

INTRODUCTION.

THE following lectures have been prepared for the simple purpose of presenting, in as concise and popular a manner as possible, modern ideas of the Bible. No way of indicating what that book is seems at present so promising as to inquire how and when it came to be. No amount of critical argument applied to the text itself is likely to convince many that the Scriptures are less than infallible, so long as the impression subsists that these writings were produced in some miraculous fashion, and therefore, as to their composition, are as distinct from other books as light is from darkness. But if it can be shown that these writings were a natural growth in Israel, that they are without exception severally the product of conditions and exigencies which are still traceable, that in many cases they bear a wholly fictitious date and authorship, there is no need to go further or make any direct assault upon infallibility. In every reasonable mind that theory surrenders without more ado.

A very great importance therefore attaches to this discussion. Whatever a man's views on the subject, he must