overstepped the limits of a becoming modesty: or if any should be offended because an individual invested with no authority has thus presumed to teach. In the hour of peril, it is surely incumbent on every man to contribute somewhat to the common defences. And I have confined my particular observations to that sphere of Pastoral labour with which alone I have been hitherto familiar,—namely, the cure of souls in agricultural parishes. But, in truth, whether in Town
or Country; Human nature is found to be much the same; and, except in matters of detail, the same general principles are everywhere applicable. Real earnestness will make its way in any place.

Let it not be thought however that I here dictate to others; or, (though I have written nothing inconsiderately,) that I suppose myself to be always certainly right. Addressing chiefly young and inexperienced men, (as explained on the title-page,) I have only been solicitous to maintain no single opinion of which I suspect the soundness; and to recommend no course of action of which I have not sufficiently ascertained the value. It argues, doubtless, a certain want of worldly prudence, thus freely to express sentiments and declare opinions on many diverse and difficult subjects. But I would infinitely rather prove of some little use in my generation, than enjoy the praise of being a shrewd and wary man. One must be prepared to make some ventures, I suppose, in a good cause.

Lastly, should any be induced to peruse these pages, who are far in advance of such teaching,—and who, having the same object with the Writer in view, have happily attained it by pursuing a different and a better course,—they are entreated to believe that from them I desire nothing so much as to be a learner; and that I shall be very grateful for any criticism they may be disposed to bestow upon my work.... I dismiss it with a hearty aspiration that it may promote no other thing than God's Truth; and become in His hands a help to many who, having entered the Ministry with but slender preparation, are now acquainting themselves,—where there are few to sympathize with them, and none to guide,—with the difficulties and dangers of the Pastoral Office.

Oriel,

Holy Week; 1864.
Ἤρ' οὖν ὅρχήσεως μὲν καὶ αὐλήσεως ἔστι διδασκαλία καὶ μάθησις, καὶ χρόνου πρὸς τούτο δεί, καὶ ἱδρώτων συχνῶν καὶ πόνων, καὶ μασθοῦς καταβαλείν ἔστιν διε καὶ προσαγωγῶν δεηθήναι, καὶ ἀποδημῆσαι μακρότερα, καὶ τάλλα τὰ μὲν ποιήσαι πάντα τὰ δὲ παθεῖν οἷς ἐμπειρία συλλέγεται· τὴν δὲ Σοφίαν, ἢ πᾶσιν ἐπιστατεῖ, καὶ πάντα ἐν ἑαυτῇ τὰ καλὰ συλλαβοῦσα ἔχει . . . οὕτω κοὐφόν τι καὶ πεπατημένον πράγμα ὑποληψόμεθα ὡστε θελήσαι δεῖν μόνον καὶ εἶναι σοφὸν; πολλῆς τούτῳ τῆς ἀμαθίας.—Gregor. Nazianz. vol. i. Or. 2. p. 37, b. c.
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GENERAL INDEX.
CHAPTER I.

ON THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

Κύριε, πρός τίνα ἀπελευσόμεθα; ῥήματα ζωῆς αἰωνίου ἐχεις.

Consider how studious ye ought to be in reading and learning the Scriptures.—THE ORDERING OF PRIESTS.

In the front of any treatise on the Christian Ministry, must be placed the study of that much-neglected book,—the Bible. It is the one revelation to man of God's mind and will. Nothing which is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is "to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith." All other books which relate to the science of Divinity, have grown directly out of this. They are expositions of its teaching, or formularies of its doctrines; commentaries on its meaning, or exhortations based upon its precepts; treatises on its idiom, or discussions of its difficulties; unfoldings of its prophecies, or helps to its correct understanding. They all point back to the Bible: appeal to it, refer to it, submit themselves to its decision. From this celestial armoury, the minister of Christ derives all his weapons. At home and abroad, from what is here revealed he makes himself and others "wise unto salvation." Not afraid to profess ignorance of any other book, about this he may on no account make so fatal an admission as that he is but slantly informed. Somewhat concerning the study of the Bible, therefore, must be laid down before we can advance a single step. The Bible shall be the corner-stone of our intended superstructure.

