

future." Since prediction forms but a small section of Hebrew prophecy, he further says, and justly says, "It is a weakness rather than an excellence to exalt the predictive element as such. It is one of the evil fruits of an unwholesome apologetic that has been transmitted to us from the previous century, when there was a greedy grasping after anything and everything in the form of prediction that might in any way serve to exalt the supernatural character of the Bible."*

Notwithstanding these facts, the predictive element has generally been pressed and emphasized. This unfortunate emphasis has produced a powerful and widespread revulsion in the minds of scientific students of the Old Testament. As a reaction from the older views of prophecy, which magnify the predictive but minimize the moral element, many writers nowadays mention only the former and disregard entirely the latter characteristic. The one treatment of prophecy is as prejudiced and partial as the other treatment is one-sided and incomplete. While, as has been stated, according to certain declarations of Scripture, the element of prediction sometimes belongs to prophecy, this element must be regarded as comparatively unessential and subsidiary. The moral feature everywhere predominates true Hebrew prophecy. To deliver a divine message in obedience to a divine call is the essence of prophecy or prophetism.

Since detailed prediction occupies a secondary place in the communications of the prophets, the extent of their predictive power becomes a matter of minor interest. The important thing in this connection is an admission of the reality of the predictive element in prophecy. That the prophets sometimes uttered predictions can be demonstrated by specific Scripture passages. With the range or limit, though, of their predictive horizon we have nothing now to do. In certain cases, doubtless, the prediction might have been suggested by the existing circumstances to a person of great natural sagacity. Owing to their prophetic insight, the prophets, by their special spiritual training, might readily become skilful readers of the signs of the times, as many reverent writers on the subject have most

* "Messianic Prophecy," p. 34.