

less. Sometimes two or more neighboring ministers arrange to study the same subjects and meet occasionally for discussion. This is helpful, but, lacking variety of opinion, sometimes grows monotonous.

My suggestion is that those ministers who are really in earnest in Biblical and theological study, form themselves into a kind of club, draft a course of study for a season, and meet in Toronto, say once a month, for conference and discussion. At such meetings the discussions should be the freest possible, all serious convictions respected, and all honest doubts and intelligent beliefs tolerated. From the meetings of such a club, newspaper reporters would be excluded, and, in accordance with the operating principle of natural selection, the members, being lovers of and seekers after truth in a field where many treasures of truth are still hidden, would be trusty and sympathetic, and no man should feel constrained or hampered in the discussion of the most delicate question in Biblical Criticism or Theology. Were it otherwise, were the feelings after truth published abroad as final beliefs, or were truth regarded as a fixed and well ascertained quantum, and investigation stifled by fear or prohibited by obscurantism, then all such association of students would be worse than useless. But there would be no necessity for such restrictions, and among sober-minded scholars there would be no such disposition.

No one will seriously question the utility of such a society. With whole continents open, in which the large majority of Canadian ministers will confess themselves to be but strangers and pilgrims, there need be no fear as to the interest and profit connected with such exploring expeditions. The subjects are legion. The work of scientific and historical criticism will give employment to the thoughtful student for years to come. A few, at the opposite extremes of ignorance and knowledge, have settled views on all great critical subjects: but with many judgment is suspended on some points. There is the question of the Canon, and the very vital question of Inspiration. The Old Testament presents an almost limitless field. Sir William Dawson has not cleared up the first chapter of Genesis, and the whole question of Pentateuch or Hexateuch is still an open one to many students. Job and the Psalms, their origin and structure, Isaiah or the two Isaiahs, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, "and all the prophets"—questions of great importance and of present-day interest arise in connection with the study of almost every book in the Old Testament. New Testament problems are almost as numerous. If more general subjects are asked for the Hittites would admit of further acquaintance, and much benefit would be derived from the study of such subjects as the Influence of Outside Nations on the Destiny of Israel.