investigation of monumental remains, have gone hand in hand; and we are now beginning to understand the history of what even sceptics must admit to be one of the most interesting and remarkable peoples of ancient times.

There is no part of the Bible in which these new methods have produced more important results than the books of the prophets. These are no longer regarded as mosaics composed of isolated fragments of Christian teaching clothed in a more or less mystical dress; but the prophets themselves live again and move before our eyes, as men who shared the life of their own time, and understood its thoughts, even while they rose infinitely above them. So there is an increasing tendency to find in them more and more the spiritual guides and the practical advisers who directed the religious impulses and feelings of their own day, less and less the foretellers of a state of things which neither their readers nor themselves would have at all clearly understood.

To sum up what I have said. The tendency of modern exegesis obviously affects the argument from prophecy in two important respects. (1) It often shows that what were previously considered

to be predictions of future events fulfilled within the period of Jewish history were in all probability no predictions at all. (2) It makes it equally clear that what were believed to be simply predictions of a distant future have their most natural explanation in the historical events of their own time. It is obvious, therefore, that if we accept the results of modern criticism and scholarship, we must approach the subject of prophecy very differently from the way in which it would have been approached in Bishop Warburton's own day. That critical views of the Bible will ultimately win general acceptance, at least in principle, I cannot seriously doubt, and the apologist who wishes to gain the ear of those whose biblical studies are up to date, cannot afford to leave them unconsidered. Truth can never ultimately suffer by looking facts in the face. This at least will be my honest endeavour, and I shall feel that my work has not been altogether thrown away if I can do something, however small, towards showing that prophecy, under what I venture to call the light of modern criticism, while it gains immensely in its intrinsic value, still holds a very important place among the evidences for the Christian religion.

Christian Faith.

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"Lord, increase our faith."—LUKE xvii. 5.

THERE are perhaps few terms in the Christian vocabulary that have suffered more at the hands of system-makers and would-be theologians than the term "faith." Let it be granted at the outset that the New Testament use of the term is by no means uniform: that it is sometimes used to express the faith, *i.e.* the creed, *in* which we believe, and sometimes the faith, *i.e.* the spiritual faculty, *by* which we believe our creed: that it is sometimes used to express the faith of God, or that belonging to God Himself, *i.e.* the faithfulness of God, and sometimes to express our human belief and trust in God's faithfulness: that there are several clearly marked stages in its development so tersely expressed in the famous dictum, *Credo Deum*, "I believe that God is"; *Credo Deo*, "I believe what God says"; and *Credo in Deum*, a pregnant construction, "I am in God, and therefore I have

trust or faith in Him": that, further, its use is sometimes not altogether theological, but rather literary or fluid, and that we cannot bind down the sacred writers to theological precision: that sometimes it is very like love, at other times wondrously similar to hope, and that these three, faith, hope, and love, are not three distinct and separable metaphysical or spiritual entities capable of minute and exact discrimination, but that they run up into and are sometimes merged in each other, being all comprehended in the general spiritual character of man. Let all this be granted, and granted further that much of this distinction is very valuable to the theologian and to the exact student of Holy Scripture, and valuable to him not only as part of his system, but as bearing fruit in his life and gradually working its way downwards into the common knowledge and experience of the people;

yet the fact that we do find a general kind of haziness at once come over the mind of any one to whom we mention the question of faith, is surely one that requires consideration, and that demands of us at least some reflection, whether in our attempts to thus define and limit the word we have not partly deprived it of its meaning, and rendered less powerful as a factor in our daily life and conduct.

I. In the first place, let us clear our minds of some utterly misleading ideas about it, for which, however, some of the Christian Fathers are, I am afraid, responsible. *Credo, quia impossibile*, "I believe a thing just because it is impossible," is a dictum that may have suited some minds in the third century (though I venture to doubt its real value even then), but which certainly cannot fit any type of mind in our own time. Faith is not something opposed to reason. It is not an instrument enabling us to perform feats of mental or moral or spiritual jugglery, however marvellous such feats may appear to be. It may be needed in such a sense perhaps by the devotees of an alien faith, whom nevertheless we call and love as our brethren, whose credulity seems to increase with the age of their Church, and whom neither the advance of science, nor of philosophy, nor the slow disintegrating processes of historical discovery, scattering legend and myth into their primordial elements, seem to daunt in the least degree. We leave to our Roman brethren, if they so choose, their credulity in the blood of St. Januarius, and similar thaumaturgical absurdities, their persistent adhesion to the historical figment of the primacy of St. Peter in Rome, their astounding dogmas of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mother of our Lord, and of the infallibility of the holder of the Bishopric of the Imperial City; and though we grant that if ever we should need to use this prayer of the disciples in relation to questions that can be solved in quite other ways, we should need to use it in the case of the pious beliefs and dogmas just quoted, yet if to pray, "Increase our faith," means so to "increase our credulity that we may believe the scientifically and ethically and historically impossible and untrue," we prefer to reply "we have not so learned Christ," who, while He makes great demands upon our faith and allegiance, does not do so at the expense of our reason divinely given, and our judgment the endowment of God. There is no virtue in believ-

ing the impossible. The virtue lies in testing all things, and in holding just to that and to that only which can abide the test of truth and of life.

