

repetition and lifeless monotony characterize all writers. It will tell us also whether the writer was a man, with all the zeal and imagination of youth, or a man of age and sorrow moralizing upon the experiences and the vicissitudes of life. No one will deny that the same man at different periods in his life, or under different circumstances, or in the treatment of different subjects, will vary in style, but when all proper allowance has been made, there still remain individual differences and historical differences, which even the untrained critic may observe. (b) The presence of historical allusions furnishes the most conclusive help. With a sharp line drawn between prophecy and history, one may be reasonably sure in the case of any writer that the event was described after its occurrence, and that, therefore, a direct allusion in the Book of Genesis to the times of Israel's kings points, so far as concerns this passage at least, to the time of David or that of his successors, or that an ordinary reference in one of the Psalms to the desolate condition of Jerusalem points to the time of the captivity. (c) Only less certain than the evidence from historical allusions is that derived from a study of the religious ideas contained in a given book. After making due allowance for the genius of particular individuals and for the divine element, there still remains a gradual growth which may be readily traced in the history of every institution and of every idea, and not infrequently may the age of the book be determined by a close scrutiny of the ideas which it makes prominent.

(2) Great aid will also be obtained from outside sources. The nation Israel, in the different stages of its preparation for the great work which it was to do for mankind, came in contact with outside nations. In Egypt, Israel first became a nation, and during its later history there was always in Jerusalem an Egyptian party. With Assyria, Israel, north and south, fought many times and desperately. The contact was long continued and very close. In Babylonia there were spent many years of harsh captivity, and the postexilic Israelite differed greatly from his ancestors in customs, language and religion. The Persian influence was very marked, especially in a religious way. Nor did Greece fail to leave her impress upon the history and the