

our chief aid in discovering the true sense is accurate grammatical analysis. Much oftener than is commonly supposed have grammatical mistakes given rise to errors in doctrine. And still more frequently have the clearer views obtained by grammatical study borne fruit in the spiritual life of the student.

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THE READING AND RENDERING OF  
COLOSSIANS II. 18.

WE must now read, it appears, *which he hath seen*, instead of *which he hath not seen*, in Colossians ii. 18. For on this point our leading textual critics are all but agreed; and, indeed, the evidence is abundant and decisive. If we are bound to accept what our documents actually do say, instead of determining what they ought to say, then we must believe that St. Paul wrote ἠέώρακεν (or ἑώρακεν) ἐμβατεύων. But this gives us a clause difficult in the extreme to interpret. Clearly it will not do to read, *Intruding into the things which he hath seen*. Some other meaning must be found for ἐμβατεύων. And, on any rendering of this clause, it must be readjusted in its now completely altered sense to the context of the sentence to which it belongs. So perplexing is the problem thus presented, that Bishop Lightfoot, in his noble Commentary on *Colossians and Philemon*, fairly gives it up. "The combination," he writes, "is so harsh and incongruous as to be barely possible; and there was perhaps some corruption in the text prior to all existing authorities." He therefore 'cuts the Gordian knot' by proposing the learned

and ingenious emendation, *αἰώρα κενεμβατεῶν* (*raised aloft, treading on empty air*). When this reading is compared with that given above, and it is remembered that the words of the original Uncial MSS. are written continuously, without any space between the last letter of one word and the first of the next in the same line, it will be seen that the change involved is very slight, and quite resembles the clerical error of a copyist. Such a confusion in one, or even in many MSS., is conceivable enough. But that the original reading should have disappeared utterly, and left no trace of itself anywhere in all the mass of testimony, so ancient and so varied, by which this Epistle is handed down to us, one may well hesitate to believe. "Conjectural emendation," a high authority says, "has absolutely no place in the criticism of the New Testament."<sup>1</sup> Whether this principle must be maintained in all its rigour, or whether the maxim, *exceptio probat regulam*, has its application here as in most other practical matters, is a question we may leave to these distinguished critics to settle between them. It will be granted in any case that subjective correction of the text is a desperate remedy, only to be thought of, if ever, on the proved failure of every exegetical resource, and when no intelligible meaning can possibly be given to the reading attested by documentary evidence.

The object of this Paper is to plead in vindication of the text of our oldest witnesses, as presenting after all a fairly intelligible and probable sense. Griesbach's sagacious maxim has often been verified in the case of recovered ancient readings, and may perhaps hold good

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, *Outlines of Textual Criticism*, p. 8. Compare Scrivener's *Introduction*, pp. 433, 434, and Davidson's *Biblical Criticism*, p. 817.

of this instance amongst the rest: "That reading is to be preferred which contains a sense apparently false, but which, on closer examination, is ascertained to be true."

Let us discuss, first, the meaning of ἃ ἑώρακεν; then, of ἐμβατεύων as governing it; <sup>1</sup> and, finally, the general connection of the clause with the sentence of which it forms a part.

Two explanations have been given of the phrase, *which he hath seen*. (1) Alford and others make it equivalent to *things visible* <sup>2</sup>—"the realm of sight, not of faith." But, as Meyer points out, *which he hath seen* should denote something more definite than this, some *seeing* specially asserted of, or claimed by, the person referred to. *Things visible* would surely have been expressed by τὰ ὀρατά, as in Chapter i. 16. In that passage, moreover, it is just the angels who are identified with *the things invisible*; and, this being so, it would be a strange contradiction on the part of the Writer to attribute to the same persons at once *worshipping of the angels* and *taking their stand on the visible world*, and to do this too in such a way that the second statement seems intended for an explanation

<sup>1</sup> Hofmann, who will not surrender the μή, is yet dissatisfied with the ordinary interpretation. He therefore completely recasts the sentence, making τ. ἀγγέλων subjective genitive to ταπεινοφροσύνη and θρησκεία alike. (So indeed Luther, as far as θρησκεία is concerned.) He also finds in these words the antecedent to ἃ μὴ ἑώρακεν, and joins εἰκῆ to ἐμβατεύων, which now stands without an object. He thus arrives at the following translation: *Let no one pass judgment against you, delighting in the angels' humility and their worship, things which he hath not seen—idly speculating, puffed up by the mind of his flesh.*

There is force as well as acuteness in his objection to regarding ἃ μὴ ἑώρακεν as object to ἐμβατεύων. The visible is not the divinely appointed limit of research. And the mere fact of the errorist *not having seen* angelic or other supersensible objects would not in itself be sufficient to brand his speculations as *intrusion*.