The fact is, that all such conceptions of faith are beside the mark. Read (i.) Canon Scott Holland's essay on "Faith" in *Lux Mundi*, and (ii.) Professor Jowett's essay on "Abstract Ideas in the New Testament" in his *Commentary on the Romans*, a work by no means as yet esteemed at anything like its true value, and you will see how much broader and deeper is the idea gained from these writers belonging to such opposed schools of theological thought, schools which are, however, daily approximating closer and closer to each other, as they learn more of each other's thoughts and lives. The idea common to both these essays is this: That faith is not a matter of the head alone, nor of the heart alone, nor of any part of the spiritual man taken by itself. It is something which belongs to the whole spiritual character, and which affects every part of it. Sometimes it is intellectual, and then it embodies itself in the formation of or the assent to creeds. Sometimes it is emotional, and then it shows itself in strong love and loyalty towards God. Sometimes it is volitional, and shows itself by active deeds of charity and self-sacrifice. But in each case it is the act of the whole man, and not of any separate part of him, which is, let me say in passing, good philosophy as well as sound theology and sound practice. Faith is, to quote Canon Scott Holland, "an elemental energy of basal self," that is, something that is perfectly natural to the best nature we have. It rises spontaneously from our deepest being, and is as natural as a child's faith and trust in its father and mother. Indeed, the best illustrations of faith are those drawn from our everyday life. By faith a child is enabled to live, to draw its very breath and food of daily existence from those by whom it came into the world; to look at them with deep, clear, trusting eyes, believing all they say, and believing them utterly and completely good. By faith the child, grown older, lives its intellectual life, sitting at the feet of master and teacher and pastor, and books and nature, and its own intuitive perceptions of things, and learning thence first to believe and to obey, in order that hereafter it may be able to obtain self-mastery, and to subdue all knowledge under its feet. By faith the lover looking into his mistress' face learns the secret of her soul, and in the glory of his

"maiden passion for a maid" gains oftentimes his first glance at the glory of the Divine Love, a glory which first makes him tremble and then stand firm. By faith the man, battling with the world within and the world without, learns to discern a Power higher than himself and yet within himself, fighting on his side against all unreality and unrighteousness and error, and, by the consciousness of his daily victory, becomes one with that which thus he learns to know, until the faith of God becomes his faith, and he cries in the rapture and exultation of triumph, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith." By faith the man when his work is done is content to know this world but a shadow, its prizes but illusions, its hopes but phantoms, its gains but losses, and to trust himself to his unseen Pilot to cross the Bar into the unknown land "where beyond these voices there is peace." In a word, faith is the sustaining and uplifting power that enables us to see Him who is invisible, and seeing to endure. It is the eye of the spiritual man to which is vouchsafed a vision of the eternal realities lying behind and beneath all temporal and passing phenomena. It is the ear of the soul catching the sound of the celestial harmonies heard often faintly but surely above the discord and wailing of the threnodies of earth. It is the spiritual hand stretching upward into the darkness, until caught by the hand of the Unseen it holds It and is held by It. It is the spiritual tongue singing the song of Zion in a strange land, and praising God even when His face is hidden, as we think, from us. Such is faith, a spiritual power, a spiritual force, a spiritual reality.

II. Why then was not this power always in the world as we now have it? Why is it so especially a mark of the New Testament and of Christian teaching? Remember, first of all, the purport of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews in his eleventh chapter, which is, to show that faith was the active principle in all the Old Testament worthies; it was the one thing that made their lives sublime and inspiring. "These all died in faith," and they looked forward (I am not careful to inquire now how clearly nor to what degree) to a good time they believed to be coming. And they were right. There is such a thing as Messianic prophecy, there is such a thing as the Messianic hope in the Old Testament, difficult though its interpretation may often be to us, a difficulty not diminished but increased by some

modern theories thereon, but a difficulty that is destined, I believe, to grow less and not greater. They were right.