And first, we repeat that the Bible is a 'much-neglected book.' Not of course that it is not read, by the clergy especially,
with diligence. What is asserted is, that the labour generally expended upon it bears no manner of proportion to its importance. How few are able even to decipher the language in which the Old Testament is written! How few take pains to retain their familiarity with the original idiom of the New! Is it not unreasonable that a minister of the Gospel in the nineteenth century should not be able to read with fluency the record which he is called upon daily to illustrate and explain?

But even in the case of those who are familiar with the Greek of the New Testament,— (not to insist further on the subject of Hebrew,)—how obvious is it that such knowledge will profit little, unless it be matured by constant study and observation! It is a critical acquaintance alone with the sacred idiom which will be of real avail to the student. A little knowledge, (proverbially "a dangerous thing," ) is here strangely prone to mislead. On the other hand, the remedy is easy. If a person of ordinary abilities, (having gone through the usual curriculum of our universities,) will attentively read half a chapter of the New Testament every day in the original; will read steadily on, with patience and attention, and keep some register of his difficulties as well as of his observations, as he proceeds; above all, if he will frequently add to his reading a chapter of the ancient Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures; this man will assuredly become in a few years a competent critic (for all practical purposes) of the Greek of the Evangelists and of S. Paul. Such a work as that of Dean Trench on the Synonyms of the New Testament, then falling in his way, will give him a great lift. It should be added that, while he is so engaged, Rose's edition of Parkhurst's Lexicon, and Greenfield's Abridgment of Schmidt's Concordance, ought seldom to be out of his hands.

To the subject of the original language of the New Testament we shall be constrained to return in a subsequent page. For the entire volume of Scripture, it is hard to see how less can be required than an amount of systematic study to which most men appear to be strangers. For I venture to assume that if the consecutive laborious examination of the several books be not achieved before a man undertakes a parochial cure, the chances are that it will never be achieved at all: and it is
generally neglected.

thought that not many men devote themselves thus early to the task. True, that all "read their Bible." In the college-chapel, and at the college-lecture, and probably in private,—almost daily. But why deceive ourselves on so solemn a subject? The chapters so read are not studied with that exactness which is indispensable if the Bible is ever to be turned to scientific account; neither in this way is the volume ever read consecutively through. Enough has perhaps been said. It may be laid down that the Bible should be studied at least as laboriously and exactly as any other book which has to be completely mastered. Every expression, every word, must be weighed; patiently, thoughtfully, systematically, reverentially.

None, it is hoped, will suppose that I am putting the inspired Word of God on a level with Aristotle or Thucydides: or implying that the Bible is to be studied in the same spirit as profane writings. But it must certainly be studied with at least the same amount of attention as any other very difficult book of History, Poetry, or Morals: that is to say, with consummate industry and inquisitiveness. Addressing, for once, very junior aspirants to the ministerial office, I would entreat those who have not done this already, not to lose a day in making a beginning; (for indeed they have not a day to lose): and let them begin, by all means, with the first chapter of Genesis; persuading themselves of this,—that, whatever flattering notions they may entertain on the subject, they are as yet very imperfectly acquainted with its contents. The assertion may be hazarded, that they probably could not solve more than three out of a dozen questions, the answers to every one of which nevertheless lie on the surface of the sacred narrative. If any doubt this, (and it will be disbelieved by many,) let a man attempt to answer in writing the questions I proceed to offer at foot.

A (1) On which of His creatures is it related that God bestowed names? (2) What about the creation of the waters? (3) Rehearse in order the works of the days of Creation. (4) Describe exactly the food assigned to man. (5) In what terms is the origin of fowl described? (6) Are any of God's works singled out for special commendation? (7) How are the names of the sun, moon, and stars introduced? (8) Is it said concerning the work of every day, that "God saw that it was good"? (9) What is there peculiar in the employment of that sentence concerning the works of the six days? (10) What is said (of that kind) concerning the creation of man? (11) Over what part of Creation did God first assign to man the dominion? (12) Is man's 'dominion' spoken of before, or after, his creation? (13) How is Adam mentioned, and out of the Bible.

B 2
the present remarks are clearly not for him. Should he fail, then may more attention to what follows be reasonably expected of him, than he would else have bestowed.

