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- Writing in Lux Mundi in 1889, in his famous essay on 'The Holy Spirit and Inspiration', which provoked such a strom, Charles Gore declared: 'A Literary criticism is being developed, which is as really new an intellectual product as the scientific development and, as such, certain to reverse a good many of the literary judgements of previous ages."
- When Gore spoke of a new literary criticism he had in mind p.80 developments in that literary criticism of the Bible which came into being in the nineteenth century and distinguished itself from textual criticism under the name of Higher Criticism. But his words can be given a wider extension. . . It is anyhow underiable that a writer who asserts today that a problem in the New Testament is a literary problem and requires a literary solution means something very different from what Jowett, or Matthew Arnold, or Dean Farrar, or even Charles Gore would have meant by such a statement.
- The literary critic is often spoken of as exercising one of two functions, interpretation or evaluation It would, however, be generally true to say that the main stress of criticism in the last thirty years has been
- on the duty of interpretation,

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- . . In field after field theories of composite suthorship, earlier versions p.97 different strata have been discarded. The kind of analysis which was once marked markedly weak thought to be the particular duty of literary criticism is now markedly out of fashion. The assumption today is more and more in favour of single authorship, unless there is clear external evidence to the contrary, and of taking works as they stand and not postulating earlier versions to account for inconsistencies. Even were the inconsistencies in the work as published are as glaring as they are in The Faerie Queene, most people would agree with Professor C. S. Lewis that it is 'quite impossible to reconstruct historically the phases in Spenser's invention of which particular inconsistencies are, so to speak, the fossils', and would applaud him for taking the poem as it exists and not speculating on its growth. This general movement in scholarship has gone on side by side with the rise of the so-called ontological school of criticism, whose main axiom has been the necessity of interpreting a work by itself. The importance of the single author and the single work dominates literary studies, as can be seen if the plan and treatment of the new Oxford History of English Literature, new in p.98 progress, is compared with that of the eld Cambridge History. Schools of
- influence' are as out of fashion. Old disintegrating theories which assumed that Shakespeare spent much of his career revising other men's plays, and later attempts to show him as almost continuously engaged in revising his own, theories of Beowulf being based on heraic lays, and later theories of a pre-Christian Beowulf were all in the air, or at least being debated, thirty years age, although they were then being increasingly challenged. The modern undergraduate is not troubled with these discussions. Occam's razor has been applied to the critical postualtes beloved by nineteenth-century scholars. The modern scholar or critic concentrates in the first place on making what he can of his text as it has come down to him. There xxxxxxx has been a strong reaction against the study of even extant and known sources, much more against the discussion of hypothetical ones.