

detailed laws and groups of laws into a code at the time subsequent to the conquest, all the conditions of variation and development might be explained.' Between this and the contention of 1893 the gulf is deep and wide. The last book displays no greater learning than the earlier essay, and in logical vigor it is decidedly inferior. His last volume has certainly not added to his reputation. Its learning is undigested. The material is chaotic. The tone of argument is not judicial. There is a painful want of logical clearness and consistency. Ingenious suggestions take the place of proof. Dangerous and revolutionary theories are modified by a personal caveat. Their logical issue is simply evaded. Names are made to take the place of evidence. The reader is overawed by a list of authorities, in which all schools are indiscriminately jumbled together. The counter arguments are in the main ignored, and conservative critics are labelled in school-boy fashion. The reader who can divest himself of prejudice lays down the book with the feeling that if this is the best that can be said, the problem has not even been clearly stated, and that its solution is a long way off. And the same judgment must be passed upon Canon Driver's book, which Professor Briggs speaks of as 'invaluable,' many a page of which bristles with assumptions for which not the slightest evidence is given. The critical processes are reverential in spirit, but they are very far from being severely scientific; and the historical criticism is thoroughly loose and arbitrary. The traditional view of the origin of the present Pentateuch may require modification, but the present mediating school cannot be said to have defended the credibility of the Old Testament, and its claim to being the record of a divine revelation, against the assaults of the destructive critics."

#### Sabbath Observance.

AN important conference took place on Thursday last at Toronto, between representatives from Hamilton and Toronto on the question of Sabbath Observance, the outcome of which was the decision to form a Provincial Sabbath Observance Society, and to hold a public conference at Toronto on the 31st inst., in furtherance of the same object; also that steps be taken to test the sufficiency of the existing law to suppress certain classes of desecration of the Lord's Day. This action has not been taken too soon. It has been proved over and over again that in order to effect changes in legislation, organization is necessary, and the friends of the Sabbath Day cannot afford to stand aloof. There ought to be a Sabbath Observance Committee in every congregation, irrespective of sect, and a general committee in each community with Provincial and Dominion connections. The making of laws is in the hands of politicians, and to a greater extent than is desirable the enforcement of the law is controlled by the same body of men. To offset this, public opinion in a consolidated form must be brought to bear, and that can only be done when the Christian people of the country are organized and determined. As to the effect on the community a contemporary well puts it: When the Christian Church will consent to magnify the divine command, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy"—not seeking worldly pleasure or gain on that sacred day; not joining hands with Sabbath-breaking directors of corporations; not secularizing holy hours by admitting Sunday newspapers into the home—then will a new era break upon the nation. The spiritual significance of the

Sabbath, as the holy sign between God and man of all good, will then become widely apparent. The Holy Spirit will then give to moral and Christian reforms of every kind a new impulse. In a word, the responsibility of right Sabbath observance, with all its attendant blessings, rests upon the Church of Jesus Christ. The Sabbath question will never find its proper place in the nation until its discussion is brought more fully within the realm of conscience. An awakened moral conviction throughout the land must precede Sabbath civil statutes, otherwise such legislation will be loose and below the divine standard. This moral awakening will transpire just as soon as Christian example is in accordance with the Fourth Commandment, when our schools will give moral truth a full chance to assert itself, and when the home life will more generally guard the Lord's day against harmful perversions.

Stick to your Last. Says the Mid-Continent: At one time Presbyterian journalism was—Presbyterian journalism. Now, in certain quarters, it is a little of everything not half so well done as by secular illustrated weeklies, whose overcrowded field the broad, liberal editor strives to enter.

A Presbyterian There is a strong desire manifested in several quarters in the United States for a Presbyterian Congress. It is pointed out that the machinery of the Church is so great that business absorbs the Church meetings, while a Congress would do much to remove difficulties which arise in critical and practical problems, and would bring about a better understanding by close and candid intercourse.

The Shorter Catechism. DR. BOYD, of Scotland, who used to be well known in this country by his delightful essays, "The Recreations of a Country Parson," in a sermon recently preached in Edinburgh, took occasion to throw in a reminiscence to the effect that when he was a boy he had to repeat the half of the Shorter Catechism after coming from church on one Sabbath and the other half on the following Sabbath, and it was no trouble, it was so firmly rooted in his memory. He said he had been a doctor of divinity for thirty years, and to this day whenever he was in any difficulty on any question of theological science he reverted to the definitions of the Shorter Catechism, than which he knew no better. Some years ago Dr. John Hall, of New York, also made a very pleasing testimony—that when as a young man attending church services, if he had heard any statement in the sermon of which he felt uncertain, he was wont to try it by some plummet line of the Shorter Catechism, and that thus while still a youth he could find his home training in that little book "profitable for doctrine."

#### The Old and the New.

The Old Year laid upon the portals of the Past  
A trembling hand,  
And said, "Oh, let me die and be at rest  
Within thy misty land!"  
Then all the years that lived and died before  
Reached forth, and drew the wanderer safe within the door.

The New Year laid upon the portals of To day  
A firm young hand,  
and said, "Oh, let me come and live and work  
Within thy shining land!"  
Then all the years that are to be replied,  
"This is your world," and drew the youth inside.

—Kathleen R. Wheeler, in Lippincott's.