The Bible then, is to be read patiently and laboriously, and it is to be read consecutively through. Not a single word may, on any account, be missed; not a single clause slurred over: and when a fresh chapter is begun the concluding words of that which went before should be reconsidered. If a man will be at the pains to find out for himself, (which he easily may,) how the Books of Kings and Chronicles interlace each other, and chooses to read them conjointly,—it is not denied that he will do well. Again, if he is disposed to read the prophets in their presumed historical order,—it is thought that he will do wisely so to read them. The same may be said of S. Paul’s Epistles. But let not this principle be carried too far. Above all, let no edition of the Bible be habitually used, which professes thus to put the sacred contents to rights. Except in the instances above indicated,—to avoid distraction, and to ensure a perfect work,—let the several books of the Bible be read through in the order in which they actually stand; the order into which, by God’s good providence, (not unmindful, we may be sure, of His own work!) those books are found to have fallen.

The dignity of the four Gospels,—or rather of the one Gospel “according to” four Evangelists,,—is so august, that the subject claims separate notice. Sooner or later, to read them in a Harmony, is of course indispensable: in other words, (for it is only a better way of stating the same thing,) they should by all means be minutely compared together. At the same time, it must never be forgotten that each is complete in itself: has an independent perfectness: and therefore claims no ordinary amount of independent study. From the comparison of the four, a fresh set of phenomena is evolved; and by consequence, a

of what is he said to have been created? (14) Is Eve alluded to? (15) Which divisions of the vegetable kingdom are enumerated, as the work of the third day? (16) Is the Creator distinctly said to have pronounced a blessing on Man? on the beasts of the earth? on the fishes of the sea? on the fowls of the air? (17) What divisions of time are here mentioned? (18) What is made of the food of beasts? fishes? birds? creeping things? (19) What is the Earth said to have first brought forth? (20) Judging from the italics employed, how much of that statement, “He made the stars also,” exists in the Hebrew?

a Τὸ δὲ τεσσάρων ἐν ἐστὶν Εὐαγγέλιον, says Origen. And again, Ἐουαγγελισταὶ μὲν τέσσαρες, Εὐαγγέλιον δὲ ἐν.

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new field of criticism is disclosed. But nothing which a Harmony will ever bring to light can compensate for the neglect of what the Gospels severally teach. In the first instance, therefore, let them be studied one by one; and when, at last, recourse is had to a Harmony, let the reader be thoroughly persuaded of this,—that there does not exist a work under that name which is trustworthy.

It is suspected that we all read the Bible much too fast. We do not linger over the words as if we loved them, and were loth to pass on. “O how sweet are Thy words unto my throat: yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth,”—said one of old time. Truly, the man must have delighted in the words of Holy Scripture, who could so express himself! And yet, nothing knew he of the consolation of the Gospel. Now, I do not find that readers of the present day commonly feel towards Holy Scripture as he seems to have felt. Seldom is the attempt made to retain on the palate the flavour of the words of Inspiration. It follows, that we seldom notice the peculiarities of Divine expression; seldom detect covert hints or allusions, or avail ourselves of the less obvious teaching of the Spirit. Thus, we do not fully apprehend what we read; and when we come before the world, we “therefore do err,—not knowing the Scriptures.” To give a humble example of what is meant:—In the history of the Deluge, there are commonly said to be references to but three Sabbath-days; and yet, any one examining that record with attention, will find that it contains indications of no less than nine.—Again. Has it ever been noticed that when the paralytic, borne of four, was healed by our Saviour, his bed was left on the house-top; not let down with him into the house?.......It will be found a salutary practice in reading the Bible, besides an attentive examination of every word, sometimes to look off the page, and attempt to give an exact account of what one was reading the instant before. Let a man attempt to repeat a parable, or relate one of our Lord’s miracles, in the words of Scripture,—and he will sufficiently perceive the importance of the practice here recommended. He will be amazed to find how small a portion of what he never got by

"Ps. cxix. 103."
heart, he is able to produce from memory; and how very inaccurately he renders what he thinks he can recall.

Another impediment to an intimate acquaintance with the Bible, is the habit so early acquired of resorting to extraneous sources for assistance,—'Introductions,' 'Guides,' 'Analyses,' 'Notes,' and the rest. Such an useful elementary work as Nicholls' 'Help to the Reading of the Bible' will prove, on the contrary, a serious hindrance, if it induces a man to accept tabular statements, summaries, and general deductions, ready done to his hand,—in lieu of discovering all these things for himself. It is wished that men could be persuaded that the imperfect enumeration of miracles,—the not quite accurate genealogy,—the set of references containing a few mistakes and not a few omissions,—which they make for themselves, is inestimably more instructive to them, and will in the end prove infinitely more serviceable, than the ready-made achievements of another, however exact and exhaustive, which they simply adopt. Let men by all means acquire the habit of independent study and observation. It will be high time to compare their results with those of others, when they shall have completed their researches, and ascertained experimentally the difficulties of the task.

