

canon of criticism, as, *e.g.*, that Moses predicted and warned the people against a condition of things that would obtain under a monarchy; you are silenced at once by the assurance that Moses never wrote that prediction, and its existence in Deuteronomy is one of the evidences of the later origin of that book.

According to this rule, the prediction contained in Isaiah xiii. 1-xiv. 23 is declared to belong to the exile. The critics have to allow the element of prediction in it, for they do not place the composition as late as the conquest by Cyrus, and yet the overthrow of Babylon is clearly portrayed in this remarkable prophecy; and not only the fall of the Babylonian dynasty, but the utter desolation of the city and empire, an event that did not occur for some centuries after. The argument against the Isaianic authorship of this passage, and of nearly all that is objected to in this book, rests on this canon. But on what ground does the canon itself rest? What are the evidences in support of it? They ought to be very clear, and, in all fairness, they ought to be established independently of those passages that are in dispute. If the old school is not allowed to quote this prophecy, or any of the many passages in Isaiah, and in the Pentateuch generally, that contradict this new canon point blank, surely the new school should not be allowed to prove their canon by disputed passages. The new school are bound to show from independent evidence, from the fundamental character of prophecy, from principles clearly laid down by divine authority in respect to prophecy, that "the prophet always speaks, in the first instance, to his own contemporaries." Where is there such a principle laid down in scripture? It is no proof to point to the course followed by many prophets, and say, "These go by the rule." The opposite side can point to Moses and Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel, and say, "These go against the rule." Upon investigation, the canon will be found a modern invention, as an offset to the old school canon, that "a prophet is sometimes immersed in spirit in the future, and holds converse, as it were, with generations yet unborn." The two rules have precisely the same authority, *i.e.*, they are both modern inventions to explain supposed difficulties. Each is a more or less plausible conjecture. Neither is certain; neither is of sufficient authority either to establish or overthrow the authorship of any prophecy.

The Book of Isaiah has suffered sad mutilation at the hands