

false ; whether such books have been preserved to us in their integrity or have suffered probable losses in their transmission; whether their text, as it now appears, is original or derived, pure or composite. Inquiries of this nature, if properly conducted, are as justifiable in the sphere of sacred as of profane literature. In fact, the higher the claims of a book, the more imperative are these researches. And the Bible, so far from disputing this freedom of examination, and confronting those who attempt it with the "*Procul, O procul este, profani,*" of the pagan oracles, courts examination, urges investigation and study as one of the surest means of securing those higher objects which it has in view.

But there is criticism, and criticism so-called. Like everything that is human, biblical investigations may be governed by a false spirit, may employ wrong methods, and so, instead of reaching correct results, may achieve only a still greater confusion and uncertainty. It may fail, for instance, to confine itself within its proper limits, claiming a prerogative that can never be accorded to it. It may assume misleading premises. It may fall short of taking account of essential facts. With the strongest protestations of sincerity, it may be clearly governed by invincible prepossessions making the goal of truth impossible to it. It may, in short, so conduct itself that among sober and reverent men who are not scholars and do not know how to discriminate in such matters the very word "criticism" may become an offence, a synonym for cynical refinements, for unbelief and hostility to the truth. Hence, in weighing the apparent results of criticism, we have to weigh the criticism also. The only really formidable thing in this world is truth. If modern biblical criticism has actually and finally overturned any of the essential doctrines of Christianity, it is because the facts have been found to be on the side of the criticism.

The doctrine of the authority of the Bible and of the whole Bible as a revelation from God, seems to be fundamental to the system of Christian faith as generally held. If the Old Testament be shown to be without genuineness or authenticity, there is scarcely one important doctrine of the New Testament that is not, in consequence, undermined. It must be admitted that our Lord and His apostles looked upon the new dispensation which they ushered in as developed directly from the old. In their minds the one held the relation to the other of a plant to its root. Jesus said that he had not come "to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill." He claimed that Moses wrote of Him, and on one occasion expounded to His disciples "in all the Scriptures," the things concerning himself. As a recent distinguished biblical scholar has stated it : "Our Lord rested his whole life and teaching upon the Old Covenant, declaring Himself to be the Redeemer to whom that Covenant had looked forward from the first, the culmination of its hopes and promises, and always represented His