In some such way then it is thought that every one should master the Bible for himself: take his own survey of every book; classify and distribute the several personages; group together the similar events, expressions, trains of thought. Nothing can be properly called his own but what he has thus acquired. He will be careful to register his difficulties also; and, being supremely anxious to learn, he will for ever read in a spirit of humble but close observation and curious inquiry, which will introduce him to a hundred matters of interest, not familiarly known to others, or at least not generally insisted on in books. It will not perhaps be altogether a waste of time, that we should handle this subject a little more particularly; and indicate to the student of Scripture, somewhat in detail, the nature of the task which lies before him.

He should attend then to the unique structure of the Bible, consisting as it does of two sets of writings; the former 39, by prophecy, type, and shadow, all pointing to the coming of
CHRIST; the latter 27, all discoursing of Him as come in the flesh, or declaring the doctrines of His kingdom. He should carefully remark how perseveringly each subsequent writer of the O. T. either elaborately rehearses, and so confirms,—or by allusions without number shows that he deems worthy of all acceptation every book which has preceded. Allusions to the earlier narratives will be found on examination so to interpenetrate all the books which follow, that to eradicate any portion of the Bible is absolutely impossible. All the parts must stand or fall together\textsuperscript{a}. The very Prophets quote from their predecessors' prophecies, and so commit themselves to one another irre-vocably.

But it is the N. T. which most remarkably establishes the Old. Formed into a single volume four hundred years before the birth of CHRIST, the O. T. is by Him and by His Apostles emphatically called \( \gamma \Gamma \rho \alpha \phi \gamma \), 'the Scripture.' With what reverence it is appealed to in all those later writings: how authoritative all its utterances are assumed to be: what mysterious importance is claimed for its minutest details,—the reader of Scripture must by all means collect for himself; and such an attentive reader as I have been supposing, cannot overlook it. He will note with awe that his LORD thrice repulsed Satan with a sentence quoted from what "is written" in the Book of Deuteronomy; in reply to which Satan himself was constrained to borrow (albeit in vain) a weapon from the same celestial armoury. Nor will it escape him that the Eternal Son appeals to the sure word of Scripture even in addressing His FATHER in Heaven\textsuperscript{b}; and declares that it "cannot be broken\textsuperscript{c}." If all this begets no sense of the Divine origin of the Bible, a man must needs be strangely constituted indeed. But I am concerned now chiefly to call attention to the august spectacle of our Saviour CHRIST habitually handling the earlier Scriptures; and so everywhere confirming their truth. Not only does He accept the prophecies of His ancient Servants, "beginning from Moses\textsuperscript{d}," and declare them to be fulfilled in Himself, —but (which is much to be noted) He lays His finger on so

\textsuperscript{a} See on this subject \textit{Inspiration and Interpretation}, p. 234-5, &c.
\textsuperscript{b} S. John xvii. 12.  \textsuperscript{c} S. John x. 35.  \textsuperscript{d} S. Luke xxiv. 27.

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many incidents of the Sacred History, that He corroborates all; His allusions extending from the first page of the Bible\textsuperscript{a}, down to the days of Elijah and Elisha\textsuperscript{b}. Especially should it be noted that those parts of the Old Testament which might be thought more than others to stand in need of corroboration, have all enjoyed it. He does not merely allude to the Deluge, but expressly declares concerning the men of Noah's time that "the flood came and took them all away\textsuperscript{c}". He weighs the guilt of Capernaum against that of Sodom\textsuperscript{d}; and corroborates the history of what befel the cities of the plain. "Remember" (He says) "Lot's wife." The serpent in the wilderness,—and the miracle of the manna,—and of Jonah in the fish's belly,—are all cited by Him as true histories. The temptation of Eve, and the crossing of the Red Sea, and the water which flowed from the smitten rock, and the falling of the walls of Jericho, and the story of Balaam's ass,—all these astonishing narratives are fully confirmed by S. Paul and S. Peter. Not only therefore has the seal of CHRIST and His Apostles been set generally on the volume of the O. T., but particular parts of the narrative have been diligently sought out, and placed beyond the reach of cavil by severally receiving the same Divine impress.

