

verification. Every scholar in our days who would be exact in his methods and sure of his results will test his own work by the methods of Criticism; and he will not accept the work of another until he has submitted it to the same tests himself, or has seen it tested by others.

The scholars of previous centuries were not so exact in their methods and were less careful in their work. They have handed down an immense mass of learning, the most of which they received by tradition from others. They accepted it without criticism, and they transmitted it as they received it. The modern scholar cannot accept this mass without criticism any more than he can accept the new learning of the present age. It is necessary to pass it all through the fires of criticism before we can give it our confidence and build upon it for the future.

The Christian Evidences have the same elements of uncertainty attached to them that we find in all other branches of human learning. They are traditional. They have not been sufficiently tested by scholars of previous generations.

Criticism has a twofold work; it is destructive of error, and it is constructive of truth. Its first work is destructive. The error must be destroyed before the truth can be given its place. This is the easier work of criticism. It is less difficult to pull down than to build up; to see a fault than to appreciate an excellence; to kill an error than to quicken a germ of truth. We are not surprised that the great majority of critics have been destructive, and that the chief work of criticism, thus far, has been the destruction of error; but constructive criticism has not been wanting.

1. There can be no doubt that Recent Criticisms have considerably weakened the evidences from Miracles and Predictive Prophecy. To many minds it would be easier to believe in the Inspiration of the Scriptures and the Divinity of Jesus Christ if there were no such things as Miracles and Prediction in the Sacred Scriptures. The older apologetic made too much of the external marvels of miracle working and sought to find in History the fulfillment of the minute details of prediction. But it has been found easier to prove the divinity of Christ without miracles. Belief in miracles needs to be sustained by faith in Jesus Christ. It is necessary to prove the inspiration of the Scriptures as the product of the spirit of prophecy before we can advance with profit into the special field of prediction. Even the Scriptures themselves recognize miracle working and prediction in false prophets, and teach us to distinguish the true miracle and the true prediction from the false by their internal character and their conformity to truth and fact. Recent Criticisms have brought these lines of evidences into better accord with the representations of the Bible itself.

The Old Testament is full of Theophanies; and in the New Testament there are many Christophanies and Pneumatophanies. These