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THE NEGATIVE CRITICISM
AND
THE OLD TESTAMENT.

AN ALL AROUND SURVEY OF THE NEGATIVE CRITICISM FROM
THE ORTHODOX POINT OF VIEW, WITH SOME
PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO
CHEYNE'S "FOUNDERS OF OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM."

BY

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PREFACE.

THE beginning of this book is Biblical. The second part is Biblical and historical. The third part is prevailingly philosophical. The last part is prevailingly literary and archaeological.

A hurried reader should glance through chapters two, one, five, fifteen and sixteen, and at the literary methods of the new criticism, as detailed in chapter twenty-one and onwards. The trained reader may appreciate the attempt to delineate the negative critical mental type in chapters seventeen to twenty-two, in which chiefly the references to Cheyne occur. One wishing to weigh dry facts will find them largely in the front part, where there has been great indebtedness to Prof. W. J. Beecher.

There is a sequence running throughout. The series of external, is followed by the series of internal evidence. This leads to the series of defective motifs underlying the theory, and finally to the series of defective means through which the theory manifests itself.

The Negative Criticism

• and •

The Old Testament.

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THE NEGATIVE CRITICISM AND THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE negative criticism claims that the religion of the Old Testament is an evolution, not a revelation. Like all other religions, it was at first polytheistic and idolatrous. Beginning as an altogether natural product of the Hebrew mind, it developed in slow and gradual stages, passing into the pure monotheism of the prophets, and culminating in the complex legal ceremonial of the priestly law. It has been left to this era of Darwin to discover that the religion of Jehovah, like all other religions, was a historical development, built up on the principle of historic evolution, of unconscious selection, of the survival of the fittest.

The Old Testament writings, then, as we have been taught to know them, do not convey a correct impression of the Old Testament religion. They reverse all the great facts. Israel's laws, festivals, institutions, sacri-

✓ fices and worship were a growth of ages, arriving at completeness only in the last days of the Old Testament.
✓ They were not revealed directly and completely in a pattern which God showed Moses on the Mount; nor historically established in actual fact, as the record says they were.

So the teaching of Christianity that the law came by Moses, needs to be revised. The negative criticism believes that the complete Old Testament Law, in its perfection, was not revealed by God to Moses at the very beginning of Israel's history. The Kuehnen-Wellhausen hypothesis postulates as a fundamental fact that Israel was slowly lifted from the polytheism of its heathen neighbors through the power of the prophets, and passed into the stage of ritualistic formalism at the late date ✓ when the Old Testament record received its present shape. The hypothesis postulates that the Old Testament Law, being no exception to the universal law of natural development, was a gradual growth, first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.

✓ Only the blade is Mosaic. The ear appeared in the days of King Josiah. The full corn was ripened in the school of Ezra. He labelled the finished ear "Mosaic," and imparted an antique appearance to the whole. He did this by shelling the grains from the original cob, browning the young corns of his own day with archaic dye, bleaching the older ones where needed, and then re-arranging the whole in a new and artificial setting.

It is this ingeniously arranged mosaic that constitutes

the Old Testament, as we now have it. Ezra's work was so cleverly done that the production bears a surprisingly real appearance of historical actuality, and the world for all these centuries has taken it for such, Christ himself not disturbing the belief.

Though certain facts have always been perplexing to Old Testament students, it was not until the negative criticism instituted a thorough-going analysis, on scientific principles, of the various incongruous corns, that the surprising fact came to light, that the greater part of the Pentateuch is a post-exilian writing; that the whole Old Testament is a series of artificially arranged, not of naturally succeeding strata; and that the history of the children of Israel is very different from the traditional view of it. The great task before the negative criticism at the present moment, is the reconstruction of the Old Testament. Ezra's cob must be re-shelled, each corn picked out, examined, and put back into its natural arrangement, on the theory that the law came not by Moses, but ripened subsequently to the Babylonian exile.

THE theory introduces a revolution into Hebrew history. Abraham was a mythical figure. Moses wrote no laws nor history; David, no psalms; Solomon, no proverbs. The plagues did not descend miraculously upon the land of Egypt. The pillar of fire did not precede the journeying Israelite. The fire and thunder and quaking of Sinai, and God's appearance with speech unto Moses are rhetorical imagery. The Lord did not command the construction of a tabernacle. The latter

is itself an entirely fictitious figment of the age of Ezra, being simply the reflex of the temple of Solomon transported back to those early times. For, the historical and prophetic books know nothing of a central and only place of worship, and the Jehovist document sanctions *many* altars. There is no trace of sin and guilt offerings in the Old Testament, before Ezekiel. Consequently there is no prefiguring of Christ. There is no Passover, no day of Atonement, no Sabbath and Jubilee years, before the later days. In the earliest period there was no distinction between the clergy and the laity ; no Aaron by the side of Moses. Everybody might sacrifice. There was a tribe of Levi, but it perished before the Judges. The High Priest is a personage brought in by the priestly code whose importance is entirely foreign to the remainder of the Old Testament. The divine and supernatural is eliminated, according to the radical school of critics ; while the conservative school practically identifies inspiration with natural genius, or holds that the Word of God came to the Old Testament writers as it comes to all contemplative minds in all ages, even now yet, by immediate mystical communion. ¹ The Old Testament is inspired as Homer and Shakespeare are !

If these things be so, it follows that God's Law, as a dispensation preparatory to the coming of the Gospel, is not the basis of all of Israel's religious history from Exodus to Malachi ; and that the promise and prophecy and doctrine of a Redeemer and of Redemption are not

(¹ *Verbum Dei*,—Horton.)

the sum and substance, the sole and sufficient reason of existence for the Old Testament. On the other hand, these writings receive "a basis of naturalness and of absolute rationality," and are brought into touch with "universal history and the religious consciousness of the race." They are inspired, only more so, as the other sacred writings of the world are, as are the religions of Egypt, and Greece, and Rome.

IT is well to have in view the working of the **Methods** by which the negative criticism came to conclude that its most important Old Testament writer, Ezra; a sort of *Moses redivivus*, living a thousand years later than the time of the original Moses, took the old traditions and documents and dressed them up in the interests of his own age, whilst clothing them in the garb of antiquity, and presenting them as the original religion of Israel to the Jewish congregation of his own time and to posterity.

In the first place the critics have made a literary analysis of the style and diction and range of ideas in the various books. They have compared the results of their dissection, and have placed similar parts together into earlier and later documents. In the second place they have traced the growth of laws and institutions in these documents. They have learned in this way that the prophets are older than the law, and the psalms later than both. There was in fact no Old Testament at all earlier than the time of the literary prophets, Hosea, Amos and Isaiah, and their contemporaries, in the eighth

century before Christ. There were, it is true, some fragments of Israelitish literature.

The older document of the Old Testament, the Jehovist document, which contains the decalogue and the whole of the Book of the Covenant, namely from the twentieth to the twenty fourth chapter of Exodus, and includes large parts of Genesis, took its rise some time after the occupation of the land of Canaan, and before the time of the prophets. In these ages priests and prophets were in conflict for pre-eminence. The priests emphasized worship, and sacrifices, and sacred places and festivals. The prophets represented morality and spirituality. The prophets prevailed.

In the year 621 B. C. another document, namely Deuteronomy, was prepared. It was intended to reform the people. It was pretended to have been found in the ark in Jerusalem. This document, containing the Deuteronomic legislation, is the offspring of the prophetic spirit. We see in it that the interest of society is placed above worship. Everywhere humane ends are assigned for the rites and offerings. But the result did not correspond to its prophetic origin. When prophecy allowed its precepts to become practical laws, it died. The final outcome of Deuteronomy, namely that the worship of Jehovah was abolished everywhere outside of Jerusalem, greatly increased the influence of the priests of Jerusalem.

The third document is the product of the Babylonian captivity. During the exile, the Jews of Babylon, under

the lead of Ezekiel, elaborated the "Law" and reduced it to writing. It embraced and corresponded to the sacred praxis of that time. Ezra came to Babylon with this law in his hand. Heretofore the covenant had rested only on Deuteronomy; now it was based on Ezra's book. And Ezra's law book was substantially our modern "Pentateuch." In the interests of the priests he originated the whole Levitical law together with almost all of the last fifteen chapters of Exodus, and considerable sections of Numbers. This which he originated is the "Priestly code," the latest document of the Pentateuch.

The striking facts of the Priestly code are the immense extension of the dues payable to the priests, and the sharp distinction made between the descendants of Aaron and the common Levites. The striking principles of the code are its ideal of Levitical holiness, its complete surrounding of life with purificatory and propitiatory ceremonies, and its prevailing reference of sacrifice to sin. Everything is regarded from the Jerusalem point of view. The nation and the temple are identified. And in this way the prophetic movement, stooping to become practical, arrives at complete externalization.

This Priestly code was constructed as a framework into which to dovetail the earlier documents, and thus to produce the Pentateuch. The author, probably a priest, and in touch with priestly traditions concerning the beginnings of Israel, recorded them in systematic order. He was particularly minute in treating such an-

cient ceremonial institutions as the Sabbath, Circumcision, the Passover, the Tabernacle and the Priesthood.



FROM what has been said up to this point, it will be seen, that it becomes a matter of importance to examine the grounds on which the negative criticism moves up and sweeps away the faith of the fathers, and to know whether these grounds are able to support the conclusions to which they lead. A belief that these grounds are not merely inadequate, but that they are not reasonable, together with the feeling that the time-spirit of the century has invested them with a dangerously fascinating glamour, has impelled the writer, somewhat against his own inclination, to interrupt the preparation of another work in the Biblical field, and to attempt the argument against ² them on the whole.

² "Argument" is direct and open warfare. The negative criticism has attacked with intent to demolish. It is not in a position to say, "Come, and let us reason *together*." It is committed not merely to a *discussion of facts*, but to a *contest of principles*.

FOR the negative criticism of the Old Testament, apart from such purely sceptical animus as is always with us in the world, is the highest wave of a general critical movement caused by a vast breaking up of the waters of human thought, through the introduction of certain modern principles. The flow of this tidal wave of criticism is equally strong, and has been felt with equal keenness, in the secular realms of literature and history, in philosophy, in sociology and political economy and even in the ordinary avenues of practical business life. Having produced a ferment, successfully or unsuccessfully, in all the lower regions of thought and truth, it has at last reached the doors of the loftiest and most sacred citadel of Christendom, and is rushing through its portals.

The movement is distinctively rooted in the rationalistic and revolutionary soil of the end of the last century.³ It passed down through Eichhorn, the all embracing litterateur, and Ilgen, the linguistic analyst, and De Wette, the exegete, and Gesenius, the philologist, and Hitzig, the dry, ingenious etymologist, and Ewald, the intensely real exhibiter of prophetic ideas. Ewald sowed the critical seed liberally by his epoch-making commen-

³ It was not generated then, but earlier. For a more complete historical resume compare Chapter XVII.

aries and prophetic books and his History of Israel. ⁴ Thus the negative criticism of the Old Testament is both the predecessor and the successor of that brilliant but utterly routed school of Baur, Strauss and Renan in the field of New Testament criticism.

It was in 1834 that Edward Reuss, while lecturing to his students on introduction to the Old Testament, first put forth the new theory. He did so only orally, and over thirty years elapsed before his words bore fruit in the works of two students who heard him, Graf and Kayser. In 1835 Vatke made a stir with his "Biblische Theologie," maintaining that the religion of Israel was a development. But his book was not widely read on account of the difficult Hegelian terminology. In the same year Leopold George put forth a similar view as to the Levitical Legislation in his "Die älteren Jüdischen Feste." In 1861 the first volume of Abraham Kuehnen's "Historico-Critical Investigation" appeared. It was only moderately radical, but in 1862 the English Bishop Colenso published the first part of his "Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined," producing a tremendous sensation, and leading Kuehnen much further on in negative views.