Now, the unique character of the Bible, which has thus been in part illustrated, will impress a thoughtful reader very deeply. By what subtle process of attraction (he will ask himself) were the books of Joshua and of Judges, of Samuel and of Kings, drawn into union with the Pentateuch? The other historical books, the Psalms, and the Prophets,—how came all these, (written at intervals throughout upwards of a thousand years,) to coalesce into one volume? How again did it come to pass that a precisely similar phenomenon attended the formation of the N. T. Canon? Lastly, how were these two volumes, as soon as the second was completed, drawn into one,—the BIBLE?

The 'History of the Canon of Scripture,' (as it is called,) which is an account of how the Church from the beginning has been a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ,—"an eternal witness to guard and authenticate it, and to assure the world of the truth of its inspiration,"—is an inquiry apart. It is for the

\textsuperscript{a} S. Matth. xiv. 4, 5. \textsuperscript{b} S. Luke iv. 25-27. \textsuperscript{c} S. Matth. xxiv. 39. \\
\textsuperscript{d} S. Matth. xi. 23. \textsuperscript{e} Dr. C. Wordsworth.
careful reader of the several books in the mean time to note the marvellous sympathy which evidently subsists between their many authors. Besides quoting from one another in the O. T., the sacred writers in the New quote from their predecessors in the Old exclusively,—interpreting their dark sayings, applying their minute details, appropriating their very phraseology, and in a word invariably dealing with their language, not only as if they had an intuitive infallible apprehension of its meaning, but as if the utterance of these earlier writers were absolutely their own.—And next, although the sacred writers are so numerous and so diverse, and extend over so long a period of time, the attentive reader of the Bible will note with astonishment the similarity of allusion, the correspondence of imagery, the uniformity of method which characterizes them all. And when he notices this, he will behold therein the sure evidence that those many authors all drew from one and the same fountain of Inspiration; that there was but one Providence which overruled their various disclosures; and that it has been divinely ordered that their many books should finally all be united in one. Under this last head may be specially noted the very striking fact that the whole of Scripture, (the historical books included,) is written, so to speak, not on earth, but above the skies. However ordinary the narrative, it does not profess to be so much the account of what man did, as what God did in ruling man. The writer beholds the transaction which he records from a Divine (not a human) point of view. God is described throughout as the agent. In the words of Bishop Butler,—"the general design of Scripture .... may be said to be, to give us an account of the world, in this one simple view,—as God's world: by which it appears essentially distinguished from all other books, so far as I have found, except such as are copied from it."—Above all, the oneness of purpose which is discoverable in all the books of the Bible alike, will fill a thoughtful man with admiration. Christ and His religion is in fact the object

\[\text{f Consider, for example, how the image of a Shepherd extends through the whole of Scripture,—Gen. ii. 1, (Abel): xxxi. 38-40, (Jacob): xlvi. 34, (the Patriarchs). Exod. iii. 1, (Moses). 1 Sam. xvii. 15, (David). Ps. xxiii. 19-22.}
\[\text{Is. xl. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 1-24, Mic. v. 4, —to terminate in the Good Shepherd Himself, S. John x.}
\[\text{g Consider Jonah i. 17: iv. 6, 7, 8.}
\[\text{h Analogy, P. ii. c. vii. See also Eden's Sermons, p. 153-5.}

\text{OF THE BIBLE.}
of them all ....... Thus much shall suffice on this great subject. My purpose has been merely to suggest to the Christian reader with how much attention and intelligence the Bible is to be studied. It will also sufficiently appear from what has been said why it is judged expedient that he should not at first embarrass himself with a Commentary. Is it unreasonable to expect that, in the course of his survey of the structure and contents of the Bible, he will attain to such a conviction of its Divine origin that he will be proof against all the sophistries of the infidel when he is invited to look upon the Bible as if it were an ordinary book; or suasively urged to attend chiefly to its human aspect?

