

An unreasoning conservatism and a presumptuous radicalism are thus both at fault—both to be treated as hindrances to the full apprehension of Divine truth and the interpretation of Scripture. The application of the critical spirit and method to theological studies by which our own age claims to be pre-eminently distinguished, must not be regarded with any alarm. It is inevitable and it is desirable that all doctrines should be thoroughly sifted, that the strong wind of criticism should blow away all the chaff, and the wheat only remain. The doctrine of the Canon, Textual Criticism, the Interpretation of Scripture, the History of Dogma, and Dogma itself are all subjected to the most rigid scrutiny; sometimes, indeed, by men whose only qualifications for such work are intellectual and literary, but also by men of equal parts and attainments who love and reverence the Word of God. The final result will be good; “those things which cannot be shaken will remain.” The substance of the message which the New Testament delivers has in all ages been apprehended truly by the pious, and there is no danger that when scientific criticism has accomplished its work the great lines of evangelical doctrine will be laid in another direction; nor is it possible that in the coming days the Bible will be less to its devout students than it has been to God’s children in the past. We do not claim that theology, in any department of it, has fully accomplished its task, and that nothing remains to be done by those who shall come after us. Let scientific theology press forward in its legitimate course, for it has its rights and its own value; but let us not expect from it results which it cannot yield, nor for a moment imagine that any possible reconstruction of theology will remove the difficulties which, we are often told, make faith too hard for a scientific age and alienate large numbers of religious spirits from the Christian Church.

II.—THE HIGHER CRITICISM AND THE TOMBS OF EGYPT.

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“ Misri’s poems once the Mufti took,
Read them one by one, to note their claim,
Then deliberate threw them in the flame;
Went to nothing the fair-lettered book.”

—GOETHE, *West Easterly Divan*.

ALL who have followed the writings of the “Higher Critics” must have been struck with their scant recognition of modern Oriental discoveries. Many of these works would not afford a hint that their authors suspected that there was such a thing in existence as an ancient Babylonian and Egyptian literature. It is an astonishing fact that in all these voluminous