

conclusions are pressed upon us on the ground of a general agreement on the part of the critics, it is essential for us to know how such an agreement is reached. The disintegration theory of the Pentateuch is presented to us as the result of scientific criticism. But it can hardly be called scientific progress to adopt theories simply because they have been adopted by other people. We do not accept the theory of gravitation on the mere authority of Newton, Lagrange, Laplace, and other distinguished mathematicians. The writers of mathematical and scientific books give us the working by which the theories are reached, and every one may scrutinize the processes who will. But when we are told, without any effort at proof, that "we know for certain" that Solomon did not write Ecclesiastes, that Isaiah did not write the latter part of the book that goes by his name, and that David did not compose the greater part of the Psalms that are ascribed to him,¹ our slow Anglo-Saxon brain gets a little confused. Criticism may render these conclusions probable; but how without a great deal more information than we possess can we possibly know for certain that they are correct? Kuenen and Wellhausen literally bristle with such assertions as these. We have already given some specimens from the former; a few are now added from the latter. "I refuse to believe" is a phrase frequently in use, but the reasons for the refusal are seldom given. "Nöldeke's assertion is quite off the mark." "Isaiah used the word Torah not of priestly but prophetic instruction." "The piece is Jehovistic," with sublime self-confidence, in spite of Nöldeke's assertion to the contrary. Such passages occur in almost every page. Reasonable men do not, we repeat, complain of these assertions if they can be proved. What is complained of is that they are made without any attempt at proof, and that unlimited dogmatism and conjecture is dignified by the name of scientific investigation. When our critics will point us to any other science which has advanced by such methods as these, we may be inclined to pay

¹ See Kuenen, *Religion of Israel*, i. 15. He apparently means those formally ascribed to him in the Psalter as we now have it. "Every schoolboy knows" that he did not write *all* the Psalms.