

teachings the rule of faith and practice. The modern critical study of the Bible is reaching practically the same results as have underlain Baptist practice from the beginning. Baptists are to-day doing a vast work in the practice and promotion of Bible study. They have a magnificent opportunity through their multitudinous educational institutions, through their Sunday School and Publication Societies, through their Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, through the Baptist Young People's Union, through the Baptist press, through their educated ministry, through improved methods of teaching in the Sunday Schools, through the encouragement of regular Bible study in the homes, through the endowment of Biblical research, and in a hundred other ways, to promote the scientific and popular study of the Bible, and thus to propagate the truth and advance the kingdom of Christ on earth. If Baptists are right in their distinctive views, the profounder study of the Scriptures will confirm them in their views, and the general promotion of such study will bring others nearer and nearer to the Baptist position. If Baptists are wrong in anything, such study will tend to correct their errors, which would be equally advantageous.

2. Next to the wide-spread enthusiasm for scientific and popular Bible study the feature of the age that most impresses me is *the zeal with which historical investigation is being carried forward*. Everything that pertains to the past life of man is to-day a matter of interest, and occupies the attention of a host of earnest and painstaking investigators. The determination to know all the knowable with respect to man's life on earth, expresses itself in anthropological research, in archaeological investigations, in the study of history proper. Church history is coming to be recognized by historical students, apart from their personal interest in Christianity, as one of the most important departments of the history of man as a social being. Church history is being studied more and more with a view to getting at the exact facts, and not so much as heretofore with a view to supporting preconceived theories. Baptists have not had anything like so large a share in the advancement of the science of church history as their numbers and their intelligence would lead one to expect. We have left it to others very largely to bring to light much that is most honorable in our own his-