It was the opinion of a late eminent Prelate of our Church that it is best to read Holy Scripture with a special object. This counsel has been since repeated, as well as largely acted upon. A profound conviction of the danger of such counsel,—when addressed, (as by a late esteemed Professor,) to candidates for the Ministry—a,—induces me to put forth a diametrically opposite opinion. It is presumed that it is generally better not to read the Bible with a special view to one particular object: that it is even dangerous so to read it. Rather, in approaching those sacred pages, should notions of what we wish to find there, be dismissed; and a single desire cherished to ascertain simply what God has revealed. We speak as addressing candidates for the Ministry; or persons who, although in Orders, and therefore professors of sacred learning, do not yet nearly enjoy that familiarity with the Bible which they still hope to acquire. Let the mature in attainments and in age, ransack the Scripture for evidence on any specific subject they please. These pages are not specially addressed to them.

The nature of the danger apprehended, is easily shown. A man desires to find in the Bible illustrations of the depravity of Human Nature, or of the Doctrine of Sacrifice; instances of unfulfilled Prophecy, or of typical coincidence; proofs that the literal meaning is to be adhered to, to the exclusion of the

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* "The next suggestion, with respect to your method of reading the Scriptures which I will offer is this,—that it may be well to read them with a view to some particular inquiry, with a view to clear up some peculiar question of interest which you can create for yourselves, no matter what."—Blunt's *Duties of a Parish Priest*, p. 81.

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mystical sense,—or *vice versa*; evidences of God’s moral government of the world, or of some one of the Divine attributes. Such an one is prone to overlook, certainly to undervalue, whatever does not conduce to his purpose. If a chapter does not contain evidence of the wished-for kind, the book is laid down with a sense of disappointment: if it *does*, undue importance is attached to a single passage. The rest of the chapter is slighted. He has detected the attribute of tender Mercy; but he fails to lay equal stress on the terrible indication contained in the same chapter that God is a God of severe *Justice* likewise. And thus, he makes the Bible the kind of book he pleases. He determines beforehand what it shall tell him; and attends to it, or not, as it tells him, or not, what he wishes to know.

Let it be further added that it is very easy thus to blind oneself to the real teaching of Scripture. It is one of the properties of “the Word of God,” that it is, (like its Divine Author,) “a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” And because this is an office of Holy Writ not generally noticed, it shall be dwelt upon for a few moments.

The Bible then, is a great instrument of human probation,—moral and intellectual. To quote the words of a recent writer, who has abundantly illustrated the remark by his own strenuous practice,—“All men appeal to Scripture, and desire to draw the authority of Scripture on their side...... Nothing so slight that it has not been caught at; nothing so plain that it may not be explained away. What men have brought to the text, they have also found there.” Is any one inclined to regard the Gospel as a mere moral code? It is not hard to discover isolated passages which shall seem to countenance the opinion. The enforcement of a great moral duty shall sometimes appear to have been the sole purpose of certain of our Lord’s Parables; or of His mightiest Miracles. No mystical teaching shall be thought to underlie His most wondrous sayings; or the most clearly symbolical of His actions. Nay, we shall sometimes even seem to have His august authority for discovering merely

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d Heb. iv. 12.

e Rev. B. Jowett in *Essays and Reviews*, pp. 357 and 358.

f S. Luke x. 30-35.

g S. John vi. 5-13.

h S. John xiii. 1-11.
a human purpose in either\textsuperscript{a}. A religion of Love,—untram-
melled by uncharitable dogmas, unperplexed by unfathomable
doctrines,—shall be imagined by some to be the true idea of
Christianity; and they will think they find in the Gospel itself
a warrant for their imagination\textsuperscript{b}. A few untoward texts will,
of course, suggest themselves\textsuperscript{c}: but—are there perhaps no
various readings? As for dogma, (say readers of a certain
class,) how different is the general tone of the Gospel from the
Athanasian Creed! There is, to be sure, a very unmanageable
verse at the end of S. Mark’s Gospel\textsuperscript{d}: but has not the
 genuineness of the passage been suspected?—Luther, in his mis-
taken zeal for the true proposition that “we are justified by
faith only,” is found to have rejected the Epistle of S. James.
—Beza, having first determined, not only that “the just shall
live by faith,” but also that he shall be incapable of ever “draw-
ing back” unto perdition,—when he found that S. Paul says
the direct contrary, hesitated not to tamper with the inspired
text, so as to make S. Paul’s language seem consistent with his
own erroneous judgment\textsuperscript{e}.

