

times and occasions of the prophecies, and of the condition of the people to whom they were originally addressed, has invested them with a far greater living interest than they have when read as isolated statements. To take an illustration from the New Testament. The tender sympathy which breathes through St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians is far better understood, when the epistle is read in the light of the peculiar circumstances of suffering and deliverance, under which that Church was founded by Paul and Silas. But this personal element does not lessen the truth and value of the teaching, which do not depend upon the local associations. But just because the occasion of a prophecy or psalm enhances its interest, many invent imaginary settings that have no historic foundation. Against this we must guard. It is also safe to believe that the keen and exhaustive criticism to which these books have been subjected, though for a time it may disturb the faith of many, will ultimately tend to promote a more unfaltering confidence in revealed truths that have been tested by the severest scrutiny.

But though frankly recognizing the advantages accruing from modern critical study, it must be admitted that many conclusions have been set forth as the results of scientific methods of research, which do not appear to rest on anything more solid than conjecture; and which, to say the least, it is very difficult to harmonize with the Scriptural and historic conception of the prophets, which regards them as holy men, who "spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost." It is important to remember that these conclusions are, for the most part, not new facts discovered by modern research, but inferences drawn, by a freer style of speculative criticism, from facts that have been long familiar to all intelligent students of the Bible.

#### TWO CURRENT VIEWS OF PROPHECY.

Speaking broadly, there are two current views of Hebrew prophecy, which are dividing theologians into opposing camps. One view is that these prophetic oracles were special and extraordinary revelations of God's will and purposes, made known by Him to those whom He had chosen to be prophets. The