

lowed by a section of another, then, perhaps, a verse or two of the first, then two or three verses of the second, then perhaps half a verse of the first again, then a portion of the third, then more of the second, and so on in a complicated patchwork arrangement. According to many critics the literary mosaic thus produced included not only the books we know today as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy but also the Book of Joshua.

Such is the theory that is held and propagated today in practically the same form as when it was first presented, nearly ninety years ago. In the intervening time no new facts have been discovered in its favor, and many of the theoretical grounds on which it was originally advanced have been now almost completely abandoned. Yet the theory continues to be presented as established history, and is even being taught in the high schools of some of our states.

Since this is the case, it is important for every churchgoer and every Bible student to know just what the facts are about this theory which has been variously called "the Source Theory," "the Multidocumentary Theory," or "the Graf-Wellhausen Theory."

Wellhausen declared that the documents J, E, D, and P do not give us any true knowledge of the alleged time of the events described, but merely present the beliefs of the times when the particular documents were written. On page 320 of his book he said, "Abraham...is somewhat difficult to interpret. This is not to say that in such a connection as this we may regard him as a historical person; he might with more likelihood be regarded as a free creation of unconscious art. He is perhaps the youngest figure in the company, and it was probably at a comparatively late period that he was put before his son Isaac."

Four years after Wellhausen's book appeared he asked to be relieved of his position as a professor in the theological department of the University of Greifswald and transferred to a position in the department of ancient languages in another university. As the reason for this request he pointed to the fact that a professor of theology was expected to prepare men for the pulpits of the Evangelical Church, and declared that, no matter how hard he tried to hold back, he found that his teaching resulted not in preparing men to occupy these pulpits, but rather in unfitting them for doing so. Followers of Wellhausen have for nearly a century been training ministers in theological seminaries all over the world. How different the religious condition of the world would be if Wellhausen's successors had shown the same honesty and forthrightness as their great leader!

The rise of the Higher Criticism was part of a widespread movement which began, not in the study of the Bible, but in the study of the great works of classical antiquity. Its first prominent protagonist