

to their own confusion, by involving themselves in the most serious error that had ever been committed in the dates and analyzing of documents. It seems that a composition called the Cairene Ecclesiasticus was discovered a few years ago. After a close critical investigation it was pronounced by all the leading Hebraists to be a work of the 2nd century B. C., more than that it was declared to be the source of the existing Greek and Syriac translations of Ecclesiasticus. It afterwards turned out to be the production of the eleventh century, after Christ. It was proved, moreover, to be itself a compilation from those translations. The critics had blundered egregiously, both as to date and source. They had made a mistake of twelve or thirteen centuries, and they had taken the offspring for the parent. What reliance can be placed on a method of criticism so plainly inconsequential?

Before we leave this division of the subject, there is a question to be put and answered. Is the contention of the critical School from De Wette to Driver true? Is it true that no external evidence for the age and authorship of the Sacred Books exists? Emphatically no, it is not true. External information does exist. There is outstanding testimony; there are materials whereby the truth of the critical views may be tested. First of all there is Tradition. "The Jews," says Prof. Driver, "possess no tradition worthy of real credence or regard," while Dr. Briggs, of New York, sneers at the arguments of the "Traditionalists," as he calls them, as "speculative dogmas," as "appeals to popular prejudice." But Messieurs Higher Critics, you cannot, by a stroke of the pen, rule out of court the witness of a whole nation. You cannot give the lie to a theory of Bible history, which has been substantially accepted by the Synagogue and the Church for 2,000 years. We are aware, gentlemen, that it is quite according to your