Such is the treatment which the Bible experiences at the
hands of men. It was designed to be a trial; and in this very
way. We can always find something in it to suit our purpose;
however unreasonable, however wicked, that purpose may hap-
ten to be. Every sect professes to stand upon the Bible. Every
error pretends to appeal to the Divine oracles for its proof.

Especially necessary therefore does it seem that we should
approach the awful page with humble hearts, and minds unpre-
occupied: with spirits supremely desirous of hearing the voice
of God speaking therein to ourselves. The object should be to
reflect, as in a very faithful mirror, every outline, every hue,
every peculiarity, of the Divine original. No single accessory
should be overlooked; no feature distorted; no part, however
subordinate, either overcoloured, or unduly toned down. We

\textsuperscript{b} S. Matth. vii. i 2. S. Mark xii. 32–44. S. John xiii. 35.
\textsuperscript{c} S. Matth. xx. 16. 1 Cor. v. 11. S. John ii. 22: iv. 3.
\textsuperscript{d} S. Mark xvi. 16.
\textsuperscript{e} See the remarks in Bp. Pearson’s Prof. Par. in LXX, on Heb. x. 38
(Minor Works, i. p. 261–5): and by all means Bp. Turton, On the Text of the

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are not proper judges in such a matter. We go to the Bible to be learners, and learners only. We may not even choose our subject; for we go to the Bible in order to learn this very thing, viz. what are the subjects to which Almighty God would have us direct our attention. Hence we are made very thoughtful by finding that a domestic incident sometimes fills a chapter: that a page of moral precepts awaits us when we were anticipating lofty doctrinal statements: or again, that our attention is occasionally invited to a strictly private transaction. (A man would have lost this last lesson, had he been straining his eyes for coincidences between Sacred and Profane History!) Then, we shall be astonished to find that the same record which condenses an important life, of nearly a thousand years’ duration, into three short verses, will freely bestow one third of that space on the description of an act, apparently insignificant, which can have scarcely occupied one minute in the doing; or will devote a yet longer space to a transaction to all appearance so unimportant as the account of a man’s losing his way in the field, and finding it again! These minor revelations of the Spirit, as they may be called, are only to be detected by persons who read the Bible in the frame of mind here recommended. For there is hardly a more striking feature in the Book of God’s Law, than the apparent unconsciousness with which the inspired writers pass from what seems ordinary, to what certainly is altogether stupendous.

Then, as we proceed with the sacred story, how are we all of a sudden reminded that the very narrative itself is full of prophetic meaning! Melchizedek and Abraham,—Sarah and Hagar,—very differently impressed, surely, will two men arise from the perusal of those histories, one of whom took up his Bible in order to collect Divine examples of literal exposition; the other, in order to ascertain what the Bible teaches concerning itself!

1. to discover what the Bible teaches.

15-17: 18-20, &c.
1 “Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.” Gen. viii. 9.

m Gen. xxxvii. 15-17.

n E. g. Gen. xxxi. 55 and xxxii. 1; xxxv. 8 and 9. S. Jude, verses 8 and 9. S. Paul is full of such passages: e. g. 1 Cor. vi. 1-3: xi. 9, 10. 2 Cor. xi. 33 and xii. 1-4, &c. &c.

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If any one therefore inquires whether he ought not to read Holy Scripture with some definite object before him? it is answered,—Certainly: but let that object be, the discovery of what Holy Scripture teaches. Disabuse your mind of every prejudice, and sit down humbly to do nothing but learn. The attitude recommended seems exactly suggested by those words of the infant Samuel,—"Speak, LORD, for Thy servant heareth!"

And this leads me naturally to offer some remarks on the Interpretation of Holy Scripture. It is a vast theme; and one which it is obviously impossible to handle satisfactorily in this place. But the subject is far too intimately bound up with the matter in hand, that it should be passed by in silence. Indeed, to stop short at the literal meaning of the words; to suppose that we understand the Bible, because we are versed in its grammar, antiquities, chronology, geography; and can give some account of its Patriarchs, Judges, Kings, Prophets;—is a very weak mistake. "I do much condemn that interpretation of the Scripture," (says Lord Bacon,) "which is only after the manner as men use to interpret a profane book." The Bible is not a literature, but a Revelation.