Faith is easier to us than it was to them. It is more easily exercised. It has more foundation in fact. To us has been given that revelation which many prophets and kings and righteous men desired to see, and did not see it. To us has been given the final Apocalypse of God, so far as this dispensation is concerned, in the face of Jesus Christ. When we speak of faith, we mean, or should mean, faith in the Christ, else ours is not Christian faith. It may be Jewish or heathen or philosophical faith, but not Christian. Christian faith is essentially faith in the Christ as its highest object and highest illustration. When I am willing to trust God, I mean that I am willing to leave myself in the hands of Him who shows to me the face of the Father, and in whom is all the fulness of the Godhead in bodily form. But what do we mean by faith in the Christ? There is, I think, a threefold progress of the thought, both of the individual man and of the Church as a whole, to be easily traced. We begin with faith in the Christ of the four Gospels, in the historical, personal Jesus of Nazareth, who lived a man among men, and who spent His life in doing good. The story of that life has a never-failing charm for all, young and old, rich and poor, learned and dull. Its pathos touches us, its tenderness melts us, its warnings move us, its teachings inspire us. We ask, Who is this? What is He that can so speak and live and die? What is His secret? What His inner life? And the answer surely is found in something like this at first. He is a man fired to His very soul with the consciousness of the presence of God. His Father and He are so at one, that His will and God's will are identical. If He can so trust God, why may not I? If God is His Father, why is He not mine also? Jesus says, God is my Father too, and He will give me power to believe this and to live by it, if I will take His word for it and trust Him.

But we cannot stop there. We can take no man's word as to the character of God. The apostles did not. The early Church did not. The Christ Himself did not so teach His followers. Philip thought He did, and prayed for a vision of the Father of whom the Christ had spoken. And there came an answer never to be forgotten, either theologically or practically. "Have I been so

long time with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." And so our faith grows till we identify the Christ with the very eternal God Himself, and from the historical Jesus of Nazareth we pass to the spiritual Christ, the Lord, the Lord Christ of the Epistles, not dead but living, not finite but infinite, not temporal but eternal, not material but spiritual, filling all heavens and all earths, all being create and uncreate, with His presence and power. And from the Christ of the past, the Christ which was, we advance to the Christ of the present, which is. And our faith in Him is therefore a living present faith in a living present Christ, Lord and Saviour of our souls and spirits, Lord of every action and every word and every thought.

And we cannot stay here. The first great theologian in His Divine Apocalypse added yet another term, "Which was, and which is, and which is to come." Jesus we know, the living Christ we know, but there is a Christ yet to come. How or when we know not. Whether in this world or in another beyond the grave, is difficult to determine from the few hints given in Scripture; but the probabilities, scientific as well as scriptural, seem to me to point to the latter alternative, though I do not press the view, knowing its difficulty. But somewhere, and somehow, and somewhen He is to come, and His coming in power and great glory is to exceed in its splendour that first coming in humility and in shame. There is yet to be an Apocalypse of the divine that shall transcend all our present knowledge and expectation. "He shall come to be our Judge." We say we believe this every Sunday morning in our *Te Deum*. Do we? I do not mean only in the sense alluded to just now as to a definite conception of the last things. But do we look forward to a still greater extension of His kingdom in righteousness and truth and love all over the world, through all the heavens? Does our faith, our trust in God, extend to the future as well as to the present and

the past? For if not, it is but a maimed faith at best. There is to us, as there was to the saints and heroes of the Old Testament, a good time coming, a new Messianic hope. It may be here or it may be yonder. I cannot tell. But that it will be there is no question, if our Lord's words are true, and if our own instincts do not lead us astray. We may be wrong as to detail. We cannot be wrong as to idea. And if not wrong as to idea, then, my brethren, behold the object of your faith. The Christ of the past, the Jesus of the Gospel story; the Christ of the present, the living and inspiring Spirit; the Christ of the future, the righteous and loving Judge of the world, the setter right of all wrongs, the universal Redeemer and Saviour,—these are not three Christs, but one Christ. You trust Him who died on the Tree of Calvary two millenniums ago, and you trust Him who now breathes into you the very spirit of that cross. You take His life as your example and inspiration, for it is that life that judges you now and will judge you hereafter. You believe that He will set all wrongs to right. Let that faith impel you to begin that process now, first with yourself, then with the little part of the world that lies around you in your home circle; then if you have time (and perhaps not till then), in the larger world outside you. I speak for the majority of men and women, and not for those to whom comes a special call to special work.

Not three Christs but one Christ, the perfect example of faith in God and of faith in man, who saw what man was capable of doing and becoming, and who died that He might make man believe in Himself and in His fellow-creatures. "Lord Christ, increase our faith," we cry as did Thy disciples of old. "Touch us with Thine own hand. Inspire us with Thy Spirit. Teach us the mystery and secret of Thine own life, that our life may be trustful and faithful as Thine was, and our death like Thine the commending of our spirits to the Father."