✓ But it was Graf's famous treatise on the "Historical Books of the Old Testament," in 1866, from which the post-exilian hypothesis properly dates. Kuehnen followed and extended Graf's destructive work in his "Re-

⁴ In form, Ewald was rather across, than exactly along the lines of the recent development, and his influence may have temporarily held back rather than advanced the latter.

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ligion of Israel" in 1869-70, and in a series of special papers. In 1872 his "Five Books of Moses" appeared, and "Prophets and Prophecy in Israel" in 1877. Meantime, Wellhausen, chief follower of Kuehnen on the continent, published his "Text der Buecher Samuel's," in 1871; his article on "The Composition of the Hexateuch," in 1876, 1877; his "Prologemena zur Geschichte Israels" in 1878; and his "Skizzen und Vorarbeiten," in 1885. Kayser wrote his "D. vorexil. Buch d. Urgesch. Israels u. seine Erweiterungen," in 1874. Dillman began his commentaries with "Genesis," in 1875, and by 1886 had published his "Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua." Stade published his "Geschichte des Volkes Israel," in 1881-85. Cornill wrote on Jeremiah and on Ezechiel previous to 1886, and in 1888 his "Entstehung des Volkes Israel und seiner nationalen Organization," came out.

In 1885, Kuehnen himself published an important second edition of his "Inquiry," and long before that time he had gained his chief follower in Great Britain, Robertson Smith, who was arousing great excitement, and who in 1881 published his lectures to his students on "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church," and in 1882 "The Prophets of Israel." By 1886, the ninth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* was out, with Wellhausen's article on "Israel;" Robertson Smith's articles on "Messiah" and "Psalms," etc.; and T. K. Cheyne's articles on "Cosmogony," "Daniel," "Deluge," "Isaiah," "Jeremiah," etc. Canon Cheyne, Oriel Professor in Oxford,

is the main-spring of the thoroughly negative movement in the English theological world at this time. He is a great and accurate linguist, with unusually capacious and sober powers of reasoning and judgment, and with a bold spirit. He is very active in propagating the new spirit among young students and is using powerful exertion to hurry up the hesitating pace of Driver, Davidson and other cautious scholars, who still love to linger near the gates of orthodoxy. The new propaganda of the English negative school is the Salmond-Briggs Foreign International Library, and in literary and theological circles, the papers of the "Lux Mundi" group of writers.

There is also a school of critics on the continent which accepts the analytic method of dealing with the Pentateuch, but denies the post exilic origin of the Pentateuch. Dilman himself, with Noeldenke, Schrader, and Strack, are representatives of this school.

THE causes and wide-spread character of the new movement, seeming to sweep the brightest scholarship of two generations into its wake, are not less difficult to indicate, and to struggle against, than were the causes and overwhelming power of any great philosophical or theological movement of past ages, each in its own day, and until it had run its course and spent its strength. There was a time for instance when the philosophical movement which culminated in the hypothesis of Hegel ruled the intellect of the greatest scholars, and when all phenomena were interpreted and ordered in accordance

with it, and it was accepted as a certainty, and as the great and settled finality of the human mind. And it was only after the lapse of decades and after the tendency was spent, that scholars, though they were as yet unable to combat the all-embracing theory of this wonderful philosophy, gradually began creeping out of the mazes of its perfect reasoning.

So in the present day, it is far more difficult to penetrate to the secret of power in the negative criticism, and to expose it, than it will be a century hence, when it shall have become a movement of the past. But a century is a long while for faith to wait, and it is permissible to meantime do what may be possible towards explaining the movement.

The power of the negative scholarship is largely due to a triple conjunction of mental forces, a conjunction both new and fruitful. The modern rationalistic motive has combined with both the modern linguistic and the modern psychological methods of investigation. The rationalistic motive working with free hand in a whole Bible full of new philological and literary material, and among the underlying psychological causes, whether going about it boldly or cautiously, whether exercising sober and maturely trained judgment or wild and brilliant fancy, becomes a creative re-constructor of a very grand and momentous order. And so sure does it feel of the correctness of its methods and the consequent certainty of its results, checked and counter-

checked as they are at almost every step by cross inductive tests, that even when the results are in a constant flux, or when conflicting critics reach contradictory conclusions, ⁵ each remains sure that the carefully applied judgment of his own school has reached a historical certainty beyond a doubt.

The two greatest peculiarities of the negative criticism are, first, the necessity of disintegrating the material in which it works; and second, the internal, literary, and subjective character of its methods.

Cheyne well calls the theory of the negative criticism a "disintegrating theory." That explains a great part of its nature, and also of its charm to a very high order of mind and scholarship. It is of the essence of human reason to be destructive and creative. When once the fascinating craze to disintegrate, on internal grounds, seizes a critic, there is no limit to the minuteness into which it divides the material before it. The greater the analytical and cross-logical ability of the critic, the more wonderful does his destructive and subsequent reconstructive work become. ⁶ The books of the Bible are thus not merely each a stiff and defunct organism with several

⁵ Klostermann of Kiel, himself a negative critic, has published a whole series of lengthy articles to show that an entirely new reconstruction of the Pentateuchal analysis is demanded. Thus "sure" results of the modern criticism have been discredited in its own house.

⁶ Of this fact Canon Cheyne's reasonings on the Psalms are an excellent example, and it is his regret that Dr. Driver in his treatment of the Psalms, "with all his love for the Hebrew language, cannot bring himself to say that the linguistic argument is a primary one."

limbs sadly out of joint, but they are an unorganized pile of old material, falling into a greater and greater multitude of smaller and smaller original pieces at the will, or according to the needs of the investigator, along any one of an increasing number of internal lines of cleavage.

The second characteristic of the new theory is the subjective, the psychological, the internal character of the field in which the investigations are conducted. Perfectly sober judgment may be exercised on the internal phenomena, and everywhere within the theory, but the theory itself is held to be established and positive, without the need of any external witness or historical foundation or corroboration. In fact external and objective history is set aside as unreliable and unnecessary, and the literary sense and feeling of the critic to a great extent supplant it. Canon Cheyne himself unguardedly acknowledges a literary "feeling," namely that of "the fascination of myths,"⁷ as a basis of critical judgment in the younger generation of scholars.

It is to be distinctly noticed that the negative criticism is a critical literary movement of rationalistic origin, which did not take its rise in an objective historical field, and which indeed ignored the historians and archaeologists as long as it could afford to do so. Further, it will be shown, later in this work, that the great scholars who are the exponents of the theory, in their younger days

⁷ "Founders of Old Testament Criticism," page 318.

had their home and training in rationalistic ideas, and that with some exceptions their development along this line was only what might have been expected. Finally, it may be said, that some of these leaders appear to have been men constitutionally drawn toward the more free, and liberalizing, and humanistic side. Some of them e. g., Wellhausen and Kuehnen, were probably men whose bent of reasoning would have carried them outside of the church in any age or position ; and others, e. g., Robertson Smith, would never have entered the Biblical field at all, if it had not afforded the best opening for their talents at the time ; while others like Ewald were "hungry for fresh distinction." In short, we find a partial explanation of the negative criticism in the underlying mental states from which the analytic processes spring, and in the fundamental nature of the judgments which the critics apply in using the processes.

As to the *success* of the theory, it may be well to point out some of the reasons of the rush of a younger scholarship of the age after the lead of the newer theory. For there are reasons why fresh scholars are likely to be caught up into and carried away by the age's characteristic movement, and the surprise is that the infection is not even more universal. It is not given to many young active minds to remain calmly on a fixed rock, when they see the passing tide bearing everything floatable by.

First of all, a new investigator with fresh and leading powers, is intensely alive to the spirit and trend of his

age. He feels that progress is along its line.⁸ He longs to be its exponent and to introduce its peculiar principles and strength into his own special department. He may aim to be at the head of the procession in his own times. Whatever happens to be the advanced thought of the day, attracts some minds simply on that account.

In the second place the new theory appeals to the heroic instinct of youth. Young men love fight, and daring deeds. There is a feeling of dash and liberty in cutting away from the old, in bursting the fetters of tradition, in hewing one's way with a sabre through a perilous path, and burning the bridge behind. Cheyne in his "Founders of Old Testament Criticism,"⁹ quotes an instance just in point in reference to Vatke: "Courageously he made a way for himself through untrodden fields, and his pioneering boldness counted for much in the attraction which he exercised upon the academic youth."

In the third place, the freshness of the new field, the room for original research, the many discoveries to be made, the rich mines of material untouched and still to be worked out, the endless puzzles to be solved, the prospects of startling results, are very tempting in comparison with the tedious prospect of mining in the old quarries and finding here a little and there a little.

In the fourth place, the possibility of being original, and of being looked up to as the founder of a new school and the developer of a new trend of thought, especially

⁸ This is particularly true to-day.

⁹ "Founders of Old Testament Criticism," page 134.

if it be in accord with the direction of the general mental activity of the age, is an evident, if not a conscious motive in all departments of professional scholarship.

In the fifth place, the same literary and critical and creative faculties of the reason that urged on the founders of the negative criticism, serve as a temptation to the younger thinkers. The new theory offers wide scope for both the destructive and the constructive powers of the intellect. The biblical literature is wonderfully rich in its human aspects, and if these may be invaded and investigated and recombined, all the architectural and creative faculties are given a play which is otherwise denied them.

In the sixth place, the negative criticism by lowering this literature to the level of other religious literatures, and eliminating the miraculous, seems to bring all intellectual development into one single series, and to harmonize all existence into unity. It enables one to conceive a complete scheme of existence through the operation of a single universal principle. It brings the Bible under the principle of evolutionary development. Yet here we need to remember the very latest teaching of science, namely that Nature herself will not reduce to a unit or a unity. "The occurrence of the exceptional is now more clear to naturalists than it was a century ago. Even in the matter of miracles it seems not improbable that science is likely to come nearer to religion than in the earlier days of that learning."

The chief strength of the negative criticism has been

that it brought the Biblical writings into harmony with the idea of a continuity of natural causation, with an orderly succession of events in which sudden transitions and interventions are excluded.) It reduced the perplexing and exceptional Word of God to accord with the modern philosophical conception of the world. But the newest science now points out the insufficiency of this modern conception even in respect to purely physical phenomena, and the necessity of its limitation. Thus the Professor of Geology in Harvard University in his latest work ¹⁰ takes the decided ground that although this conception as applied to matter and energy is vast and informing, yet it does not of itself alone enable us to explain the occurrences in the universe. "It appears that we have to be on our guard lest we extend our notions of continuity in the natural world beyond the point where the evidence justifies it. The notion is so overwhelming in its magnitude that we cannot adopt it without danger of extending it far beyond the limits of proof." For this world is a "place of surprises which take place under natural law, but are quite as revolutionary as if they were the products of chance, or a result arising from the immediate intervention of the Supreme Power." He sums up the matter thus :

"Speaking from my own experience alone, I may say in conclusion that by dwelling on these considerations¹¹

¹⁰ "The Interpretation of Nature," by N. S. Shaler, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1893.

¹¹ The critical points in the continuity of natural phenomena.

we may attain to a view concerning the course of nature which differs widely from that which seems to be held by most naturalists. We see that this world, though moving onward in its path of change under conditions which are determined by the persistence of energy and of matter, is subject to endless revolutionary changes. These crises seem to be arranged in a certain large and orderly way. The minor of them occur with infinite frequency, appearing in every combination of matter, the greater happen but rarely, the greatest only from age to age. For my own part I find this rational introduction of the unexpected and the unforeseeable into the conception of nature more satisfying than the purely mechanical view which is so commonly held by my brethren in science."

