

never can be anything more than conjectural. But the case is not without a parallel at a much more recent time. One of the most remarkable books in the New Testament is the Epistle to the Hebrews; and yet no man living knows the author; nor has anyone known it, so far as we can discover, for the past 1800 years. He has been lost under the name of Paul as completely as the great unknown of the exile was lost under the name of Isaiah. And perhaps for the same reason. Whoever he was, he owed so much to his great predecessor, that he was content to have God receive all the glory and himself to pass into oblivion.

As regards the discourses in the first part of the collection that appear to relate to the time of the exile, the case is somewhat different. Obviously addresses which are interspersed among those acknowledged to belong to Isaiah have a much stronger *prima facie* claim to be regarded as his than a separate series added at the end. Furthermore, there is only one of them in which the historical allusions are so distinct and clear as apparently to demand a later date, viz. : that contained in chaps. 13-14, which describes in graphic terms the approaching destruction of Babylon. If that is Isaiah's the rest may well be his also. Now this one is distinctly ascribed to Isaiah in an inscription which stands at the head of it. Smith in his commentary dismisses this inscription rather summarily as being simply the report of tradition, and of a later date than the rest of the text. But it can hardly be disposed of so easily. Of course it may have been only a marginal note by some copyist that has found its way into the text without due authority, like those put at the end of Paul's epistles in many manuscripts and printed texts, but now universally discarded. But in the meantime the manuscript evidence here is decidedly against that view. The oldest version, the Septuagint contains it as well as, I believe, every known manuscript of the Hebrew. Even if it does represent only a tradition, that tradition is at least very early and very distinct and so entitled to respect. If the early editors were so indiscriminating and reckless, why did they not date all the discourses? Their very reserve in other cases shows that they were not wholly uncritical. And until we get some better evidence, it is safe to be guided by what we have, avoiding all dogmatism as to what it was possible or impossible for a prophet to do. The facts should govern the theory and not *vice versa*.

Nor should it seem to us such an unnatural thing that Isaiah should foretell the destruction of Babylon. Assyria rather than Babylon was certainly