

rated periods of the nation's life, and that the sixty-six chapters of Isaiah represent many stages of ethical prophecy and apocalyptic thought. Our discussion must relate itself to this history and rest upon this basis of modern critical scholarship.

Early Hebrew Religion.—According to the view now dominant, as to the age of the documents, we have no contemporary narratives from the earliest time; but while even fragments of our sources may reach back beyond 1000 B.C., there is no doubt primitive material that has been modified and very early beliefs and usages which have left traces in the later laws and literature. We see now quite clearly that there is no such thing as reaching back, either by history or speculation, to the beginning of the world. The Hebrews are comparatively a modern people; behind their history is that of ancient Arabia, Egypt, and Babylonia, and farther back is the dim pre-historic period. The Hebrews belong to the Semitic family. It is not probable that Egypt exerted any direct or powerful influence on their religion. Their early affinities are closer to the Arab tribes, and Babylonian influence affected them at various stages through the relation of those great Oriental empires to Palestine. Many religious beliefs and customs found among the members of the Semitic group are common to other races. The investigation of that subject belongs to the sphere of comparative religion. Of "a primitive monotheism," here or elsewhere, there can be no proof. Monotheism in any real sense is the result of a long, painful struggle; it has come to the world through what has been aptly called "the Divine discipline of Israel." In this respect both Christianity and Mohammedanism are dependent on the OT. To us with our conception of one God, who rules the whole world through the working of laws and the action of forces whose qualities and effects have been studied and catalogued by long centuries of toil, it requires a strong effort of imagination, assisted by the observation of many facts, to recreate the ancient view with its appropriate atmosphere. Then religion pervaded the whole of life; *supernatural* beings were everywhere, if we may use such a phrase of a time when no clear line was drawn be-