

Andover controversy in the Congregational, and the Briggs debate in the Presbyterian, yet as a rule even these stand in close touch and tone with the general problems that modern theological thought throughout Protestantism has under consideration. The most typically modern theological school is that of Ritschl in Germany; yet the position taken there is to all intents and purposes the same as that of the *Theologie de la Conscience* of French Protestantism and of much of the advanced theology in the English-speaking theological world, especially as this has been made prominent in the biblical discussions of recent years. These facts and data show that it is possible now, as probably never before, to speak of certain trends and tendencies as characteristic of theological thought in general.

This is an age of biblical study and research. Not at any time since the Reformation era have the Sacred Scriptures themselves been so much the center around which the theological discussions of the church circle, as is the case at present. Not for many decades has there been such a general and intense interest in the various phases of biblical problems as now pervades Christian scholarship. The most minute detail in the externals of Scriptures, such as their archeology, geography, and chronology, elicit an unprecedented concern on the part of scholars, and even the most minute fact learned from the unearthed literature of the Bible lands—Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt, etc.—is carefully weighed as to its value for biblical lore and interpretation. Everything within the whole world of exact scholarship is being utilized for the study of the sacred records.

Were this zeal for Bible study merely a revival of emphasis laid upon the formal principle of the Reformation, according to which the Scriptures, and they alone, are the sole source of Christian faith and life, then this, the most marked feature of modern theological thought, would be directly in the line of Protestant traditions and ideals. It is impossible to lay too much stress on the importance of building upon the foundation laid by the Apostles and Prophets. And according to the cardinal principle of Evangelical Protestantism, not a traditional reliance upon the Scripture, but one based upon personal conviction and upon an investigation of the claims and tenets of Holy Writ, is the *sine qua non* of our faith. There has been and there is still such a thing as dead orthodoxy, a traditional adherence to dogmatical systems or exegetical teachings of former generations not the outcome of individual research or study. Nothing could be farther from the teachings and spirit of the Reformers than an adoption of the Scriptural principle in such a superficial and blind manner. We are to speak because we believe not what former generations have developed, but because we ourselves have read and have become convinced.

While it goes without saying that a good deal of the Bible study of the day is in harmony with Reformation methods and manners, it is