

affection clung to it as long as possible. She sails all the better for re-adjusting her freight, and after every storm she is in better trim to meet the next encounter.

To look back at some of the storms of the last half-century—there was the Tübingen squall, when it seemed to some timid souls as if the winds and waves of German criticism would tear the New Testament into tatters. Well, that storm subsided; the Tübingen school is nowhere now; the later disciples of Baur have discredited the conclusions of their own master. We English-speaking people have the Revised Version as the result of the latest criticism, and what have we lost? A short verse or two here and there have been "thrown overboard," others have been altered a little, and that is all. The credit of the fourth Gospel has been grandly vindicated; the Catholic Faith is as inviolate as ever.

Then there was the Eschatological squall, raised by Canon Farrar and others. That was very fierce as long as it lasted, and certainly the ship was lightened of a load in consequence. But we all feel that what was then cast away was not any part of the treasure committed to the crew by the Divine Master of the ship, but rather the curious constructions of various ages, very cumbersome and very ugly, which she had piled up in her hold. Doubtless they had served a good purpose in their day, but they were felt to be useless lumber now.

But before that there was another fearful storm; the Essays-and-Reviews squall. How violent that was while it lasted! But, now that it is all over, how has it left the ship? It would not be true to say it had no effect on her. The fact was, it drove her to shape her course more truly; and while not throwing overboard anything of value, she is in better trim to-day, thanks to that storm, to withstand the next one, which is now upon us, blowing from the same quarter.

The clouds began to gather, and the heavens looked very dark when the Encyclopedia Britannica came out with the articles by Prof. Robertson Smith, and others, respecting the Pentateuch, and various other books of the Bible. Oh! how the wind blew then! and ever since, indeed, has the gale been raging. The blasts of the higher criticism have grown stronger and stronger. They will not overwhelm the ship; there is no fear of that; but we wonder how she will trim her sails and stow her cargo in order to weather it.

The assaults on the Old Testament—or rather our present conceptions regarding the Old Testament—are very fierce just now. Many things hinted at in "Essays and Reviews" are now openly accepted as matters of course, and that not by "latitudinarians," or "unbelievers," or "scoffers," but by earnest Christians who are devoted to the faith.

I lately read over again Professor Jowett's essay on "Inspiration" in "Essays and Reviews," and compared it with Principal Gore's essay in "Lux Mundi," and I could not help thinking what a change had come over the spirit of the church in the interval between these two publications. Many of the remarks in the former of these, which scandalized the pious then, are mere truisms to-day.

In speaking of the chronological discrepancies in some of the books, and other like difficulties, Prof. Jowett says: "A principle of progressive revelation admits them all." And Mr. Gore insists upon the same idea—"the gradualness of the Spirit's method"—in revela-

tion. Both believed in the inspiration of Scripture; but both believed that inspiration to be quite compatible with imperfect knowledge of physics, chronology and history on the part of the writers. If so, it naturally follows that the further back we go in the history of human civilization the more imperfect and crude will be the knowledge in natural things of the writers of that age. Such a theory of inspiration might of course shock and distress those of the pious who have conceived of inspiration as extending to "every word, every syllable, every letter." But this pious opinion has never been the faith of the Catholic Church, as the Duke of Argyle and Mr. Gladstone both pointed out, in the Nineteenth Century, in their several answers to Professor Huxley. Mr. Gore, too, says: "The Church repudiated the Montanist conception of inspiration according to which the inspired man spoke in ecstasy as the passive unconscious instrument of the Spirit; and the metaphors which would describe the Holy Spirit as acting upon a man 'like a flute-player breathing into his flute,' or 'a plectrum striking the lyre,' have always a suspicion of heresy attached to their use." (Lux Mundi, essay viii.)