<sup>2</sup> He can hardly claim Augustine (*Confessions*, x. 42—? 67, Lightfoot) in favour of this view.

of the first. And if Lightfoot's conjecture (to which we shall refer afterwards) be correct, that "the Apostle" in the words, *φυσιοῦμενος ὑπὸ τ. νοῦς κ.τ.λ.*, which follow, "is taking up some watchword of the false teachers," then apparently it was *Nous*, or Reason, the faculty of internal supersensible perception,<sup>1</sup> by which they professed to be guided, and which they alleged, we may presume, as the organ of their visions. Whatever the Colossian heretics may have been, they were certainly not materialists. Everything goes to shew that their errors were of a transcendental cast, and that it was not from the visible, but from the invisible world, and through the powers by which man is conversant with it, that they claimed to derive their new "wisdom and knowledge." This view seems, therefore, in every way untenable.

(2) Meyer's treatment of the phrase is much more satisfactory, and points the way, as it seems to me, to the true exegesis of the whole passage. He supposes an allusion to some well-known assertion of the false teachers respecting their intercourse with the other world. If, as we may easily imagine, these pretenders (or their Coryphæus, for some single definite person seems to be in the Apostle's eye) were accustomed to say, with an imposing and mysterious air, 'Εώρακα,

<sup>1</sup> Compare Romans i. 20, *τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ . . . νοούμενα καθορᾶται*, where *νοέω*, the verb-form of *νοῦς*, is used with philosophical precision of the act of rational, intuitive discernment; as in Plato 529B (quoted by Meyer *in loc.*), *νοεῖν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ὀφθαλμοῖσι θεωρεῖν*, to discern, but not to behold with the eyes. So in John xii. 40 (from the Septuagint). Also *πίστει νοοῦμεν κ.τ.λ.* (Heb. xi. 3). *Νοεῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια*, in Ignatius *ad Trall.* 5, is probably a very close parallel to the passage under discussion.

*Νοῦς* is attributed twice to *the Lord* by St. Paul, in Romans xi. 34 (from LXX), and I Corinthians ii. 16; *νοήματα*, once to *Satan* (2 Cor. ii. 11).

The angels themselves were called *Νέες* by some Patristic writers. See Suicer's *Thesaurus*, s. v.

ἑώρακα—"I have seen, ah! I have seen"—in relating alleged visions of heavenly things, the Colossians would understand the reference well enough; and its obscurity for us would be simply due to the vividness of meaning the allusion would have for them, rendering further description of the matter superfluous. And such visions would furnish exactly the kind of proof needful to support a doctrine of angel-worship, and likely to impress these Phrygian Colossians. Moreover, this was an age of heavenly visions and revelations,<sup>1</sup> which doubtless had their counterfeit.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, one might almost venture to say that mystic visions would be sure to be forthcoming in behalf of such doctrines as those of the Colossian heresy, and on such a soil.

This interpretation accords with the most ancient exposition of the passage that remains extant. It is given by Tertullian in so many words when he writes, combining Verses 18-21, "But when he [the Apostle] blames those who alleged visions of angels as their authority for saying that men must abstain from meats—'you must not touch, you must not taste'—'in a voluntary humility,' 'vainly puffed up in the fleshly mind, and not holding the Head,' he does not in these terms attack the Law or Moses, as if it was at the

<sup>1</sup> See Acts ii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> In 2 Corinthians xii. 1 (following the text of Tregelles and Tischendorf) we read, *I must needs glory, it is not expedient indeed,—but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.* If this be the Apostle's language, does it not seem to imply that he is still continuing the course of comparison in "glorying" between himself and the "false Apostles" and "crafty workers," which commenced in Chapter xi. 16-18, and appears to terminate only in Chapter xii. 11? If so, they also claimed "visions and revelations" in their pseud-apostolic character. What more likely?