Now, one need not hesitate to lay down the rule absolutely,—at first, use no Commentary whatever; but suffer the Bible to be its own interpreter. Let men be content, for a while, to read and to wonder: to grope their way with no other assistance but that which the Bible itself supplies. Exactly as it fares with one who tries to find his way alone in the dark, so will it fare with them. They will learn, at last, to distinguish objects for themselves; and this will inspire confidence, and produce a sense of security. In time, they will tread boldly, and even prefer not to lean upon a guide. Then, indeed, a judicious Commentator will be of real use. At present, he would only perplex and mislead. Ultimately, he might be found to have robbed a man of his birthright,—the faculty of private judgment; as well as destroyed his power of vision. "One is often tempted to wish that every Commentary, at least of modern days, was burnt;" says Evans, in his 'Bishopric of souls:' "for the effect of its continual use is to enslave the mind, and confound the understanding; to fill with prejudice,
and possess with party-spirit …….. Use no Commentary at all."

And indeed, at first, a man cannot spare time for a Commentary. To go carefully over the inspired text is as much as he can achieve. Interesting "Notes" beguile attention, and consume an unreasonable proportion of that time which a man sets apart for the study of the Bible. The discovery that he has advanced so little, at the end of an hour or two, is fatally discouraging. A far more serious evil is the distracting and disturbing influence of a Commentary. So many more things are told than we expected, or even desired, that it is with difficulty we at last resume the attitude of attention to the Spirit's teaching. And what if the guide whom we have chosen should prove incompetent, or should lead us astray?

I venture to subjoin the first example, (not an imaginary one,) which presents itself. A thoughtful reader of S. Luke's Gospel, observing that our Lord compares the Kingdom of God to a seed which a Man cast "into his garden," is inclined to connect that expression with S. John's statement, that "in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden, a new sepulchre.….. There laid they Jesus." What S. Paul, (explaining the mystery of the Resurrection,) says about "bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain, sown in dishonour, raised in glory," confirms the reasonableness of such a notion; and our Lord's own prophetic declaration concerning Himself, that "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;"—these words, I say, help further to establish it. The subsequent discovery that Gregory the Great, and Ambrose before him, have connected the place in S. Luke with the place in S. John, becomes an encouraging circumstance. Let it be discovered that the thought has found favour with many profound Commentators, ancient and modern, and our reader has met with appreciable corroboration. But how erratic and impracticable, how full of incorrect notions, both concerning the Fathers and concerning Holy Scripture itself, would that man be who should trust himself habitually, and from the first,

a S. Luke xiii. 19. b S. John xix. 41, 42. c 1 Cor. xv. 37, 43. d S. John xii. 24.

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to the guidance of such a work as the 'Catena Aurea,' for example;—which is here instanced chiefly because it is the most obvious storehouse to which the ordinary English reader resorts for a something of Patristic lore! On the other hand, (to take the case before us,) what if D'Oyly and Mant had been the guides? Would not their profound silence have discouraged the supposed inference? Or, what if a man had trusted to such a Commentator as Scott? Is it not to be thought that the following weak note,—"the grain of mustard seed is represented as sown in a good soil, and a select spot; a garden, not a field,"—would have extinguished a speculation which, to say the least, is beautiful, and instinct with life? Matthew Henry, in like manner, recognizes in this mention of "a garden," nothing beyond a hint that the seed was "sown in a soil proper to receive it." How worthless and unmeaning is such a remark as that!

One is tempted (for the subject is important) to subjoin a further illustration of the position here sought to be established. With this view, those six striking verses of S. Matthew's xxviith chapter (5-10) are selected, in which the Evangelist relates what became of the thirty pieces of silver which Judas Iscariot returned to the chief priests; together with the quotation from "Jeremy the prophet" which follows, and with which S. Matthew concludes that part of his subject.

Now, it may be assumed that any person reading these verses with a Commentary at his side, will be chiefly impressed with two things;—first, with the difficulty of reconciling S. Matthew's account of the Traitor's suicide, (ver. 5,) with that of S. Luke in Acts i. 18:—next, he will be perplexed by the difficulty of explaining why the name of Jeremiah is connected with a prophecy which is nowhere found in his writings; but which is found, substantially, in Zechariah xi. 13. If anything else assumed prominence, it would be the apparent inconsistency of the circumstantial narrative of S. Matthew, (which makes the chief priests the purchasers of the potter's field;) and S. Luke's incidental declaration that it was Judas who "purchased a field with the reward of iniquity." And this point, like the other two, would assume this prominence, only because so much prominence has been assigned to it by the Commentator.