

the . . . ves of the East, and bishops and deans and reverend professors grubbing in the mouldering dirt of the old manuscripts, hurrying about from one document to another to investigate the evidence about the passages in question?

Comfort yourself, my reader. The parchments and the dirt are safe in their repositories all over the different libraries of Europe. The dirty work has been already done. For a hundred years past patient scholars have been toiling in many lands over the masses of ancient Biblical lore, and the results of their toil appear in the clean and carefully prepared sheets that lie on the revisers' table. Beside each column of the Hebrew are accurate annotations, telling of every important variation that has been discovered, whether in some of the Massoretic manuscripts, or in the Samaritan, or in certain copies of the Septuagint, or in the Syriac or Vulgate versions. If the Talmud or Targums, or any of the mediæval Jewish commentators, or any other authorities, have light to throw on a passage, their information too is carefully recorded. So that, it will be seen, the evidence for or against any particular reading is manifest at a glance.

### III.

#### Defects of our Specimen.

Before proceeding to examine the work of the Old Testament revisers, it is necessary to remark that, though the most convenient specimen, it is by no