

BOOK III.

CRITICS AT WORK.

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Introductory.

"The Old Testament is sitting, sir!"

It called up rather absurdly reminiscences of the poultry-yard, this statement with which a pompous official barred the entrance to the Jerusalem Chamber to some visitors of our acquaintance during the recent revision days. The information really conveyed was that behind those closed doors the Biblical critics of the Revision Company were working at the materials accessible to them for producing a correct version of the Old Testament, and the visitors must retire without gratifying their curiosity about either the historic chamber or the work of the revisers.

I trust the reader's interest has been by this time sufficiently aroused to make him share their curiosity in the latter particular, for a glance at the work in the Jerusalem Chamber would be a most valuable illustration of our "Lesson in Biblical Criticism." We have already roughly examined the accessible material—the "Old Hebrew Documents" and the "Other Old Documents" described in the preceding pages. We