From these considerations we may perhaps conclude with confidence on the one hand that even presumptively, and far more than is actually the case, we would expect to find the leading and most vigorous critics of the age on the negative side, entirely apart from the real merits of the question; and that on the other hand there are indications that the present spirit of the age, with which the negative criticism probably stands or falls, will itself be out of date, giving way to something else in the future; and that in all probability neither nature nor science will permanently uphold the purely naturalistic view of life, or thought, which now obtains.

Therefore, untroubled by the weight of adverse scholarship, and undisturbed by any present day popularity

that the negative criticism may possess, we can with good courage proceed to an examination of the latter on its own intrinsic merits.

AT the very beginning of our argument, we notice a **serious point in general against the negative criticism.** It is that the **evidence** on which the whole theory rests, and on which it depends for proof, is almost entirely internal and **circumstantial.** Circumstantial evidence as a rule is exceedingly captivating in its plausibility, and striking to the human imagination, but a long experience has taught the judicial tribunals of the race, that circumstantial evidence is an unsafe thing by which to effect a proof. It is a valuable and clinching confirmation of positive proof. In the absence of the latter, it is not entirely safe and trustworthy. There is especial need for caution when it is adduced to overthrow beliefs that have been generally held by humanity for ages and ages. The presumption and the probability are against it. And the reason is plain to see. It is possible to secure, especially in the realm of history, where facts are multitudinous, striking circumstantial evidence for almost any theory one may venture to broach. Thus, for example, when Mr. Buckle wrote his history of civilization on the theory that individuals have no influence in moulding the course of affairs, he was able, for the purpose of proving his theory, to accumulate an astonishing number of interesting facts, and he arranged them with an ingenuity in every way admirable. But, says^a

historian, "though he had done what he could to fortify and render impregnable the position he had taken, the failure of his argument will be patent to those who are able to clear their minds from the bewilderment caused by the author's multitudinous citations."

So the negative criticism with admirable imaginative faculty and with analytic ability has arranged an apparently simple and lucid plan for clearing up the difficulties out of the Old Testament, and has supported it with some striking features of internal evidence. But it has not sufficiently—or rather not at all—realized the uncertainties of such historical evidence as it offers. Nor does it appear to be cognizant of the dangers of drawing inferences at a distance of dozen of centuries from the actual events.

The difficulties in the way of learning the exact truth at very short range are often quite insurmountable. Still more inaccessible is the truth in respect to events remote in point of distance or in point of time. Some unknown condition or unseen state of affairs may entirely upset a view that seems thoroughly logical and plausible. There is force in the tale told of Sir Walter Raleigh that after viewing a brawl with his own eyes beneath his prison window; and finding to his surprise that he had misapprehended the whole affair, he threw the unpublished part of his history into the fire, saying, "If I could not understand what passed under my own eyes, of what use is it to attempt to tell the truth about what took place hundreds or thousands of years ago?"

There is a very fine illustration of the insecurity of relying upon internal evidence and plausible circumstance, and of the mistaken confidence of higher critics in their results; in the parallel field of classical literature. The case is parallel in methods, use of evidence, and results, to the whole movement of the higher criticism in Biblical fields. It is the effort to prove that the two great poems of Greece, the Iliad and the Odyssey, were not written by Homer, but were originally a set of popular lays, which were subsequently dovetailed by men of a much later period, into epics, amidst a mass of additions and interpolations; while Homer himself was only a mythical personage. The only external evidence for the theory is an obscure tradition in out of the way corners of Greek literature that the poems had been "scattered" and that by some one they were gathered up and put together. Cicero, the first extant writer, who mentions the matter, lived five centuries after the supposed event. Still later authors tell a similar tale, and all seem to base their statements on a few verses of an epigram, itself late and anonymous. About 90 A. D., Josephus mentions, as a common belief the idea that Homer *could not write*, and that his poems were long handed down by memory, "hence the discrepancies in them." In addition to this circumstantial evidence, there is nothing but what is gotten out of the analysis of the writings themselves. Much is said of "ancient lays," but concerning them we know nothing whatever. Much is stated about the "Homeridæ," but they are a mere name. There is "no

trace of such organizations.”¹² Much is inferred in respect to diaskeuasts and rhapsodists, of whose labors (except that they are appealed to in minutiae by the critics of Alexandria, say 200 B. C.) we have no knowledge at all.¹³

Wolf, the leading advocate of the new theory, was the greatest and most scholarly editor, from the textual point of view, that Homer ever had. His “Prolegomena” to the Iliad, written in 1795 is still the standard in that line. “Wolf possessed enormous learning, great conscientiousness and fairness; moreover, unlike most Homeric critics, he had literary taste. But between his taste as a man of letters and his microscopic studies as a critic, he failed quite to make up his mind. Compared with many living critics of the cocksure school, Wolf may almost be said to have no constructive theory at all. He admitted that when he read Homer for pleasure, he was angry with his own doubts. Now Homer made his poems merely to be heard, or read, for pleasure, and to peer into his work as if we were examining a clause in a new bill or a new treaty, or cross-examining a witness before a jury, is to prove our own incompetence. We must keep his object in view, he sang for human enjoyment; and we must keep his audience in view, he sang to warriors and to ladies. Many things would pass with them, nay, would delight them, which a practised barrister could cause to appear very dubious in the

¹²Jebb.

¹³Like the Rabelaisian chimera, the Higher Criticism is *bombinans in vacuo*, “buzzing in the void.”

eyes of a jury. Wolf knew and felt all this when he studied Homer for enjoyment as Homer expected to be studied; he forgot it when he came to apply his critical microscope. Moreover since the death of Wolf many discoveries have been made, a chapter of lost history has been recovered, and were he living now his acute and candid mind would reverse many of his old conclusions. Perhaps we might say that Wolf never was a Wolfian. It is certain that he would be a Wolfian no longer."

For to-day one of Wolf's main grounds, namely that Homer could not have known how to write, is completely overthrown by several sorts of evidence to which we shall refer in detail later on. And since Wolf died, recent discoveries have thrown a light for which we never could have hoped. The grave has given up her treasures. It has become clear that Homer described a real but hitherto unknown civilization, of which true relics were found at Mycenæ, Tiryns, Orchomenos, and Amyclæ. The objects unearthed correspond to and verify the pictures and art in the Homeric poems.

How instructive this effort of the higher criticism in the department of classical literature is in reference to the parallel and more recent effort of the same tendency in the fields of Biblical literature, need not be pointed out. It all goes to show that circumstantial evidence is plausible but not to be trusted; and that until critical research discovers positive external evidence to the effect that the positive witnessing of the biblical record to its own origin is not true; we are probably safer in accepting

these witnessings as true, even though we cannot explain them, than we are in committing our confidence to any ingeniously constructed line of internal evidence, however plausible the latter may be made to appear.



The Argument

Against the Negative Criticism of the Old Testament centering in the Post-Exilian Hypothe- sis of the Pentateuch.

CHAPTER I.

ALL the positive evidence of the Old Testament itself is against the new theory. All the positive evidence is even on its face against the new theory. The testimony of the Pentateuch, in the meaning it naturally conveys, attributes the authorship to Moses. In Deuteronomy ¹ we read, "Moses wrote this law," and again ² "When Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished." The book of Joshua shows that "this law" means not simply the book of Deuteronomy, but the whole Penta-

¹ 31: 9. ² 31: 24.

teuch. For Joshua states ³ that "this book of the law" contained "all the law which Moses comma nded;" and the commands of Moses, guiding Joshua, were not merely from Deuteronomy, but were from Numbers, ⁴ from Genesis, ⁵ from Exodus ⁶ and from Leviticus. ⁷

In the eighth chapter of Nehemiah, "the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel" was to be read to the people at the feast of the tabernacles (verse 14 shows that Ezra understood that Lev. 23, 40-42 was to be included); and in 2 Kings, 22, 8, it was found preserved in the sanctuary.

The book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel, would naturally mean the whole Pentateuch. The very least it could mean, would be those parts of the Pentateuch which are expressly said to have been *written* by Moses. Those parts are Deuteronomy 12-26, Exodus 20-23, Exodus 34 : 10-26. Besides this, all the laws scattered through Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, are expressly declared in detail to have been given by God to Moses, and by him delivered to the people. The occasion upon which these statutes were severally enacted, the circumstances which called them forth, and facts connected with their actual observance in the time of Moses, are in many cases recorded in detail.

³ 1: 8.7. ⁴ Comp. Josh. 1, 13 ff., 4. 12, 22. 2ff. w. Num. 32.

⁵ Comp. Josh. 5. 2 w. Gen 17, 10.

⁶ Comp. Josh. 5. 10 w. Ex. 12, 6, and Levit. 23, 5.

⁷ "The Book of the Law of Moses," (See Josh. 8: 31-34) may have been more comprehensive than "The law of Moses," and may have been the same as "the book" referred to in Ex. 17: 14, and contained whatever else Moses wrote in connection with the law. This is confirmed by the fact that a record made by Joshua himself was written in "The book of the Law" (Josh. 24:26).

The argument is particularly strong in the case of Deuteronomy, which makes numerous and distinct claims to Mosaic authorship. "Early in the book Moses is described as declaring the law that follows, and appears in the first person as the narrator of the providential story. Toward the close the same statement is reiterated. ⁸ A little later it is expressly said that Moses wrote the foregoing law and delivered it unto the priests, and unto all the elders of Israel, ⁹ and the statement is repeated in language even more definite and precise. Written the words were, and written 'in a book ;' ¹⁰ and the words that were written embodied the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel at the close of their long wanderings in the wilderness. And then, as if to authenticate all, Moses adds his sublime parting psalm ¹¹ and concludes with his benediction on the tribes that were then about to enter into the long promised heritage."

The laws of the Pentateuch thus claim to have been *all given* by Moses ; those of three separate parts are expressly stated to have been *recorded* by him ; and a large proportion of the remainder, show by their very structure, that their present written form dates from the abode of Israel in the wilderness.

BUT, in the second place, and entirely apart from this evidence in the Pentateuch and the later books as to the authorship of the Pentateuch, the Old Testament, as it

⁸ Deut. 29, 1. ⁹ 31, 9. ¹⁰ 31, 24ff. ¹¹ 31, 30.

now stands, represents that there was in Israel, from a very early period a growing book of the Law of Jehovah, which was kept carefully distinct from all other literature, and regarded as of divine authority and as a peculiar possession of Israel. This fact if true, upholds the claim made by the Pentateuch, on its face.

To begin, the two tables of stone are represented to have been in God's own writing. ¹ Moses also represents that God gave to him statutes and judgments in which to instruct the people, in addition to what God himself wrote. ² In the account of the second giving of the tables it is explained that God wrote the tables, but Moses the other matters. ³ What Moses wrote is here said to include the law of the festivals, etc. ⁴

The two tables were placed "in the ark," and were still there in Solomon's temple. ⁵ In the sanctuary, before the ark, were preserved the national memorials which were regarded as peculiarly sacred. ⁶

Long before Moses received the tables, and a yet longer time before he deposited them in the ark, we find that Moses had charge of "the book," and wrote in it by divine command, matters concerning Amalek, now apparently found in Exodus. ⁷ It seems to be the same book in which Moses, before he received the two tablets, wrote, "and took the book of the covenant and read in the ears of the people." ⁸ Among the arrangements, made by

¹ Ex. 32: 15, 16; Deut. 5; 22, & 9, 10; Ex. 31: 18, & 24, 12.

