

such a science and religion, and we were compelled to choose between the two, theology must carry the day.

I make this supposition, not because such an alternative ever has occurred, or ever will occur, but merely to show what are the relative claims to deference of theology and probable science. Not unfrequently, where only an apparent discrepancy has manifested itself between revelation and some yet imperfect science, the self-confident sceptic considers the fate of Christianity as decided. But that is only a flippant philosophy which will not rank revealed truth above any single science founded upon probable evidence. Not only does theology stand above all other sciences in the importance and dignity of its principles, but in the authority with which it speaks; for it rests mainly on inspired testimony.

On the other hand, however, not a few divines demand for theology, not only superior authority, but will allow none at all to science, in matters of religion.

“We have,” say they, “an inspired record, and its declarations are not to be set aside, or modified in the least, by any pretended discoveries or theories of blind and perverted human reason. God has spoken, who cannot lie, and his Word is to be received implicitly, whatever may become of the supposed facts or conclusions of weak and ignorant man.”

Such reasoning overlooks one important principle. All will agree that when we know certainly what God has revealed, we are to receive it without modification. But he has revealed himself through human language, and given us no inspired interpreters. We are to ascertain the meaning of Scripture essentially as we do that of any other writings. Accordingly we do not hesitate to resort to philosophy and history, as guides in our exegesis. Nor do we refuse the light that comes to us from the deciphered hieroglyphics of