

own way. But to elicit or even to understand a narrative from a witness differing from ourselves in conceptions, language and habits, is often a difficult task and requires the use of trained intelligence and skill. It is here that expert study, and the methods of historical criticism come in; and here is the reason why in the interests of truth, in the interests of the Books themselves, we ask to have reverent study left free: traditions, as we know from other cases, and as we have seen here, are not always formed very intelligently, their value varies with their date, and the fact that the Church has never pledged its members to the particular traditions here concerned, gives us the fullest right to demand such freedom.

It is true that some objection is made to treating the books of the Bible as other books are treated. It is surely sufficient answer to point to the results of treating the books of the New Testament in such a way: as a consequence of such treatment we know more of them both in general truths and single details than was ever known before. Why should we apply different canons of literature or history to the Bible from those applied elsewhere? To conclude, as your Lordship does, that "to compose speeches to put in the mouths of historical personages," is to destroy the historical value of the work where it is done, or to lower its character as a vehicle of truth, seems unnecessary. A canon that asserted any work where this is done to be unhistorical would put out of court Thucydides who (Ek. 1, 22) confesses he does it: not only the mediæval chroniclers but even later writers do the same. It is surely then no argument against criticism that it concludes this to have been done by some Old Testament writers.

I have distinguished in my sermon between the *methods* and the *results* of the Higher Criticism (a distinction at times lost sight of) because while the method itself is correct, its results so far as reached at present, may be only a step towards finality although not final. An excellent illustration of this is