² Deut. 4, 13, 14. ³ Deut. 10, 1-5. Ex. 34 1, 27, 28, 29, and Deut. 4, 14. ⁴ Ex. 34, 23-27. ⁵ Deut. 10, 2-5. ⁶ 1 Kings 8, 9. ⁷ 2 Chron. 5, 10.

⁸ Ex. 40: 4, 5, 23, 25; 16, 32, 33, 34; Num. 17: 4, 7, 10; Heb. 9: 2-5; Ex. 25: 16, 21. ⁷ Ex. 17: 13, 14. ⁸ Ex. 24: 4, 7.

Moses for closing up his life-work, ⁹ the finished book in which the law was written was to be deposited "beside the ark of the covenant of Jehovah." There are further notices of the contents of this book in the Pentateuch.

Josephus speaks with special reverence of the books laid up in the temple, and he mentions the Law of the Jews, along with the golden candlestick and other furniture of the Holy of Holies, as being among the spoils of Titus.

The book of the Law of Moses, whatever it may have comprised, was handed over to Joshua. ¹⁰ Joshua counted it a part of his mission to add something to this book. ¹¹ This must have been "the book," not "a book," in which Samuel wrote the fundamental law of the kingdom, ¹² just as Moses had written in it the fundamental law of the theocracy. The aged David ¹³ charged Solomon to do "as it is written in the law of Moses." David ¹⁴ made the arrangements for worship and sacrifice "according to all that is written in the law of the Lord which he commanded Israel." In the previous verses David's singers are represented as singing a song which cites from Genesis the story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and, apparently, that of creation. A longer version of this song of David is found in four other psalms. ¹⁵ There the allusions cover the periods mentioned in Joshua,

⁹ Deut. 31: 24, 25, 26.

¹⁰ Josh. 1, 7-8; 8: 30-35. Comp. Deut. 27, 1-3, and Ex. 20: 24, 25. Josh. 23:6.

¹¹ Josh. 24: 25, 27.

¹² 1 Sam. 10, 25.

¹³ 1 Kings 2, 3.

¹⁴ 1 Chron. 16:40.

¹⁵ Psalm 136: 105, 106, 107.

Judges and I Samuel. ¹⁶ In Psalm 104 is an epitome of the account of the creation in Genesis. The evidence from the Psalms is too abundant to be properly introduced.

This evidence does not lack much of proving that Solomon inherited a Bible brought up to date by David, Samuel, Nathan and Gad, sharply distinguished by them from all other literature, and including the Mosaic writings, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, a collection of Psalms, and probably Ruth, all recognizable by the matters they contain.

Later on, the men whom Jehoshaphat appointed to instruct Judah ¹⁷ had "the book of the law of the Lord" with them. In 2 Chron., 20 : 21 there is probably a recognition of the group of Psalms mentioned in 1 Chron., 16, and therefore of the historical books recognized in those Psalms. In the same book ¹⁸ the words of David, Asaph, Samnel, etc., are mentioned as authoritative in the midst of an account of sacrifices offered according to the Mosaic laws. In Isaiah ¹⁹ terms are used which seem to show familiarity with the idea of appeal to the written canon of Scripture. The "book of the Lord" ²⁰ can hardly be anything else than such a canonical Bible. The prophets of the time of Isaiah are familiar with the idea of *written law* ²¹. They are also familiar with a

¹⁶ Ps. 105: 34; 106: 34-40.

¹⁷ 2 Chron. 17:9.

¹⁸ 2 Chron. 29: 25, 30.

¹⁹ Isa. 29, 18; 8, 16, 20; 30, 8.

²⁰ Isa. 34, 16.

²¹ Isa. 8: 16, 20; 30, 8, 9. Hos. 8:12.

definite body of instruction, known as *the* law, and by other definite forms of expression. ²²

It is highly improbable that the copy of the Law found in Josiah's time was the only one then known. It is more natural to suppose that the excitement it caused arose from its being *the* original copy which had been temporarily lost or concealed. ²³ Josiah's canon cannot certainly have been narrower than that of his predecessors. His written Scripture included writings by David and Solomon. ²⁴ The record of his deeds includes a reference to Samuel the prophet, ²⁵ and to matters and predictions now found in I Kings. ²⁶ The writers after the Captivity ²⁷ are perpetually referring to the "Scriptures," "the Law," "the Prophets," the writings of David, of Jeremiah, etc.

Thus the Old Testament, as it now stands, gives a clear and consistent account of its own origin. This body of literature has existed in its present shape for at least twenty centuries. If its shape is abnormal, we shall be apt to find evidence of the fact in its testimony on a crucial question like that concerning its own origin. If the witness does not tell the truth in his original statements, he will probably under this cross-examination, have contradicted himself. If he gives a consistent

22 Mic. 4:2. Isa. 2:3; 30:9; 1:10; 5:24; Hos. 4:6; 7:1,12. Am. 2:4.
 23 2 Kings 22: 8, 10, 11, 16; 23: 2; 2 Chron. 34: 14-30; 35: 12.
 24 2 Chron. 35: 4, 15.
 25 2 Chron. 35: 18.
 26 2 Kings 23: 15-18, 27.
 27 Dan. 9: 2, 6, 10-15, 24; 10:21; Neh. 8: 1-8; 9: 3-32; 10: 29, 30;
 Ezra 3: 10, 11; Zech. 7: 12. etc.

account, then his testimony must be either accepted or disproved. The evidence is remarkably strong and consistent, and proves, at the very least, that the law of Moses and certain writings of David and Solomon were accepted as authoritative from the time when they were written. It also seems to show that there was a law of growth in the canon of Scripture, successive portions being kept distinct and being regarded as scriptural from the time they were written.

WE have seen that from two different points of view, the evidence is flatly against the new theory. When we come to a third point of view, that of the actual contents of the Pentateuch, the evidence again is fairly against the new theory. The Pentateuch with Joshua, is very varied in form ¹ and matter. It consists of prose narrative, with a number of poems ², and addresses, ³ and especially a large body of legislation, designed for magistrates and all classes of people; including a codified list of precepts in Exodus, ⁴ "largely in the apparent form of decisions on adjudicated cases, in shape to be easily memorized, and suited to practical judicial use;" and "a more extensive collection of laws in Deuteronomy with a bulky historico-homiletical comment upon them." There is in addition a still larger collection of laws scattered through the different books, and intended especially for the priestly class.

¹ The argument from literary form, language and style will be treated later on. ² Gen. 49; Ex. 15; Num. 23; Deut. 32. ³ Deut. 1-4, Josh. 23-24. ⁴ Ex. 21-23. 20. 34.

“This legislation consists partly in records of precedents, partly in manuals for particular services, partly in alleged proclamations, general orders, return reports, and the like. While certain portions of it are carefully arranged in order, this class of the legislation as a whole exhibits no trace of orderly arrangement or of codification.”

“The various poems, addresses, laws, heterogeneous as they are in themselves, are bound together, partly by being arranged in a certain order, but mainly by being imbedded in a connecting narrative. The narrative itself, moreover, is frequently duplicated, and this and other phenomena are supposed to indicate that previously existing narratives have been incorporated into it.”

Nevertheless, the whole Pentateuch, together with Joshua, in spite of this variety of contents, and apart from the question of its authorship, is evidently and confessedly a single work, with a single purpose. And conservative scholars feel themselves perfectly able to show that there is nothing in all this variety of contents that would prevent Moses from being their author, “in the sense of being responsible for the literary existence of these books in their present form,” and in such a way as one would naturally expect of a public leader; and that there are many things to compel the view. He may have written some parts personally, some parts through amanuenses, other parts “by directing secretaries, or by accepting documents prepared to hand. He may have taken other parts from the works of earlier authors.”

The objections of the negative criticism to these views are quite weak. It says for instance that Moses does not speak of himself in the first person, but that some other writer, living long after, speaks of him in the third. But why could not Moses speak of himself in the third person, "just as Cæsar and Josephus do. And if it is another writer that speaks of Moses in the third person, he could do this as easily while Moses was living, as long after."

It says again, that the Book of the Wars of Jehovah ⁵ would not have been referred to by Moses himself, as it speaks of his own deeds. "But there is nothing in the fact that a book mentions a man's deeds to prevent that man's citing the book."

It refers to the passage "There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses," ⁶ as having had to be written ages after Moses. But in fact it would be just what any old man one generation later than Moses, who in his youth had known Moses, would be likely to say. These are really representative instances of the objections brought by the negative criticism against the Mosaic authorship. Of all the several hundred instances that can be brought to bear on the question by the negative criticism, there is not a single one of them which necessarily points to a later date than the generation after Joshua.

Now there was a grandson of Aaron and a grand-nephew of Moses, Phinehas, who was already in public

⁵ Num. 21: 14.

⁶ Deut. 34: 10

life, and among the most prominent men of the nation before the death of Moses. ⁷ Next to Joshua himself he was the chief public man in Israel in the times of the conquest. He was still high-priest in the time of the civil war with Benjamin, which war occurred early in the times of the Judges. Still more significantly Phinehas is known to have been the successor of his father, Eleazar, in the high-priesthood. "In this position he was the chief of the men to whom the custody of Moses' book of the law had been committed. If anything was done to the sacred writings of Moses and Joshua under his direction, it was done in the spirit of Moses and Joshua, within the lifetime of their personal associates. With these facts in mind, notice that the closing verses of the Book of Joshua bring the history up to the time of the death of Eleazar, the high-priest, and all that generation, that is up to the time when Phinehas of the next generation was already an old man." And the point is, that just here all contemporary references cease. There is no unmistakable allusion to any event later than the time of Phinehas in these writings.

When we remember how apt historians are to bring in later historical allusions, and to reflect on events in the light of their own age, as for instance in Genesis when a thing is said to exist "unto this day," or in Exodus where to the first giving of the manna a fact belonging to the ceasing of the manna, forty years later, is added; the force of the conclusion becomes very strong, that the life-

⁷ Num. 25: 7, 11; Ps. 106: 30 Num. 31: 6.

time of Phinehas marks the date of the completing of the writings of the Pentateuch and Joshua. This theory seems to thoroughly explain the Pentateuch, from the point of view of its contents, as a Mosaic writing. That earlier and later names of a place are mentioned, for instance, only shows what the experience of every one will verify—how the old name of a place clings to it long after a new one is adopted. The fact that Moses, speaking of the kings of Edom, says that they reigned before there reigned any king over the children of Israel, only shows that Moses still had in mind a promise which Jehovah had made to Abraham, namely that a line of kings was to come from his and Jacob's loins. Edom (Esau) being the elder brother of Israel (Jacob), it was very natural that Moses should mention the circumstance that there were as yet no kings in Israel, though the Edomites had already had kings for some generations.

Thus these apparent exceptions of which many more might be cited, in the light of the doubly strong positive evidence already produced, become additional circumstantial confirmations of its force.

And, finally, as over against all this positive evidence to the effect that the Pentateuch was written hundreds of years before the prime of Israel, there is not one single word of positive evidence in the whole Old Testament to the effect that it was written hundreds of years later, in the days of the exile.

CHAPTER II.

ALL the positive evidence of the New Testament is against the negative theory. Christ and the writers of the New Testament uniformly attach the name of Moses to the Pentateuch: 'Moses said,' 'Moses wrote,' 'Moses taught,' 'the law of Moses.' If we take from the Pentateuch the name of Moses, we most probably take from it the indorsement of Christ and the apostles.

