

Besant ends and Rice begins in the novels which they wrote together, and no Frenchman who would venture to do so in the case of the two French novelists.

How then is it possible for the European scholar of to-day to analyse an old Hebrew book into its component parts, to lay down with mathematical accuracy what section of the same verse belongs to one writer, what to a second, and what to a third, and even to fix the relative dates of these hypothetical authors? Hebrew is a language that is very imperfectly known; it has long ceased to be spoken; only a fragment of its literature has come down to us, and that often in a corrupt state; and the meaning of many of the words which have survived, and even of the grammatical forms, is uncertain and disputed. In fact, it is just this fragmentary and imperfect knowledge of the language which has made the work and results of the higher criticism possible. The 'critical' analysis of the Pentateuch is but a measure of our ignorance and the limitations of our knowledge. What is impossible in the case of modern English or French novels must be still less possible in the case of the Old Testament