In the meantime the storm rages; the battle is waxing hot. Professors Briggs and Smith, of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, are "catching it" just now. I see by the last reports that among the charges brought against Dr. Briggs are, that he teaches that Moses did not write all the Pentateuch, and that Isaiah did not write all the book that goes by his name. I imagined that by this time nearly all the scholars were agreed upon these two points. At any rate, some Canadian divines are outspoken enough. The students of Queen's University have comparatively lately published the "Second Series of Sunday Afternoon Addresses in Convocation Hall." All of these addresses are excellent. There is a healthy, breezy, broad-minded tone pervading them all that refreshes and invigorates one. Three of them are by Principal Grant, and one by no less a person than the redoubtable Dr. Briggs himself. Perhaps some timid souls would fear that because some of the discourses deal favorably with the higher criticism they must necessarily be "destructive." Such persons would be agreeably disappointed; they would find in Dr. Briggs a man not only of learning but of strong faith in Christ and ardent love of the Word of God. Dr. Grant's addresses plainly and boldly endorse the findings of Robertson Smith, Cheyne, Driver, Gore, and men of that school. But far from being "destructive" of the citadel of the Faith, these scholars seek merely to reconstruct and strengthen its approaches.

Another very remarkable book, as being "abreast of the times," is "The book of Isaiah," by Rev. Geo. Adam Smith. It is a part of "The Expositors' Bible," and it is published by the Willard Tract Depository of Toronto. Surely this last-named fact gives it the imprimatur of Evangelical Orthodoxy; and yet the whole work is based on the "Higher Criticism." Dr. Briggs only teaches (I mean in the matter of Isaiah) what this publication of the Tract Depository asserts throughout. It is a most fascinating book; one is impressed not only with the erudition, but also with the deep spirituality of its author. Still I must own it is not without a pang one marks the entire absence of the old

cherished ideas concerning many passages, and one is inclined to resent the reduction of these passages to meet merely the immediate circumstances of the prophet's time. But the best corrective and tonic for a disturbed faith is to read the whole book through; and also Rev. Brownlow Maitland's "Argument from Prophecy," which, though brief, is excellent, and argues from much the same standpoint.

What, then, is the result so far? What is the outlook for the "Ark of Christ's Church" in the midst of this violent storm? Better, I conceive, far better, than it was during the prevalence of the Essays-and-Reviews squall. She has stowed her cargo better: the "Plim-soll line" of demarcation, between what is to be held as *de fide* and what is matter of pious but shifting opinion, is more closely observed. The theology of her exponents is based more solidly on the great central fact of the Faith, i.e., the Incarnation: it is more christo-centric, so to speak: it insists that "God hath in these last days spoken to us all in His Son," however theologians may interpret the "divers portions" and the "divers manners," by which He spake to the few in the times of old (Heb. 1: 1, 2). The trouble with the authors of "Essays and Reviews" was that while engaged in exposing to view and rejecting some misconceptions and mistranslations concerning the Bible they ran perilously near throwing overboard the "deposit of the Faith." Bishop Colenso and his school actually did so. This is not the danger in the new movement. The Catholic Faith—the faith of the Nicene Creed in the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Holy Catholic Church—is emphasized most strongly by the modern school, the school of "Lux Mundi," in the Anglican Church, and of the "Scottish Church Society," lately founded by men of such world-wide fame as Drs. Milligan and A. H. K. Boyd.

The Holy Scriptures are the compass by which the church must ever steer; but it is necessary that the "variations" of the compass should be constantly rectified by an appeal to the pole-star of Truth; and the ship herself must be kept seaworthy. These storms try her. Sometimes the hearts of her pilots and mariners seem ready to sink with fear. But the Master is within her; let them hearken to His chiding, "Why are ye so fearful, oh ye of little faith!" He will keep His own; and by and bye He will bring us into the haven where we would be.

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ALMONTE, ONT.

## PARIS LETTER.

France is thoroughly surfeited with her Panamino; even the most reckless accusations cease now to "catch on." Excess kills. Opinion leaves to the Assize Court and the general elections next October, all lictor duty; it counts upon the Government in the interval to take up and push forward the current business of the nation and to pass the most pressing of the needful and popular reforms. The extreme journals still write wildly, but it is flogging only a dead abuse; the country has made up its mind, and the sobriety of its judgment ensures resignation as the prelude to an approved verdict. A flicker up of the Panama scandals will likely ensue when Dr. Herz comes through to Paris, and that his shadow may never grow less for some months after his arrival is a consummation devoutly to be wished. His pal, his "eminencegrise," Arton, is also ex-