

VII

CONCLUSION

BUT the time has come to conclude this summary of evidence for the defense in the case of the critics against the Old Testament. We hope that the evidence adduced will be sufficient to show that the general reliability of the Old Testament documents has not been impaired by recent discoveries outside the Old Testament. The literary forms are in harmony with what comparative literature would lead us to expect. The civil, criminal and constitutional laws agree with what the civilization of the ancient nations surrounding Palestine would presuppose; while the ceremonial, moral, and religious laws are differentiated from those of others by their genesis in a monotheistic belief and a divine revelation. The use of writing in the age of Moses and Abraham is admitted by all and the existence of the Hebrew language in the time of the Exodus is assured by the glosses of the Amarna letters, as well as by the proper names on the Egyptian and Babylonian monuments. The general correctness of the Hebrew text that has been transmitted to us is established beyond just grounds of controversy. The morphology, syntax, and meaning of the language of the various books conform with what the face of the documents demands. The chronological and

geographical statements are more accurate and reliable than those afforded by any other ancient documents; and the biographical and other historical narratives harmonize marvelously with the evidence afforded by extra-biblical documents.

We therefore send this volume forth with the prayer that it may strengthen the faith of those who still believe in God and in Jesus Christ His Son. We need not and do not fear the truth about the Bible. We welcome all sincere and honest study of its origin, purpose and meaning. But is it too much to ask and hope that more of those who have been appointed by the Church to teach its history and its doctrines should devote their time and energies to the defense of its great and fundamental, unique and outstanding, facts and implications, rather than to the picking of flaws in the garments of the prophets and to the punching of holes in the robe of Christ's perfection? It may not be ours to remove all the difficulties, to harmonize all the apparent inconsistencies, to explain all the mysteries, and to solve all the problems of the Old Testament; but we can show at least, that we believe that Christ and the Apostles are more likely to be right than we, that the age-long judgment of the Church with respect to the Bible may after all be right, and that our business is to defend with all lawful means the citadel of faith rather than to join the hosts of the infidel in the assaults upon its walls.