

is menacing them in an altogether different direction. While they are contending about details, principles are being questioned. The ground on which both parties to the Bishop of Lincoln's trial stand is being undermined beneath their feet. For the question at issue is nothing less than this, Has God proceeded on a definite plan in His training of man since the foundation of the world, or was Christianity an entirely new thing? The real tendency of the new movement may be concealed for the present. English Biblical critics so far have only accepted a few of the conclusions of their foreign brethren. They have hesitated to adopt their method, and to follow it out boldly to its legitimate results. But sooner or later we shall have to face the consequences involved in the present fashion in Old Testament criticism. It lands us in the position which the early Church distinctly refused to accept. In the second century Marcion subjected the Old Testament Scriptures to the destructive criticism in vogue in his day. He rejected the Old Testament altogether, and declared Christianity to be entirely a new religion. The Christian Church at once repudiated his opinions. They have entirely disappeared for seventeen centuries, and almost all we know of them now is derived from the elaborate refutation of them by Tertullian. But the old Marcionite doctrine is again before us in modern dress. The new criticism practically sets aside the Old Testament as the channel of a Divine revelation, and its ultimate result is to deny the existence of any Divine scheme for the training of man, carried on by means of supernatural interpositions, until the coming of Jesus Christ. Nor is this all. The denial of the supernatural character of the revelations made by God to Abraham, Moses, and the prophets (for it is one characteristic of the German criticism that all prophecies must have been written after the event) does a vast deal to rob the supernatural element in Christianity of its credibility. If the miraculous were never heard of before Christ, the evidence for the Christian miracles is weakened, and the evidence of prophecy vanishes. There is but a short step from this to the entire elimination of the supernatural from Christianity. Such teaching is a dangerous approxi-