John tells us that "the law" came by Moses. And in so saying he meant both the moral and the ceremonial law. Christ uniformly speaks of Moses as the giver of the law. He says: "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law?"¹ And again he causes Abraham to say to Dives: "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them,"² where "Moses" evidently stands for the Pentateuch, and *precedes* the prophets. And still more pointedly he says: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words."³ All negative critics agree that none of Deuteronomy was written by Moses, but comes from the time of Josiah. Yet here Christ says directly

¹ John 7:19. ² Luke 16:29. ³ John 5:44-47.

the contrary, referring to the striking passage in which Moses prophesied that He should come. He says plainly of Moses, "He wrote of me." When he says: "On these two commandments hang *all the law* and the prophets,"⁴ he quotes the commandments from the book of Deuteronomy. If they were merely a part of what came to light in the days of Josiah, he could probably not morally have used them in the solemn manner he does.

Similarly each of his three answers to Satan, prefaced by "It is written" is taken from the book of Deuteronomy. When the Pharisees come to him and ask him about their right to divorce, he replies: "What did Moses command you?" referring to Deuteronomy 24:1, and implying that this book was really written by Moses. When Christ healed an impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, in a passage of a distinctly critical character⁵ he not only endorses the reality of patriarchal history, but in referring to Moses, and by inference to the Book of Leviticus, in which circumcision is ordained, he connects the personal lawgiver with a passage in a particular book, for here the term "Moses" is not synonymous with the Mosaic law.⁶

Again when a leper came to Jesus,⁷ he told the leper "Show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded," referring to the law in Leviticus 14:3, 4, 10. He tells the multitude that the scribes and pharisees sit in "Moses seat," thus making Moses and not Ezra to have been the founder and head of the teachers and law-

⁴ Matt. 22:40. ⁵ John 7:22-23. ⁶ Ellicott. ⁷ Matt. 8:4.

givers. In the dispute with the Sadducees on the question of the resurrection of the seven wives, when they quote Moses as the author of Deuteronomy, he in turn quotes Moses as the author of Exodus, saying : ⁸ "Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying : I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" ⁹

And the risen Lord, we are told by Luke, ¹⁰ "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" And after the meal he says that he had told them while he was yet with them that ¹¹ "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me."

That the writers of the New Testament have distinctly stated that even the Levitical law was from Moses, we see from Luke 2:22, where Luke refers to the book of Leviticus. ¹² "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished." And Philip, the apostle, declares, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." ¹³ So Paul, learned in the Old Testament, says, ¹⁴ "For it is written in the law of Moses, 'Thou shalt not muzzle

⁸ Mark 12:26.

⁹ If Christ had regarded Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as mythical characters, he could not have added this comment on the passage : "He is not the God of the *dead*, but of the *living*."

¹⁰ Luke 24:27.

¹¹ Luke 24:44.

¹² 12:2-6.

¹³ John 1:45.

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 9, 9.

the mouth of the ox,' referring to a passage in Deuteronomy. ¹⁵ If this New Testament testimony were not so emphatic, ¹⁶ and specific, and uniform, even from a critical point of view, and so abundant as to have more than settled the authorship of any other book in the world, ¹⁷ one might be disposed to consider it as perhaps possible that the expressions are only conventional. But the nature of the testimony renders such a view impossible.

¹⁵ 25:4.

¹⁶ See also Chapter XVIII.

¹⁷ Consider how much better Christ and even the scholars of his age were fitted to decide on the facts than we are and how convenient and necessary it would have been for Paul to have used the negative theory of the origin of the ceremonial law in his life-and-death contests with narrow, legal-minded Jews, and Jewish Christians, if it had had any foundation in fact !

CHAPTER III.

THE evidence of ancient Jewish and Christian History is against the negative theory.

Though Jewish scholars in the century before and after Christ may have differed as to whether certain books had actually been included in the contents of the Old Testament, they all held that the Old Testament had, in their own day, been complete for nearly three centuries at least, and probably for a much longer time. It was the unanimous tradition of the Jewish nation that Malachi, who prophesied under the first Artaxerxes, was the last prophet, and that with him both the spirit of prophecy and also the spirit of holy inspiration needed to compose holy writings had disappeared. The Jewish legends in the fourth Book of Esdras ¹ add testimony to this tradition.

At the time when Ecclesiasticus was written, there must already have been a sharp distinction between the completed canon and later literature. For this book, in spite of its claims to prophetic and canonical importance, and in spite of its popularity with the Palestinian Jews, was not received into the canon. The latter must have already been completed, and must have distinguished between holy and later profane writings, so

¹ Chap. 14; and also, in the church Father Irenæus.

that no one ventured to add to it. And, in addition, Ecclesiasticus itself, both in the prologue and in chapters forty-four and forty-five, clearly refers to the Old Testament as such, in its three parts, and involves the fact of its previous completion.

All parties of the Jews, in reality, acknowledged the canonical authority of the Old Testament, and it was so firmly fixed that neither the claims of Ecclesiasticus or any other later composition availed to admit them into the canon ; nor did the Talmudic discussions concerning the holiness of particular books in the least change the settled condition of the canon.

Josephus expressed the judgment ² that all the books which properly belonged to the Old Testament were written before the death of the prophets who were contemporaneous with the first Artaxerxes, that is before 424 B. C. The Mishna says several times that Ecclesiasticus and all the books written after it are not canonical. So it was held that all the books of the Old Testament were older than Ecclesiasticus, which claims to have been written by the grandfather of a man who lived at least as early as 130 years before Christ.

Just here we meet a specimen of the forced reasoning resorted to by the negative criticism, to which more extensive reference will yet be made. There are some passages in the Mishna which indicate that there were disputes among the Jews as to the canonicity of several books such as Daniel and Ezekiel and Ecclesiastes, and

² Contra Apion LI. C. 8.

the negative criticism has used these passages to prove the late date of some of the parts of the Old Testament, and the lateness of its completion as a whole. But these disputes do not prove that at all. On the contrary the weight of their evidence is on the other side. "The very men who questioned the canonicity of Ecclesiastes and Ezekiel in the matter of the propriety of their contents, do not appear to have at all doubted the matter of the genuineness of the early date assigned to the books. They did not dispute whether the books were in the canon, or whether they had been admitted at a very late date, but they assumed that they had been in it originally, if at all, and what they questioned was the propriety of having placed them there originally." ³ There

* "They never determined a book to be canonical in the sense of introducing it into the canon. In every instance in which a writing is said to have been admitted to the canon the writing had already been in existence for generations, and had for generations been claimed as canonical before the discussions arose in regard to it. In every instance the decision is not that the book shall now be received to the collection of sacred writings, but that the evidence shows it to have been regarded from the first as part of that collection. If the decisions of early scholars and councils here have any validity, they are valid as proving that the books which they recognized as scriptural had always been so recognized from the time when they were written. In the case of those that were best known and most used no great difference of opinion would arise. In the case of those that were less familiar it became necessary every few generations to re-examine the evidence. This was done in the first centuries as it has been done in the last centuries." Prof. W. J. Bucher.

are scholars to-day yet who still dispute the propriety of recognizing these books as canonical. But does that prove that these scholars believe them to be now of recent origin, or to have been only lately recognized as scriptural?

Another example of the forced historical reasoning of the negative criticism is its conclusion that because the Greek Alexandrians did not distinguish between the canonical and the apocryphal writings as to inspiration, that therefore the distinction was not founded in fact, but was only a subjective party measure of the Palestinian Jews.

As a matter of fact we know that Josephus, although he used the Septuagint and in many respects favored the Alexandrian Jews, yet expressly declares that all books not found in the Hebrew canon are uninspired and less worthy of credence; and Philo and all the Hellenistic Jews clearly show that they knew the Hebrew canon, with its three divisions very well. But it was because of a different dogmatic principle of revelation, namely that this principle of revelation is the Logos or Wisdom who worked in the hearts of the wise and pious in all generations, both early and late, that the Alexandrian Jews did not acknowledge that the spirit of prophecy had disappeared in 400 B. C., and that they obliterated the distinction between the older prophetic and the later non-inspired literature. It was here again not a question as to time, or dates, or facts, but it was a matter of doctrinal presupposition.

A still worse example of misleading argument, is the statement that the *number* of books in the canon changed two or three times at a late date. While this may be literally true, it is not actually so. The actual fact is that only the ways of counting the books changed, not that entirely new productions were every now and then added to the canon at a late date.

From the very beginning the Christian church used the Old Testament writings as the ones which testified to Christ and were fulfilled in him. It caused them to be read in its services and ascribed final and divine authority to them in its dogmatic and apologetical discussions. At first the Christians were only able to read the Old Testament in the Alexandrian translation, and they regarded the apocryphal books as canonical, until Melito of Sardis, A. D., 172, and Origin, died A. D. 254, made the church thoroughly acquainted with the Hebrew canon. The Greek church then rejected the apocryphal books, while the Latin church accepted them, but in neither instance was there any doubt as to the genuineness and date of the Pentateuch or other writings of the Old Testament.

CHAPTER IV.

THE evidence of the **Later Historical Books** of the Old Testament **does not warrant the conclusion** of the negative theory.

The negative theory tries to prove that the books of Chronicles, Nehemiah, and also the book of Daniel, were not completed until long after the time of Nehemiah. It says, for instance, that the genealogies in the books of Chronicles and Nehemiah contain the names of persons who were not living until long after the time when the books are said to have been written. But the presence of these names in the lists can be easily explained.

Take the most extreme case of the sort, the name of Jaddua, the high priest in Nehemiah 12:22. "This Jaddua, according to Josephus, was high priest when Alexander conquered Darius, say 333 B. C. He died at about the time of the death of Alexander, B. C. 324, just 121 years after Nehemiah left the court of Artaxerxes to go to Jerusalem. Nehemiah was then evidently a very young man. There is nothing extravagant in the idea that the pontificate of Jaddua may have begun during Nehemiah's lifetime, and covered the remaining fifty-six years of the 121. Even, therefore, if it were necessary to assume that Jaddua's name was put into the registra-

tion after he became high priest, there would still be no absurdity in holding that the registration was made during the lifetime of Nehemiah. ¹

But "it is not necessary, or even natural, to assume that Jaddua became high priest ² before his name was included in the registration. If only he was born before the death of Nehemiah, he may have been registered in Nehemiah's lifetime. And the supposition that he was thus born does not necessitate the conclusion that either he or Nehemiah lived to a greater age than seventy-five years." With one exception, which is easily explained, "on the view just given, the accounts of Josephus and of Nehemiah fit each other, and each proves the other to be exact. It is, therefore, not a mere hypothesis, but an historical fact, that the genealogical lists in Nehemiah and Chronicles close within the limits of the lifetime of Nehemiah. This view finds some further confirmation in the passage in 2 Mac., 1, 2-3."

In the case of the book of Daniel, we are not sure that it makes any difference to the integrity of the canon,

¹ Prof. W. J. Beecher.

² The proof of this is founded in Neh. 12:22-23. There is in addition to this an independent and plausible reason why he should not have been registered before his accession. Nehemiah lived until after the marriage of Manasseh, brother of Jaddua, and is therefore likely to have been for some time the contemporary of Jaddua. Now if Jaddua was enrolled in the succession of high priests before he actually succeeded; and if this was an exceptional thing, then the official naming of Jaddua was, in effect, the official exclusion of Manasseh.

when the book was written, or whether the visions look forward or backward. It was peculiarly grouped, being placed between Esther and Ezra, and not with the prophets. This might seem to indicate a late date for the book, for if it had been known earlier, it would have been possible to have placed it among the prophets. But, on the other hand, its form, its historical tendency, and other considerations, may have caused it to be given its peculiar place among the Hagiographa. Like Ezra, it is written partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaean.