In Galatians i. 8 (we or an *angel from heaven*) have we possibly a hint pointing in the same direction, indicating that the Apostle's unscrupulous opponents did, or might, pretend to some authentication of this kind?

suggestion of superstitious angels that he had enacted his prohibition of sundry aliments." <sup>1</sup> From this passage it appears that a supposed reference to angelic visions in Verse 18 was common ground as between Marcion and Tertullian, and therefore must, one would imagine, have been pretty widely acknowledged at the end of the Second Century. These "visions" must also have been supposed to play a considerable part in the Colossian heresy, for its ascetic prescriptions are by both controversialists apparently referred to this source, although St. Paul himself does not immediately connect the two things.

But this interpretation of ἀ ἑώρακεν, if it is to stand, must be sustained by the words which follow, and by the general drift of the sentence. For the Apostle would not surely refer to these visions without saying something to expose their false and delusive character. Viewed in this light, the words *which he hath seen* are an ironical concession, made by the writer only to enable him to deal a more effectual blow at the pretensions they represent.<sup>2</sup>

Let us see, then, whether ἐμβατεύων will lend itself to Meyer's hypothesis. It is one of the numerous and characteristic *Hapax legomena* of the Epistle, as many as seventeen of which—words nowhere else occurring in the New Testament—are met with in this single Chapter. The radical idea of the word is that of *stepping* or *going on* or *in*. The corresponding noun ἐμβατής (from ἐν and βα-, root of βαίω, *to step, go*) denotes a *passenger* (on board ship). The verb is found

<sup>1</sup> *Against Marcion*, v. 19, p. 473 *Eng. Tr.* (Ante-Nicene Lib.)

<sup>2</sup> There is perhaps a similar irony in 1 Cor. viii. 1: *We know that we all have knowledge, &c.*; and in the ζηλοῦσιν ἑμῶς of Gal. iv. 17. Compare also 1 Cor. vi. 8-14; 2 Cor. xiii. 16.

with three principal uses. As referring to *place* literally, it means (1) *to set foot upon* (with genitive), *visit, frequent* (of deities), *to haunt*. So in Attic poets. (2) In Attic prose (Demosthenes, &c.) it has the sense *to enter upon, take possession of* (usually with *eis*), or *invade* (so in Septuagint). (3) Its later figurative use appears first in the Septuagint—2 Maccabees ii. 30—where it is rendered *to enter into, examine, discuss* (a subject). And it is thus that Philo-Judæus uses it once, in a passage where he is comparing seekers after truth to well-diggers, and speaks of them accordingly as those “who advance further than others in the sciences, and go more deeply into them (*ἐπὶ πλέον ἐμβατεύοντες αὐταῖς*).”<sup>1</sup> In this usage the word is somewhat common in Patristic writers, who employ it of God as *searching* the heart, and of men as *searching into* Divine mysteries. And the Byzantine lexicographers uniformly give such equivalents for it as *ζητέω, ἐξερευνάω, σκοπέω*.<sup>2</sup> By a natural application of meaning (1) as given above, the participle might be rendered *going upon* or *over*, in the sense of *dwelling on*,<sup>3</sup> as of favourite arguments or hackneyed topics—*harping upon*. This would give a suitable and easy sense here. But there is no evidence of such a meaning having ever attached to the word, no indication of its having ever thrown out in its growth a figurative sense of this kind. The one figurative meaning which it had definitely assumed in the Greek

<sup>1</sup> *De plantatione Noë*, § 19.

<sup>2</sup> See Hesychius *s.v.*; also Suicer's *Thesaurus*, and Schleusner's *Lexicon*.

<sup>3</sup> So Farrar, in his *Life of St. Paul*.

Alford's *standing on* (*insistens*) seems to have no exact parallel in the Greek usage of the word. The same may be said of Augustine's *inculcans*; so several Latin authorities. The *ambulans* of the Latin Version is a mere mechanical rendering.

Meyer's *betretend, beschreitend* points in the direction of (3), but is not explained with his usual clearness.

of St. Paul's day, and which afterwards prevailed to the exclusion of every other, is that given under (3). And it is at least a striking coincidence that the only contemporary instance of the use of *ἐμβατεύω* that our dictionaries afford belongs to *Philo*, the great philosophical Judaist of the age, with whose theology and diction this Epistle in particular presents so many remarkable points of contact.<sup>1</sup> This fact is surely of considerable weight in determining the signification of the verb in such a passage as this. For these Colossian heresiarchs were no vulgar *goëtes*, mere charlatan dealers in the supernatural. They were above all things "philosophers."<sup>2</sup> They were acute logicians.<sup>3</sup> In this character, we may presume, they would claim to be men of "research," and would profess to "investigate" the revelation of which, through their visions, they were the medium, giving a philosophical analysis of it, and drawing out its logical consequences.<sup>4</sup> In this there would be nothing very surprising. Such a union of visionary and chimerical data with a show of scientific method, the 'logical development' of intuitions wholly factitious and unreal, would be neither inconceivable nor unexampled. If this was actually the case, and if they themselves, somewhat affectedly perhaps, used *ἐμβατεύω* in *Philo's* sense and in the manner I have supposed, Colossian readers would at once catch the Apostle's meaning, and the audacious

