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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—ARCHEOLOGY VERSUS OLD TESTAMENT LITERARY CRITICISM.

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IN spite of the title I have given to this article, there is no real antagonism between archeology and literary criticism. On the contrary the archeologist is bound to welcome all literary criticism which is based on sufficient evidence and is conducted in accordance with a sound method. It prepares the way for the application of his archeological facts by explaining the meaning and character of the documents to which he applies them. But, unfortunately, the literary criticism of the Old Testament has come to signify a very different kind of a criticism, one, indeed, which has won its way to notoriety chiefly by the startling and extravagant nature of its results, and the confidence with which they have been put forward.

The confidence, however, is in inverse proportion to the solidity of the foundations on which they rest. When we ask for the evidence upon which the unanimous belief of centuries is reversed and the authenticity and historical trustworthiness of the Old Testament Scriptures are alike denied, we find that it consists almost entirely of a philological analysis made by modern European or American scholars. Passages are torn from their context and assigned to authors who are supposed to have lived centuries after the events they record, merely on the strength of a few words or idioms which the philologist assumes to indicate a particular author and a particular date. And the conclusions so arrived at are supported by microscopic contradictions detected in the text (many of which, however, are due to the arbitrary interpretations of the critic), or by the dogmatic assertion that the statements contained in it are incredible.

But it is forgotten that, in the first place, Hebrew is a dead language, and that the critics are not even modern Orientals familiar from