The negative criticism assigns its authorship to the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, 175-164 B. C. It does so on philological grounds like the following: "The book does not have sufficient marks of a Babylonian origin; its writer has blundered in the use of proper names; it contains nine or more words of Persian origin; it contains three or four Greek names of musical instruments; it misapplies the term "satrap." To these philological reasons, it has added the following historical ones: Belshazzar is not a historical personage; Darius the Mede has not been identified; and there are contradictions with other history in the book. The ninth chapter of the book itself points to a late date. The doctrine of a resurrection and of angels, and the fact that the predictive elements are apocalyptic rather than strictly predictive, and must therefore have been written after the event, add, it is maintained, additional force to the theory of a late origin.

Each of these reasons admits of its own reply. That

the book has a Babylonian element in it is clear to all. Whether this is sufficient evidence either for or against either view of the book's authorship, is a question. "Lenormant and other scholars have made it clear that the author of the first six chapters must have known much more about life in Babylon than could easily have been learned by a Jew who had always lived in Palestine. If these stories were finally compiled with the visions of the last six chapters as late as the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, it seems to me clear that these stories were first written in Babylon, and were then filled with the color of Babylonian life, and retained facts in Babylonian history not elsewhere recorded until discovered under Babylonian soil." ³ This second is a roundabout supposition, to displace the first and simple one.

That the writer has blundered in his use of proper names is conjecture, not to be settled in the present state of our knowledge, though the argument for it tells rather against it.

That the book contains Persian words is not against its early authorship. Any man, like Daniel, who lived much at the Babylonian Court, would have met Persians there; while such men as Ezekiel, in whose book no Persian is found, did not mingle in court life. Then, there are Persian words in Ezra and Esther as well as in Daniel, and the negative theory does not make that weigh against those books. Still further, it has been said that of the seven Persian words which occur in the Chaldee of Daniel, only

³ William Hayes Ward.

one is found in the Targums. Therefore the book seems to belong to an early period when the Persian influence was strong, and not to a late period when the Persian words had been mostly dropped. In regard to the Greek names for musical instruments, it has been suggested that if they are a criterion, their use would show the book to be as old as *Homer*, or of any of the music-loving Greek princes from Agamemnon down. In regard to the term "satrap," it has been replied that if to-day "some Turkish correspondent of an American newspaper should apply the term *Bey* to some official who was only a Pacha, this use of terms would prove him to be a contemporary of the author of Daniel." In regard to the mythical character of Belshazzar, the negative theory has been put to shame. "The recovery of the name of Belshazzar as an actual ruler over Babylon and the son of its last king, and the later more important discovery of Cyrus' own record of his campaign against Babylon and his final capture of the city, are among the most brilliant achievements of modern historical research, and give to some extent confirmation of statements greatly questioned in the Book of Daniel, and cast still more light on the events there mentioned."⁴ In regard to the contradictions in the book, they can be reconciled. The limits of our space does not warrant their introduction and discussion.

In regard to the ninth chapter, it just as easily proves that the Jews of Daniel's day possessed and studied col-

⁴ William Hayes Ward.

lections of the prophetic writings, as it does that the book of Daniel was written long after the captivity. That is, it proves nothing. As to the doctrine of the resurrection and of angels, Daniel could have used Persian sources as readily as a later writer. Moreover these doctrines are present in the 25th chapter of Isaiah, a writing which the negative criticism places at an earlier date.

As to the apocalyptic nature of Daniel's prophecy, while the subject is interesting, the argument only has weight for those who hold to the impossibility of predictive prophecy.⁵ On the whole, the internal evidence for a late date for Daniel is not strong.

On the other hand, the external evidence is entirely in favor of the early date. All the evidence we have touched on in Chapter III. goes to prove that Daniel was in existence at the early date. Josephus⁶ expressly testifies that the book of Daniel was shown to Alexander the Great, by the high priest Jaddua, about 333 B. C. ; and that Alexander was greatly influenced by the predictions concerning himself. Then the book of Baruch clearly presupposes the existence of Daniel. In *Mac. II. 56*, Mattathias, during the lifetime of Antiochus Epiphanes, is represented as citing Daniel and his companions along with Abraham, Caleb, Elijah, David, and the other ancient worthies.

⁵ See Chapter XVII.

⁶ *Antiquities XI, 8, 5.*

CHAPTER V.

TURNING now from the survey of testimony, to a survey of the theory itself, we notice a whole series of things rising into view against it. It is against the negative theory that **it makes all Israel's literature spring from the period of the nation's decline and fall.** It leaves the basal and institutional epochs of Israel's early strength without a literature. It leaves the balmy and propitious periods of her maturer prime almost without a literature. It assigns Israel's grandest writings to the age of Ezra, and places nearly all her productive powers after her national decay and deportation.

This is against nature. It was not the case with the literatures of Egypt, of Assyria, of Rome, of Greece, of Germany, or of England. The rose blooms in June. The harvests are white in Summer. No land has ever garnered its grandest flowers and richest fruits after the overshadowing destruction of the autumnal storms. The greatest periods of a nation's history are not barren of literary effort. It is against the law of natural development that the best and almost the whole literature of Israel should be a product of the period of her decadence.

A moment's thought is needed to take in the real size and difficulty of the assumption that is here made. We are asked to believe that nearly a whole literature, the greater part of the literary work commonly assigned to Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the other later pre-exilic prophets, and substantially all that is assigned to the earlier men, Solomon, David, Nathan, Samuel, Joshua, Moses, was written, not by these men, but by "unknown scribes, obscure men, who made no mark on their own generation, and left no name to the generation that followed."

If it were only the texts or writings of a single prophet, or school, or generation, or of several of them, that were thus corrupted, and dissected and rendered composite, or pushed forward into an earlier age, the assumption might more readily carry some air of possibility, but "it is difficult to believe that nearly the whole of a nation's literature is marked by these characteristics; it is easier to believe that almost any supposed criteria of composite structure are mistaken. It is not surprising if we find that some great man did not perform work that has been commonly attributed to him; or if we find that some obscure man has done great work; but when we are called upon to believe that throughout a nation's history the great men have done substantially nothing, and the nobodies have done everything, that is beyond the bounds of ordinary credibility." "Views like these are not credible, except upon strong evidence."

Beyond a doubt the exiles weeping by the waters of Babylon were inspired with patriotic feeling, and gave

heroic expression to it both in rebuilding the ruined city and in thinking over the songs of Zion. Undoubtedly they had the time and the talent and the calling to produce a literature. But all the scraps of knowledge that we possess about that period, when ingeniously jointed together and indefinitely expanded by the imagination of the historian, cannot possibly form a background deep and vast and lofty enough for the literature of the Old Testament.

This is the weakness of the theory as far as the post-exilian period is concerned. There is too much crowded into it. But the difficulties of the new view are only beginning. When we come to turn our eye upon the many other more striking periods of Israel's history, how shall we explain their emptiness of historic record and poetic effort? It is impossible to find a hypothesis that will account for their barrenness.

For instance, could Moses, trained in the foremost literary nation of antiquity, leading the greatest and most orderly migration of which history tells, looking forward to a settled and larger future of the nation in a strange land, with new surroundings, a new government, new customs, new institutions, have left only some scanty and doubtful fragments of legislation? Are the multitudinous laws set into similar multitudinous and seemingly natural details of history purporting to have come direct from Moses, more easily explained by saying that they were invented and elaborated in an age separated by many wide centuries from the time of their al-

leged occurrence? Such records of the Mosaic period, as we have, would not have been written by men removed from the Exodus by as great a period as that which separates us from the discovery of this continent by Columbus; or as that which separates us from the birth of Martin Luther. Still less could they have been recorded as long afterwards, as we are after the last of the Crusades—ten centuries after the Exodus. Such a vast amount of fabricated legislation and re-written history could not possibly have been produced at such a long distance and in such a period as that of the era of the exile on the one hand; and on the other hand such men and such institutions as are found in the early days of Israel would not have done what they did without leaving a record.

If we take another conspicuous instance, say the period of the Psalms, the case for the new theory is, if anything, worse. Late eras, like that of Ezra, are rich in science and schools. Schools and schoolmen produce annotations, but not poetry. It is against nature, and almost miraculous, that the best religious lyrics of all antiquity should *also* be written in an age of national decay, when there were neither great men to write nor great events to evoke such lyrics. Can the experience of Israel in the Persian, Greek and even the Maccabean periods be the natural and sufficient mother of such a wonderful progeny. Truly “the great post Exilic Jewish Church”¹ must have had such a concentration of “great

¹ Cheyne.

religious ideas” and such an affluence of inspired historical and poetic genius, all of it humble and anonymous, as the world has not seen before nor since, and as the orthodox view has not claimed for any of the more promising eras of historic Israel.

There are psalms in which all the events of the exodus, and the history of Israel as far as the first king, are recorded. These are the themes which failed to stir contemporaries, but which waited for *eight* or *nine* centuries further on to stir the soul of a singer! There are numerous psalms in which royalty plays an elevated and prevailing part. These are the psalms which were written ages after the kings had disappeared, and in the very centuries when it is supposed that the Jews were inclined to satirize kings. ² But “from the halcyon ages of David and Solomon, when the people of Israel were in contact with Egypt and Phoenicia, when their maritime expeditions brought them tidings and products of other lands, no authentic composition has come, no record of religious opinions or customs; except, perhaps, the fragment of a psalm or at most, one or two of their sacred songs.” The real ground for running the composition of the greatest hymns the world has known, of different and varied ages, into one late and comparatively narrow and prosaic era is the negative theory’s necessity of consistently maintaining the dominating idea of a progressive evolutionary *religious* development in the history of Is-

² They “form a large number whose date would be irrevocably fixed, if it was a question of any other book than the Bible.”

rael. ² But the necessity is equally stringent to the negative critic, of maintaining a natural *literary* development. And the two necessities clash in the case of the Old Testament. Therefore the principle cannot hold in that field.

³ If any large number of the Psalms, which contain hundreds of allusions to the Pentateuch, were written in the times of David, then the Pentateuch was written still earlier.

CHAPTER VI.

THE Principal Argument on which the negative theory relies to establish this post-exilian authorship is inconclusive. It reasons thus: 'because there is no reference to a thing on the historical record at a certain period, therefore the thing did not exist at that period. Because the ceremonial law, with the whole tabernacle worship and the great festivals, are not referred to in the writings before the captivity, therefore they did not exist before the captivity. Israel is apparently ignorant of the ceremonial law, and constantly violates it, before this time. The sacrifices are offered not in the tabernacle, but in the high places, through the whole of Israel's history. There seem to be no festivals at all. The priests and ceremonies are very different and of a far more primitive character than those described in the elaborate so-called 'Mosaic,' but in reality 'post-exilian' law.'

This argument seems strong. But it is both inconclusive and delusive. In the first place, absence of reference to an institution does not necessarily prove non-existence of the institution. It may indicate observance so common and well understood as not to be in need of

special mention. History rarely records the regular observance of established institutions. It is taken for granted. When there is mention of the thing made, it is likely to be for the sake of drawing attention to infractions and irregularities. This principle applies with particular force to the very field before us, and its force is recognized by the new theory in a parallel instance.

The new theory admits that the Decalogue is as old as Moses and came from him. But *nowhere in the prophecies, and scarcely anywhere in the histories*, is there any reference to the Decalogue. There are abundant references to statutes which have been *transgressed*; but the references are general, and might be understood to include the ceremonial law as well as the moral. So that the *argumentum e silentio* relied on by the new theory to prove that there was no ceremonial law by Moses, would also prove that there was no decalogue by Moses, and so destroys itself.