<sup>1</sup> See Lightfoot's *Commentary*, Chaps. i., ii. *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 8, Lightfoot's Note

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 4: *μηδεὶς . . . παραλογίζηται ἐν πιθανολογίᾳ.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 23: *λόγον σοφίας ἐν ἰθελοθησκείᾳ κ.τ.λ.* It was not surely their "will-worship (or zeal for worship) and humility" that gave the teaching of the errorists its "show of wisdom." These things, as Hofmann says, would rather have given a "show of holiness." The "show of wisdom" must have been due chiefly to the manner in which their doctrines were argued and enforced.



and monstrous nature of the pretensions of the false teachers would be set in the strongest possible light. For it would appear that they not only alleged angelic visions in proof of their new doctrines, but even derived them in great part from this source; and regarded these private revelations as containing the most fundamental of all truths, the chief mysteries of Divine knowledge, and the matters most worthy of inquiry and investigation. The appended *εἰκῆ* serves forcibly to assert the *futility* of the whole proceeding,<sup>1</sup> and the crushing words which follow (*φυσιοῦμενος κ.τ.λ.*) reveal the spurious character and base origin of this high-flown and pretentious theosophy.

It has already been intimated that Lightfoot's suggestion of a latent allusion in the words *ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦς* to the language of the errorists, is quite in the same line with Meyer's explanation of *ἂ ἐώρακεν*. In fact, they sustain and vindicate each other. It is difficult on any other view than that given by Lightfoot to explain the phrase *νοῦς τῆς σαρκὸς* as coming from St. Paul, when it is this very same *mind* (*Νοῦς*) that, in its natural working, is represented as diametrically opposed to *the flesh* in Romans vii. 22-25. The *mind of the flesh* (*τὸ φρόνημα*) in Romans viii. 6, 7 is quite another thing, and neither the *body of the flesh* in Verse 11 of this Chapter, nor any of the other parallel expressions adduced,<sup>2</sup> appear to justify this paradoxical phrase.

<sup>1</sup> *Εἰκῆ* is required by *ἔμπαρέων* on this view, while, as Hofmann rightly observes, it can add nothing to the force of *φυσιοῦμενος*. Origen attaches the adverb to *ἔμπαρέων*, writing *εἰκῆ ἔμπαρ. κ. φυσιοῦμενος* in a reference to this passage quoted from him in Cramer's *Calcea*, vol. iv., in *Ep. ad Romanos*, p. 69. Unfortunately he throws no light on the meaning of *ἔμπαρέων*, unless his using the verb absolutely, without an object, should seem to be, in favour of the last meaning above proposed.

For Pauline use of *εἰσῆ*, comp. 1 Cor. xv. 2; Gal. iii. 4; where it is *uselessly*, not *causelessly*. <sup>2</sup> Eph. iv. 17; 2 Cor. xi. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 8; Rom. xii. 2.

But if these theosophists claimed to be men of *Nous*,<sup>1</sup> and to speak in the name of the heaven-born faculty of Reason, how bold and how well-deserved a retort to brand their imposture as instigated by *the Reason of the Flesh*; that is to say, no Reason at all, but a mere simulacrum of it, the inspiration of a low and fleshly mind wearing its guise; or, at any rate, a Reason so perverted and fallen as to be fitly identified with its very opposite.<sup>2</sup>

And it is in *φυσιούμενος* that we find the link uniting Meyer's ἀ ἐώρακεν and Lightfoot's ὑπὸ τ. νοῦς τ. σαρκός, and making them parts of one continuous statement. This word, singularly enough, appears nowhere else in the New Testament, but in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, where St. Paul is dealing with a vain and false "knowledge," very similar in some of its aspects to that which threatened the Colossian Church. There the word is used to stigmatize intellectual pride and self-complacency; and is applied in one passage with a sharply antithetical force, and with the most biting irony, where he says, "We know that we all have knowledge: knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up."<sup>3</sup> May we not conjecture a latent antithesis *here*?

