

childhood with Eastern modes of thought and expression, and in the second place that the books of the Old Testament constitute but a fragment of the Hebrew literature that once existed. Consequently our knowledge of the Hebrew lexicon and grammar is exceedingly imperfect. We are dependent for what we know of it on the traditional interpretation of that fraction of it which is contained in the Old Testament and upon a text which in many places is confessedly corrupt. It would not be possible in the case of a modern English book, like the novels of Besant and Rice, which is known to be the work of two authors, to distinguish accurately the portions that belong to each; how, then, can it be possible to do so in the case of the Hebrew Scriptures? And yet this is just what "criticism," so-called, professes to be able to do.

The fact is, that this sort of criticism is built up not only upon imperfect evidence, but also upon a basis far too narrow for the superstructure which has been raised upon it. The instrument of scientific discovery is comparison, but the language and contents of the Old Testament have been compared only with themselves. We must enlarge the area of comparison before we can arrive at any trustworthy results. In other words, we must call in the aid of Oriental archeology, and compare the narratives and literature of the Old Testament with the monuments left us by the civilized nations of the ancient East.

Whether the newer criticism is to stand or fall depends upon the judgment to be passed on its conclusions in regard to the Pentateuch. This is the pivot upon which the whole question turns. If the so-called "critical" method is right, the Pentateuch, instead of being the work of Moses, becomes a literary mosaic, consisting of chapters and paragraphs and even tiny morsels of verses, cut out of the works of a number of different authors, all of whom lived ages after the Exodus. So cleverly have they been pieced together by a compiler as to deceive Jews, Samaritans, and Christians up to the present day. The narratives contained in them are derived for the most part from popular tradition, and, since they were written down centuries after events they profess to record, are little worthy of credit. So far from being the earliest portion of Scriptures, the foundation upon which the religion of Israel rested, the Law, is later than the prophets, and marks a period of religious decline. The tabernacle with which it was associated was as much a fiction as the revelation on Mount Sinai, and owed its origin partly to the ideal temple described by Ezekiel, partly to the temple of Zerubbabel.

Against these conclusions, archeology raises a protest which is daily growing stronger and more emphatic. The "critical" position depends in large measure upon the unavowed assumption that the use of writing for literary purposes was not known among the Israelites till long after the Mosaic age. But we now know that such an assump-