It is very true, however, that absence of reference *may* indicate non-observance, just as readily as it may indicate common observance. But non-observance is not non-existence. On the contrary, non-observance implies existence. It is possible, in the first place, that a ceremonial law may exist, and that the times may be too unpropitious for its observance. It is no wonder that the days of the Judges were bad times for the observance of the ceremonial law of Moses. The Israelites had neglected the divine command and failed to drive out before them all the inhabitants of Canaan. The Canaanites had their

strongholds here and there throughout the land. They and the Philistines and other surrounding peoples managed to keep the tribes in a perpetual worry. The latter needed to be ever on the watch to preserve their boundaries intact. There was constant suspicion, uneasiness and internal warfare.

Some of the tribes too were jealous of the others, and frequently they refused to co-operate with each other in battle, and each tribe had to fight for and by itself. This prevented them from consolidating, as they should have done, into a united people; and certainly prevented them, *as a nation*, from keeping the yearly feasts with regularity. It would probably have the additional tendency to thrust the systematic teaching of the law into the background. It has been said that people perpetually engaged in border forays are likely to be moulded by the rude age in which they live, and to become neglectful of religious and educational duties, and also to underestimate the value of any institution that is a peace measure and does not turn out fighters and soldiers. A reasonable view of the situation will lead to the conclusion that non-observance of the ceremonial law is just what might be expected in ages such as these.

In the second place, in consequence of such trying times, the people may sink into deep ignorance, as well as into recklessness and carelessness in regard to the observance of such law. What an illustration of this fact was that wide-spread religious degeneracy which came over our country after the close of the Revolutionary

War, and the effects of which were felt for fully half a century.

And even in our own advantageous and enlightened day, there are many people who are almost entirely ignorant of their own civil and religious law, who are in uncertainty as to the proper observance of religious customs and seasons, who set light store upon such observance, or who are utterly careless in regard to it. How difficult it is even in our time of comfort and civilization and peace, and with all our machinery in full operation for that purpose, to educate our people up to church going, to Sunday observance and Festival observance. And how much of even our Christian religion is still a matter of obscurity, and is intermingled with lower superstitious heathenish elements on the part of the lower classes! And if this be so in an age where books and papers are as plentiful as grain in harvest, and where New Testaments can be bought for five cents, and where Christ is preached in churches every few blocks apart, how much more a thousand times must it have been the case in the age of which we are speaking.

A third case in which non-observance does not indicate non-existence, is when the people know the law, but are set against it. It may exist, and the people may be rebellious against it. It is not an unusual thing for a people to disobey its own laws. This is especially true of Israel. It would be strange, indeed, if they,—a people constantly denounced by their own historians and prophets as a *stubborn* and *rebellious* people—, had always observed the

requirements either of the ceremonial or of the moral law. The very prophets whose high morality the new theory commends, are the strongest witnesses in their powerful denunciations to both a ceremonial and a moral law, each of which must have existed before it could be either obeyed or disobeyed.

A fourth case in which non-observance of legislation does not indicate non-existence, is the case where the leaders and rulers of the people are too wicked and too neglectful to enforce it. We know how even in our own country there are so many laws which are not enforced and have been forgotten. Some are so obsolete that their very existence may be unknown to the masses. Others are known but looked on as a "dead letter." When we called to mind the corruption of the priests in many of the periods of Israelitish history, ¹ it is easy to understand how the laws were lying neglected among the archives of the temple.

But, in the last place, if we interpret the Pentateuchal book of laws, as the negative school of critics is bound to do, by applying common sense and reason and the analogy of other nations to them, the whole argument falls to the ground. "If we interpret what seem to be legal maxims as legal maxims, and not as statutes; if we apply the rule that when the reason for a law ceases, the law itself ceases, and other similar rules,—in short, if we may interpret these books as other historical books containing laws are commonly interpreted, we shall get

¹ Isa. 28. 7sq.; Mic. 3. 11. Zeph. 3. 4, etc.

a very different idea of the nature of many of their requirements from that which is sometimes presented. Remembering that rules which were established for the camp in the wilderness, and rules which presuppose the existence of a united nation with a central sanctuary, cannot, in the very nature of things, have been intended to apply, without modification, to individuals for whom neither of these conditions existed, we shall find no difficulty in explaining all the facts of the history."

Each and all of these five separate cases would serve to throw light on the alleged fact that there are no references to the ceremonial law in the old Testament, previous to the days of the exile. The reason why there are more, and more exact references in the post-exilian books, to the Pentateuch, inheres in the nature of the change which began in the sacred writings from the time of Ezra. With him began the period not of the giving of the law, nor of the coming of the prophets, but of the studying, searching and quoting of the old documents. It was the period of the scribes.

CHAPTER VII.

BUT now we come to something striking. **The cardinal assertion on which the principal argument of the negative theory rests, is contradicted by the facts.** The alleged absence of reference to the ceremonial law, the tabernacle and the Pentateuch is not actual. There is not an absence of such reference in the Old Testament.

In any case, it is an unlikely assumption that Israel, going out of a country which, long before the exodus, possessed a large and influential priestly caste, would have been without a priesthood. And it is, secondly, a still less likely assumption that this early priesthood of Israel would have remained a thousand years without written priestly laws. It would be a natural inference, if there were no positive testimony, that the priest Moses ¹ established a ritual. But there is positive testimony to such an early date of the priestly law.

So the assertion on which the negative argument rests, that there is no reference to the priestly law and the tabernacle, is not true. The number of direct references is surprising. The Pentateuch itself is filled with direct ref-

¹ Ex. 24.6 ff : Deut. 33.10; Ps. 99.6.

erences and with descriptions of the tabernacle and ceremonial law, though it is ruled out as being incompetent to testify in its own behalf. But there is one book in the Pentateuch which cannot be thus ruled out. It is the book of Deuteronomy. Even the new theory places this book as early as the reign of King Josiah, and this book testifies fully for the fact in question. Compare Deuteronomy 18:2 with Numbers 18:23sq., and Deuteronomy 24:8, where a priestly law concerning leprosy is referred to, such as is found in Leviticus 13:14. Deuteronomy 23: 10, makes reference to the ceremonial law of uncleanness.

Secondly, those prophets which the new theory admits as witnesses accepted and unimpeachable, do not ignore, but make allusion to the ceremonial law. The prophet Micah refers to priestly teaching in 3: 11. The prophet Jeremiah mentions "the law that shall not perish from the priest" in 18: 18. The prophet Zephaniah refers to both the tabernacle and the law, saying, in 3.4, "Her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law." The prophet Hosea refers to an extensive written law.

Still further, nearly all of the historical books of the Old Testament make extended allusions to the priestly law. The book of Joshua, it is admitted on all hands, implies the existence and observance of the entire ceremonial law. The Law of Moses and the Book of the Law are continually spoken of, and the different ordinances of the ceremonial law are seen to be observed. The answer

made by the negative theory in rebuttal to this testimony is the assumption that the book of Joshua is a forgery of the time of the exile.

The book of Judges offers direct testimony for the existence of the tabernacle and the priestly law. It speaks of but one house of Jehovah, 19.8, and this located at Shiloh, 18.31; of the annual feast there, 21.19; of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron as priest, 20.28. Though the idolater Micah consecrated one of his own sons as priest, 17.5; he was delighted to have a Levite instead, who deserted his service to become priest of a tribe. Beyond doubt he would have been more willing still to have been a priest of all Israel in Shiloh, if that had been permissible. ¹

The books of Samuel, which we shall take up below, and the books of Kings also show that the tabernacle and ritual services were not unknown before the time of Josiah. I Kings expressly quotes Deuteronomy 17.17. I Samuel 2.22 and I Kings, 8.4 make distinct mention of the tabernacle as a historical fact. In order to overturn this testimony of the books of Judges, Samuel and Kings, the negative theory turns against the books themselves. It says that all the books have been "worked over," so that passages implying the Pentateuchal laws must be assumed to have been interpolated long afterwards. But *why* such an assumption *must* be made does not appear. To set up a theory, on the ground that there are no ref-

¹ Prof. W. H. Green; to whom there is indebtedness for a number of facts and statements in this, and several other chapters.

erences to certain facts; and then when references to those facts appear and invalidate the ground of the theory; to dispose of them by saying that they must be interpolations, because they are contrary to the theory, is arguing in a circle. By such a method the evidence of these books cannot be excluded.

In Samuel's childhood the Mosaic "tabernacle of the congregation,"¹ named in Samuel indifferently "the house of the Lord," 1.24; and "the temple of the Lord," 1.9, was still in Shiloh, and was the one commanded place of sacrifice for Israel, 2.29. Eli and his sons officiated there as descendants of Aaron, whom God had chosen out of all the tribes to be his priest, 2.28. There was the ark and the lamp of God, 3.2; and annual pilgrimages were made thither for worship.² The offering of sacrifices elsewhere than before the tabernacle, in these times, is natural and explainable.³

From the time the ark was captured by the Philistines

¹ I Sam., 2.22.

² I Sam., 1. 3, 7, 21; 2. 14, 19.

³ Sacrifices in the presence of *the ark* were not irregular, Judges 20. 26, 27; 21. 4; I Sam., 6. 15. The phrase "*before God*" does not imply a particular place of stated worship, Josh., 24. 1; Judges 11. 11; 20. 1. Again, "*the sanctuary of the Lord*" at Shechem was not a building erected for sacrifice,—for the oak was "in it"—, but a spot hallowed by its associations. Joshua 24. 26. The sacrifices at Bochim by Gideon and by Manoah were called forth by special appearances and revelation of the angel of the Lord in extraordinary emergencies at places distant from the tabernacle.

until it was brought to Zion by David, there was no longer a sanctuary. ⁴ Samuel, God's immediate representative, in place of the degenerate priesthood, offered sacrifice in various parts of the land. When the temple was dedicated, the tabernacle is mentioned in connection with it. This is in I Kings 8:4. Shiloh and Jerusalem were the only places that ever became the abiding spot of the ark and tabernacle. Shiloh was the national sanctuary from Joshua to Samuel, and Jerusalem was the same from David onwards. Between the days of Samuel and David, the people worshipped in high places, 3:2; but then the high places in Judah were censured by both the historian and the prophets. Elijah's sacrifice on Carmel was offered by direct divine command; and the unrebuked altars in the northern kingdom, 18:30; 19:10, were erected by those who could not go up to the temple at Jerusalem.

To the psalmists, from David onward, God's sole dwelling place is Zion. Psalm Forty ⁵ testifies to the existence of the book of the law. The older prophets allude to the ceremonial law and denounce the sanctuaries of the northern kingdom. Hosea speaks of a written law. Second Kings 12:16; and Hosea 4:9 imply that sin offerings were known before the time of Ezekiel. ⁶ The prophet Joel speaks respectfully of the priests and bewails the famine, for cutting off the offering, (1:13;

⁴ I Sam. 2:32-36; Ps. 78:60-68; Jer. 7:12,14; 26:6,9.

⁵ The new theory puts it into the post-exilic period.

⁶ The new theory explains away the obvious meaning by a strained exegesis.

2:14-17.) Joel has always been regarded as one of the oldest of the prophetic books. ⁷

Thus we have seen that the alleged absence of reference to the Pentateuch, the tabernacle and the ceremonial law *is not a fact*. On the contrary there is such a fullness of reference that even after the passages which the new theory has expurgated, are removed, the *argument e silentio* will not apply to the balance. The amount of positive testimony rejected is astonishing. Yet even without any of this testimony, it is well to remember, the case of the new theory would still be weak. For the fact that the prophets complained ⁸ so frequently of the immorality of the priests, makes it quite clear, says Bredekamp, that "the old laws remained lying in the archives of the temple instead of governing the life of the people." And the most remarkable fact that in all prophetic literature, there is not once to be found a command to be *holy*, should, remarks Baudissin, "be a warning to deal carefully with the non-occurrence of certain ideas in certain books."