<sup>1</sup> So Aristophanes in the *Clouds*, 835, ridiculing Socrates and his school—

εἰσορμεῖ,  
καὶ μὴ ἐν εἴπῃ φλαῖρον ἀνέρας δεξιούς  
καὶ νοῦν ἔχοντας: (clever men and men of Reason!)

For the use of *νοῦς* in Greek philosophy see Plato's *Republic*, vii. 21, Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, ii. 19. It may be worth observing that it is only in this and the Ephesian Epistle that St. Paul uses the word *ἐγνωσία*, so closely related to, and yet clearly distinguished from, *νοῦς*. In Eph. iv. 17, 18 the two words are brought together. For other apparent allusions to the language of the Colossian errorists, comp. *Redemption* in Chap. i. 14; *Perfect*, i. 28; *Hidden*, ii. 3; *Philosophy*, ii. 8; *Idleness*; *Thrones*, *Lordships*, &c.; and see Lightfoot, pp. 99-102.

<sup>2</sup> Lightfoot gives the striking parallel in Rev. ii. 24: τὰ βάθη—τοῦ Σατανῆ ("the depths,"—yes, the depths of *Satan*).

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 1; also iv. 6, 18, 19; v. 2; xiii. 4.

May not the men whom the Apostle is denouncing have been accustomed to speak of being "exalted by Reason," "lifted into communion with heavenly Inteligences," and the like—

"Borne on contemplation's wing,  
Where the angels praise their King"?

Such language would well comport with the half-mystic half-rationalistic character of their teaching, and with their lofty personal pretensions.<sup>1</sup> And if some phrases of this sort came to the Apostle's ears, *φυσιοῦμενος* is the very word we can imagine he would seize with which to prick the gigantic bubble, to expose the windy conceit and turgid empty phraseology of this new would-be wisdom. "'Exalted' are they? say rather, *inflated*. 'Lifted up and borne high by heavenly Reason'! oh, no; merely *puffed up* and *swollen high* by the Reason of their Flesh, a Reason that is but the slave of their carnal nature, and draws its inspiration only from beneath." And *φυσιοῦμενος κ. τ. λ.* is attached, we may suppose, to *ἐμβατεύων* rather than more directly to *ἂ ἐώρακεν*, because it was in the way these impostors put forward their visions, and the style in which they talked of them, that their real nature betrayed itself.

The caustic word *puffed up* points us back irresistably to the earlier phrase, *delighting in humility*<sup>2</sup> (*θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ*), to which it gives the needed contradiction, as it furnishes the exposure of the huge pretence involved in *investigating what he hath seen*.

<sup>1</sup> In support of this last remark, besides *καταβραβεύτω* in this Verse, see Verse 16, *Let not any one judge you*, &c.; and Verse 20, *Why are you being dogmatized (made subject to decrees)?*

<sup>2</sup> For so it seems best to render *θέλων κ. τ. λ.*, with Bengel, Hofmann, Lightfoot and others. See Lightfoot's note.

It was in and along with *worshipping*<sup>1</sup> of the angels that their "humility" was shewn ;<sup>2</sup> and as that was based on transcendental visions and philosophic reasoning as false and futile as they were imposing and magniloquent, this humility proved to be but the thin disguise of an insufferable pride.

We reach at last *καταβραβεύετω*, the imperative on which the whole sentence hangs. And here we find St. Paul already striking into the singular vein of blended quotation and comment, which appears to run through the whole Verse. For this verb—another New Testament *Hapax legomenon*, by the way—does not mean simply *to defraud of the prize*, but to do so in the capacity of *judge* ;<sup>3</sup> and it is moreover in the present tense : *Let no one be (wrongfully) adjudging the prize against (i.e., away from) you*—so we might translate. Now this surely the false teacher must be supposed to *claim* to do.<sup>4</sup> It is not at all a thing which he actually could do. It was not that by leading the Colossian believers astray from Christ he would cause them to fail in the race, and so eventually to miss the prize ; but he was pronouncing a judgment which virtually took their prize away already. So that in the first word of this warning the Apostle declares the great interests at stake, and the practical issue of the

<sup>1</sup> It is important to notice that *θρησκεία* is *worship as matter of ritual and external form*. It was not therefore *angel-worship* simply that the errorists were zealous for, so much as a certain system of *rites of angel-worship*. This is in harmony with their devotion to ceremonialism as seen in Verse 16. Compare James i. 26, 27, and Acts xxvi. 5. The only other instance of this word in the New Testament is in Verse 23, where it is compounded with *ἰδέλω* in *ἰθελοθρησκεία*.

