

tions cannot constitute them Higher critics or the reverse. Higher criticism is to be distinguished from Textual (Lower) Criticism, and if the name *Lower* had been applied to the introductory science, confusion would not have arisen in regard to the one appropriately designating the advanced science. A Delitzsch, or a Green, or a Bissell, who seeks to answer the above questions is a Higher Critic; so is a Wellhausen, or a Smith, or else a scholar who is conducting such investigations cannot be placed at all until he has reached his conclusions; and, then, from the point of view of such scholars as attach a stigma to the term, he is to be called a Higher Critic, should he have departed in his conclusions from conservative views; while with those who deny the right of Wellhausen and his school to the name Higher Critic, our enquirer would be excluded from the class. The confusion on both sides is removed by making the term refer, not to the results, and not altogether to the methods, but to the character of the questions, which the critic of all beyond the mere text proposes.

Higher critics may be divided into conservative critics, evangelical critics, extreme critics, rationalistic critics, etc. If a term is desired to describe the extreme critics of Germany and elsewhere, "newer" is temporarily unobjectionable; but it is not right to destroy the meaning of a carefully chosen word by applying the term *Higher* exclusively to Wellhausenism, nor, on the other hand, should we exclude from our class men of his stamp simply on account of their conclusions, and this not because Wellhausenism is praiseworthy, but because the term Higher is to be used as distinguished from Textual and refers to a special form of enquiry. C.

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### ⇒ EDITORIAL NOTES. ⇐

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**Critical Study.**—Why should theological students and ministers who are to devote their lives to the practical work of saving souls, spend time either in working out, or in following out questions which demand careful and exhaustive study, and which do not have a direct and practical bearing upon the work they have in hand? Is not such work to be done by specialists? Can anything more be expected than a knowledge, perhaps, of the more important of the results reached by specialists? Away then with all study which looks toward a familiarity with the meaning of Hebrew words, or with the niceties of Greek syntax.

Who has not heard such thoughts expressed again and again? But have those who feel thus ever stopped to consider all that is involved in this? It would be difficult, we believe, to find a train of thought more demoralizing, or more vicious in its tendency.

No man is fair to himself, or true to the religion which he professes, who does not avail himself of all possible means to ascertain the exact meaning of the Book which he preaches, or, at least, of the particular text which is under treatment. It is no excuse to say that he has no time for the critical and exegetical study of the Bible. The clergyman who will substitute for this study, the study of science, or of literature, or of history, or who will allow the direct and pressing work of his parish, important though it be, to cause him to give up or neglect critical and thorough study of the Bible, comes far short of being a *true* minister.

The man who neglects to do for himself a fair amount of thorough Biblical study, need not attempt to satisfy himself that it is sufficient for him to accept the results of others. For he should remember that, unless he himself has conducted similar investigations, unless he has learned how to go to the root of matters, he need not expect to have any clear or accurate knowledge of results reached by this kind of work. One cannot, in fact, entirely separate "results" from methods and from the means employed to obtain them. It is only the superficial mind that is satisfied with ascertaining the mere results without endeavoring to follow out, at least in part, the means adopted to gain the results. Unless, therefore, the minister is, to some extent, able to employ the means, the results have not for him the same force. The man who is careless about means and methods is also careless about "results." The more nearly he approaches a specialist in his ability to follow or work out the results, the more clearly he will appreciate and understand results which he may not have worked out.

That there is a work for specialists to do is as certain as that ministers and laymen cannot do such work. But let us note two things: As the minister is liable to go to one extreme, the specialist is liable to go to the other. The scholar who confines himself to a single line of work, who does not have true spiritual discernment, who does not observe the practical bearing of God's word upon men and events,—such a man's decision cannot be final. Ministers are unable to bring to the study of the Word, an exhaustive acquaintance with all the departments which throw light upon it; but they *can* bring that practical knowledge, that common sense which is invaluable, and without which learning is worthless. And again; there will be found specialists in no department of study in which there are not many students. It is not possible for every man who wills, to be a specialist. The specialist in a given field is one man in a thousand, engaged in work in the same field. Unless a large number manifest an interest, and a disposition to work, there is no hope that men will be led to devote themselves especially to a single line. Out of many, there will rise up a few, who have for such work a fondness and an aptitude.

In order that ministers may be true to the profession which they have chosen or to which they have been called, in order that they may be able to avail themselves of the results reached by specialists, in order that they may counteract the often dangerous tendencies of the specialist, and, on the other hand, make it possible for specialists to be raised up, let them do the largest possible amount of honest critical and exegetical study of the Word they preach; let them show their esteem for this divine revelation, by treating it as it deserves to be treated; let them *not* suppose that there is any work for which this work ought to be substituted, or any study which should push aside the study of God's Word.

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**The Old Testament Student and the "New Criticism."**—The editor has received many letters, called forth by recent criticism of the position taken by the STUDENT in reference to the discussion of questions relating to "Higher Criticism." Of these he ventures to publish the following, which represents, it is believed, the opinion of a very large number of those who have given the matter careful consideration.

The position taken by THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT in respect to the so-called "new" or "higher" criticism would not seem to need any justification, had it not in several instances been misunderstood. As one of its earliest, and still deeply