⁷ The new theory also puts this book after the exile. Its arguments in this matter are an example of reasoning in a circle. It says, first, "The Levitical law is post-exilic, because there is no evidence of its existence in pre-exilic books." Then it says, second, "Whenever such evidences are found in the pre-exilic books, they must either be considered as later interpolations, or we must transfer the books to the post-exilic period" !

⁸ Isaiah 28 7 ff. : Mic. 3:11 ; Zeph. 3:4 ; and Jer. *passim*.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE negative theory is not only inconclusive in dealing with its own selected facts, but it fails to explain other cognate facts in the same field. Thus it **fails to explain the Origin of the Sacrificial Code**

It sees the sacrifices and ceremonies in full and complete development at the end of Israel's career, but it cannot tell where they came from, nor what they are for. Here is a singular and central phenomenon in Israel, for which it has no rational explanation.

The theory may take the ground that the sacrifices were a development of the natural religion, like the heathen rites and ceremonies around them, and that they were not directly instituted by God. But then it is holding that an institution which God, through the prophets, is alleged to have condemned, is the one towards which the religion of the nation was more and more tending. Therefore the evolution of the Jewish religion was a development *downwards* or *backwards*. It began with the lofty spirituality of the prophets and ended with the gross formality of the priests. But this conclusion is inconsistent with the evolutionary principle underlying the new theory, and with other parallel parts of the negative hypothesis. The very scholars who regard the sacri-

ficial code as a product of the post-exilian period argue (without the historical evidence) that the Psalms must have been a product of the same or a later date, on the ground that the religious development of the previous centuries was not adequate to their production. But surely one cannot be allowed to assume an upward progress when discussing the Psalter, and a downward progress when discussing the ritual. ¹

But if the new theory takes the ground that the sacrifices were really commanded or sanctioned by God, it is again in difficulty. Why would God introduce sacrifices at the end of the Old Testament period? What meaning or object could they have? They could not have been a mere form for form's sake. They could not have been merely a destruction of property for the sake of the loss inflicted. They were surely not intended to develop self-righteousness, by their being performed merely as an *opus operatum*.

They must have had some better significance. That this is so, even the prophets imply in the figures which they draw from the ritual service. Sacrifices were an expression of praise, consecration, and penitence. But they were an expression adapted to the beginning, to a primitive state of religious development. And would the divine plan, even according to the law of evolution, have begun with a spiritual code of morals, and have ended after a thousand years with a system of external sacrificial rites. They were needed, if at all, from the very

¹ Prof. C. M. Mead.

beginning of the religious development of the people. Besides, their symbolical language could be understood only as they *accompanied* the moral law. And again, to suppose that God at first gave a moral law, and then waited a thousand years before he gave the ritual, requires us to assume that, after denouncing as religious sacrilege, the sacrifices which the people had in their own gropings instituted, God at last instituted as a religious duty what was in substance the same thing !

If symbolism was needed to set forth thanksgiving, consecration, and expiation, it was needed at the beginning, rather than near the end of the Jewish national existence. If it was a part of the Mosaic legislation, it is quite intelligible that it might have been more or less abused and misunderstood, or loosely observed, that after the great national misfortune it might have been more carefully, and even too punctiliously performed according to the terms of the ritual law. But if there was originally no such ritual legislation at all, it could hardly have been introduced by any one inspired of God, at the late date assigned to it.

The more we study the sacrificial and moral legislation of Exodus and Leviticus, the more we shall be convinced that it could have been made only for a very primitive, somewhat savage people, of a high antiquity ; afar off it tells of the desert and of an early people. Yet the legislation itself is not the work of a primitive mind. From a merely human and critical point of view, it corresponds well with what we know of the mind of Moses, which

was imbued with the civilization of Egypt, where elaborate priest codes and rituals were in use. Coming from such a land, with such a leader, it is not likely that Israel waited a thousand years before giving its priests a written code for their organization and duties.

If, on the one hand, the new theory fails to explain the origin of the sacrifices; on the other hand, the explanation given by the Old Testament itself is satisfactory. Even according to the decision of the new school, Deuteronomy cannot be later than the time of Josiah, and just this book bears witness to the existence of such a code. "Everywhere in Deuteronomy, where the book contents itself with a mere general outline and sketch of precepts which, in practical life, demand a special application and complement, the conclusion must be drawn that more special commands, which it presupposed and to which it points, were already in existence."¹

The flaws pointed out in the Old Testament explanation of the rise of the sacrificial code are not flaws in reality. There is no divergence in the laws of the Pentateuch in respect to the altar. Exodus 20:24 gives no sanction to simultaneous plurality of altars. In Leviticus, priestly duties are assigned by name to Aaron and his sons as the officiating persons. Deuteronomy, which mainly respects the future, describes the priests by the tribe to which they belonged, as Levitical priests; but it neither asserts nor implies, as has sometimes been maintained, that every Levite was entitled to discharge priestly

¹ Delitzsch, in 1880,

functions. Leviticus has, of course, fuller details in respect to the feasts and the ritual than Deuteronomy, but there is no disagreement between them.

CHAPTER IX.

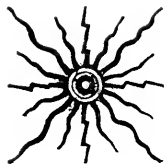
THE negative theory **fails to fit Deuteronomy into the time of Josiah, and Leviticus into the time of Ezra.** If they were produced in these times there is much in them that is superfluous ; and there are doctrines and environments that do not correspond in the degree of development with the age in which they are said to belong. In reality, each of these bodies of law not only has its distinct occasion and separate purpose, but each is appropriate to the circumstances which called it forth. Both were moulded throughout by the abode in the wilderness, and their style and character are as different as possible from that which they must have borne, if they had been produced at any subsequent period.

The Pentateuch, for instance, ordains rites, but suggests no explanation of them. This was a matter of subsequent reflection, as respecting sacrifice (Ps. 40 ; Isa. 53.) purifications (Ps. 26:6, 51:7), incense (Ps. 141:2), the privileges of God's house (Ps. 27:4), the comparative value of ritual and spiritual worship (Ps. 50:8, s s ; 51:16-17, Isa. 1:11 s s.) If these laws had not been written until the time of Ezra, we would be having the reflections and explanations before the law itself.

Then, in the case of those Mosaic laws which were expanded by usage at a quite early period of Israel's history, we would have the expansion before we have the existence of the law itself. Such laws, for instance are that of the levirate marriage in Ruth, the Nazarite in Samson, and the consecration of the first-born in Samuel. Thus too the service of the sanctuary was enlarged by music and by courses of priests under David, and its vessels multiplied under Solomon; and the prophetic order, of which the Pentateuch speaks as still future, superseded the priestly responses, for which it made provision.

Still again, in the Pentateuch, the teachings respecting the Messiah, divine retribution, the evil spirit, and the future state, are of the most elementary character, and in all these points, a great advance is made in the Psalms and other poetical books, and in the prophets. ¹

¹ So, too, the Pentateuch's account of the creation, the fall, and the deluge, while free from polytheistic conceptions, has such points of contact with the old Assyrian stories as establish its high antiquity.



CHAPTER X.

THE negative theory fails to explain the presence of many legal regulations, and of ideas, that are meaningless after the exile. What purpose could the regulations in reference to Urim and Thummim, Ex. 28.30 ; Lev 8. 8 ; Num 27. 21 ; cf, Ezra 2. 63 ; and Neh. 7 65, have had, if they were post exilian ? What can the post-exilian theory do with the regulations in regard to the jubilee year, Lev. 25. 8 ff. ? Or in regard to the Levitical cities, and the cities of refuge, in the thirty-fifth chapter of Numbers. These laws are all in the priest code. Further, the priest code confines itself to and gives only the services to be performed by the Levites in the wilderness, and no special legislation is made for the time of rest in Canaan. If the priest code were post exilian, that could scarcely have been the case. Such a fiction would not have fitted into exilian needs, and would hardly have occurred to exilian writers.

In general, the narratives and ideas that fill the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings are at variance with the spirit of the times after the exile. They are the outcome of a primitive civilization which could not have been imagined later on. It passes all historical probability to regard the laws of Exodus and Leviti-

cus as invented by, say the contemporaries of Alexander the Great. Not only are the general contents against such an origin, but the smallest details are at war with this adaptation.

Take one example among many, "A stranger shalt thou not wrong, neither shalt thou oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex. 22: 21; 23.9). Can we believe that we have here a writer, a legislator of the third century B. C., suggesting as the motive of an important law, which was opposed to the customs of his people, an imaginary fact, invented by him, which must have taken place a thousand years before, in place of resting this law upon the events of the captivity which still burned in the memories and hearts of the people? Even Kuehnen and Cheyne have been compelled to admit that some of these laws and regulations could not have been written after the exile. Thus Cheyne says "the Priestly Code contains many very early elements. Leviticus xi for instance, which is virtually identical with Deuteronomy xiv. 4-20, is, no doubt, as Kuehnen says, 'a later and amplified edition of those priestly decisions on clean and unclean animals, which the Deuteronomist adopted.' And above all, Leviticus xvii-xxvi, when carefully studied, is seen to contain an earlier stratum of legislation, which 'exhibits a characteristic phraseology, and is marked by the preponderance of certain characteristic principles and motives?'" In other words, even in the post-exilian document of the priest code there are regulations, customs

and language, which judged simply by the subjective canons of the negative school, will not at all fit into the period to which the document is assigned, and which can only be disposed of by postulating a complicated authorship.

CHAPTER XI.

THE negative view of the Pentateuch **fails to present a tolerably plausible theory of the personality of the great reputed author of the Pentateuch.** It divides and doubles the traditional Moses ; but its attempt is flimsy, and does not satisfy either historical probability or the facts. Its first Moses is the original but mythical reality of the exodus. Its second Moses is the amplified character elaborately constructed from the brain of the litterateurs of the exile. Its theory would be more conveniently served if it could make a complete myth of the earlier and real Moses, but in view of the utterances of the early prophets, it is compelled to leave to him his life, and to admit that he conducted the exodus and originated a few rudimentary laws.

But, suppose we strip the Pentateuch of its alleged later supplementary elements. On the one hand the shadowy earlier Moses will be too feeble a foundation, too slender a pillar of support, for all that is still left of the early history of Israel, with its battles, victories, defeats, organization, settlement, detailed customs, institutions and traditions. The weight of even the remaining historic detail is still too heavy for a Moses who is little more than a shadow to hold aloft.

And on the other hand, it is impossible to satisfactorily reduce Moses to a half mythical personality. He is one

of those characters we cannot kill off. He will live in strength and force of sharp-cut detailed act in spite of our arguments and desires to the contrary. In infancy, for instance, he was exposed, but in a strictly probable, and not in a mythical fashion. He cannot be placed in the category of Semiramis or with Romulus and Remus. No dove came to feed the babe in the bulrushes, no wolf to suckle it. And it is dry, hard, natural law, corroborated in details by extra-biblical facts, that the Egyptian king should fear the menace of a prolific subject race, and should seek to cripple it; that Moses' parents should conceal him as long as possible; that maternal affection should devise the cunning expedients adopted, relying on the prompting of a woman's sympathy to have her babe spared. The narrative is also natural in its silences. There is no mention of his boyhood in the palace, of his youth at the university, of his manhood at court, of the possible honors, jealousies, intrigues and perils about one so near the throne, yet so far from it. What a tempting field for romance! