

so many generations of critics it be still immature, the chance of its ever reaching maturity would seem to be slender. The results which are enumerated contain little that is sensational, and seem to be somewhat vague except where they are conservative.

This goes to the very heart of the subject, for, as the Professor suggests, it is astonishing that after so long a time criticism should still be regarded as "immature." This is only another way of saying that we are still waiting for what are called "assured results" of Old Testament Criticism, for, as a well-known Critic said not so long ago, the points that were supposed to be settled twenty years ago are still open. And they are likely to remain open, because recent research has raised quite a number of problems, and put the whole subject once more into the melting-pot. It is curious that many who have accepted wholesale the modern German view of the Old Testament are apparently unconscious of the striking inroads of conservative scholarship during the last five years, proving once more that what is new is not necessarily true, and that what is true is not new.

### Spiritual Comradeship

Among the most interesting accounts of the war are the letters published in the English "Methodist Recorder" and reproduced in the Canadian "Christian Guardian" by a Methodist Chaplain, the Rev. O. S. Watkins. After a fairly wide experience of letters and articles from the Front, these articles of Mr. Watkins stand out from most of the others by their fascinating interest and thrilling inspiration. From time to time he speaks of the fellowship he enjoys with one whom he calls "my brother Chaplain," the Rev. D. P. Winnifith, of the Church of England. Mr. Watkins remarks how grateful he has been for this, and "how precious to us both were the rare occasions when we could gather a congregation and unite with our men in public worship and thanksgiving." We wish it were possible to reproduce at length some of Mr. Watkins' impressive stories, but our present object is to call attention to the way in which the war is bringing together men of various Churches, and uniting them in one solid body of religious interest and sympathy. For this reason it was a great satisfaction to observe in connection with the recent Week of Prayer that various Churches in Toronto united in their intercessions by meeting in different buildings in turn and getting clergymen of other denominations than their own to speak. The war will not have been wholly in vain if it makes us concentrate more and more on the things on which we agree, and think less and less of those on which we differ.

### Why Study the Old Testament?

The re-commencement in Genesis of the Sunday Lessons calls fresh attention to the question at the head of this paper. Many people seem to look upon the Old Testament as a book that has long been out of date. While rightly regarding it as the inspired Word of God, they respect it chiefly because of its honourable past and the sacred associations that cluster round it. It is esteemed in much the same way as an aged grandparent in a family where he is shown all due respect, and is venerated for his years and worthy past; but where no present usefulness or advantage to the family among whom he lives is expected of him. Thus many appear to feel about the Old Testament. It is to them a sacred book; they reverence it, give it

house-room ungrudgingly, contribute cheerfully to the Bible Society to help publish it in foreign tongues, and in many other ways show their respect for the old book. Its language is considered to be sometimes not wholly refined or suited to the delicate and discriminating tastes of the present generation, but this is apologized for, and patronizingly ascribed to the "different ideas of ancient times." It may be read sometimes, but is rarely studied.

It is our present purpose to show why it should be not merely read and revered, but studied, diligently, eagerly, patiently, prayerfully, and with purpose of heart. The reasons are as various as they are weighty. The Old Testament books of the Bible are repeatedly referred to as the Word of God and as Scripture, both in themselves and by Christ and His Apostles. So, being the Word of God, it should be the constant study of the child of God. It is his Father's Word: should he not, therefore, give its every statement his most careful attention, even though it be directly addressed to distant relatives of the family rather than to himself? Let us not make the like mistake with reference to the things written in the Old Testament Scriptures, even though they were addressed primarily to the Jews, and consist largely of Hebrew history, poetry, and legislative records. A Christian who does not study the Old Testament is sure to have very narrow views of the purposes of God, and is really not much better in this respect than the Jew who refuses to examine the New.

There is profit in the study of the Old Testament, which is another good reason why it should be done. The Apostle asserts also that "whatsoever things were written aforetime (in the Old Testament) were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." And he declares that what is recorded of the Jews in the Old Testament is "written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." We, like the Psalmist may, by the words of God's lips, as recorded in the Old Testament, keep ourselves from the paths of the destroyer (Ps. xvii. 4).

Intimately connected with the above reason is another: the Old Testament should be studied by Christians, because of the numerous types of New Testament truths contained in it. Through all these ancient books we have what has been called God's great picture gallery, a veritable jewel-casket, filled with figures, types, and emblems of unmistakable significance and richest import. But these treasures are hid from the eyes of those who will spend no time in search of them. They are to be both blamed and pitied for their loss.

Christians should seek an intimate knowledge of the Old Testament because of its prophecies concerning the Jew and the land of Palestine, the Gentile nations and the earth, the coming judgments and the blessing in store for this groaning creation. Many of these prophecies are full of the most minute detail, and do much toward strengthening our faith and stimulating our zeal. Those already fulfilled, as well as those now coming to pass, notably those concerning the return of the Jews to the Holy Land, and connected events, furnish the soldier of Christ with a most powerful weapon with which to meet the attacks that are frequently made on the authenticity and inspiration of our ancient heritage, handed down to us from "Moses and the prophets."

Bound up with this is another reason the Christian has for becoming familiar by study with the Old Testament portion of the Word of God. It will furnish him with ability to meet the attempts to impugn the authority of and destroy faith in these old-time "Scriptures of truth." Knowledge of the actual con-

tents of the Old Testament books is often very shallow, and even a child could often show this if, like Timothy, he was instructed in these Scriptures. Groundless assertions are made before people who are appallingly ignorant of the Bible; and it is this general ignorance concerning the Old Testament that has given men the opportunity of which they have taken full advantage. But they fail utterly to shake or move those Christians who know their Bibles from Moses to Malachi. The fallaciousness of their statements is readily perceived by the devout student of Old Testament Scripture, and he is not deceived by their show of learning. When the expounders of the most recent theories have said their worst and boldest, the student of the Old Testament calmly says, like David in his Golden Alphabet, "O how I love Thy law; it is my meditation all the day."

The most important reason for studying the Old Testament Scripture is because they testify of Christ (John v. 39). Many seem to think that we have in the four Gospels all that may be known of Christ in this present world. They are much mistaken. "In all the Scriptures concerning Himself" He expounded to the two on their way to Emmaus. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10). The direct references to Christ in the Old Testament are numerous and full. How much the Christian misses of Christ when he omits to study it!

The little pocket Testament is all right to carry about with us during the day, to be read when opportunity offers or used in service when occasion occurs. But for study we must have a whole Bible, with both Old and New Testaments. Never let us slight the Old, though, like the New, it may contain many things "hard to be understood." The Spirit of God will help us to grasp the meaning, for it is His office to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us. And as these "things of Christ" are in the Old Testament as well as in the New, we may expect His gracious assistance in the understanding of them. "Back to Christ!" is a specious cry of the present day. Yes, but we must go further back than the four Gospels. We must go back through the prophets, back through the Psalms, back to the very beginning of the Word of God, where we read of Christ, the promised Seed of the woman, the divine Deliverer from the woes of sin. "Beginning at Moses," He spake of "the things concerning Himself." One of the greatest needs to-day is a deeper interest in and a more ardent desire for the living Word of God in the older portion of His Book. It is ancient, but by no means antiquated. If old, it is not decrepit; it still goes forth, working its wonders and proving by its marvellous virility and power that it is in very truth the Word of God, "quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword."

### A PRAYER.

Lord, help me live from day to day,  
In such a self-forgetful way,  
That even when I kneel to pray,  
My prayer shall be for—others.

Help me in all the work I do,  
To ever be sincere and true,  
And know that all I'd do for You  
Must needs be done for—others.

Let self be crucified and slain,  
And buried deep: and all in vain  
May efforts be to rise again,  
Unless to live for—others.

And when my work on earth is done,  
And my new work in Heaven's begun,  
May I forget the Crown I've won,  
While thinking still of—others.