<sup>2</sup> For the connection between *humility* and *angel-worship*, see the citations in Alford and Wordworth's notes *in loc.*

<sup>3</sup> On this word see Meyer's elaborate note.

<sup>4</sup> So *καταβραβεύετω* in Verse 18 is precisely parallel to *κρινέτω* (let no one judge) in Verse 16.

claims of these new teachers, *as they themselves in effect presented them*. "They are setting up as judges of the great race in which you are running," he seems to say; "and they dare to snatch away from you the prize you were already winning,<sup>1</sup> to rob you of 'the hope laid up for you in heaven,' of which 'your faith in Christ and love to all the saints' were a sure pledge and warrant."<sup>2</sup> And this was in truth the case, if they insisted upon another "redemption,"<sup>3</sup> and taught a new way to "perfection,"<sup>4</sup> through ceremonial rites and ascetic rules, and by the knowledge of "hidden mysteries"<sup>5</sup> concerning the angels and other matters of high import, which were in their keeping. Thus at one stroke they took away the great Christian "hope" from all except their own initiates, and made it attainable only by a secret society of the separated and intellectual few.<sup>6</sup>

In this Verse, therefore, the Apostle judges the Colossian heresy, so to speak, out of its own mouth. In the next he brings it "before the judgment-seat of Christ," and charges it, in virtue of that "worshipping of angels," which was its central point and 'the head and front of its offending,' with high treason against HIM, the Head and Lord of both worlds, preëminent alike in creation and redemption,<sup>7</sup> to whom the very angels set up against Him might have taught their worshippers to pay all honour and allegiance.<sup>8</sup> The sequel of Verse 19 goes on to intimate that disloyalty to Him is destruction to his Church, for He alone is the basis of its unity and the source of all its growth.

<sup>1</sup> For the *tone* of the warning, compare Gal. iii. 3, v. 2-5, perhaps also iv. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Col. i. 3-5; compare 2 Thess. i. 3-5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. i. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. i. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. ii. 2, 3 (Lightfoot). <sup>6</sup> Chap. i. 28. See Lightfoot on πάντα ἄνθρωπων.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. i. 15-18; ii. 6, 8-10.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. ii. 15: see THE EXPOSITOR, vol. x. pp. 420, 421. Compare also Heb. i. 6; Rev. xix. 10.

“Let no one assume to take away your prize, delighting in ‘humility’ and worshipping of *the angels*—‘investigating’ idly ‘what he hath seen’!—being puffed up by ‘the Reason’ of his Flesh, and not holding fast *the Head*.” Thus we may attempt to render these few words of stern irony with which the Apostle tears the mask away from the face of the great Colossian mystagogue and arch-deceiver. Few his words are, because so full of compressed indignation; and obscure, it may be, just because they are so keenly pointed against this “spoiler”<sup>1</sup> of his Gentile flock, the precursor of that pack of “grievous wolves,”<sup>2</sup> who were afterwards to ravage and lay waste the Asiatic Churches. Here, in the Colossian heresy, he detects at the very hour of its birth the infant Gnosticism. With a quick and sure inspiration he seizes its inner principles, and discerns its deadly and yet fascinating nature—a compound, as it was, of intellectual pride, visionary pseudo-mystic spiritualism, and ritualistic fervour.

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### BRIEF NOTICES.

It is so necessary to seem, as well as be, impartial in these Brief Noticés of Books, that I do not care to have my own works reviewed in this Magazine. But I may perhaps be permitted to announce that Messrs. Kegan Paul and Co. have recently published a volume of my sermons entitled “*The Genesis of Evil, and Other Sermons, Mainly Expository*;” and that the volume contains twenty-one discourses, none of which have appeared in print before, on The Origin of Evil (Isaiah xlv. 6, 7), The Heavenly Treasure and the Earthern Vessels (2 Corinthians iv. 7), God Unknown yet Known (Isaiah lv. 6-9), the Incredible Mercy of God (ibid.), All Things Ours (1 Corinthians iii. 21-23), The Too Great Promise (ibid.), Led by a Child (Isaiah xi. 6), The Living God of Living Men (St. Luke xx. 37, 38), Death an

<sup>1</sup> Col. ii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. v. 29.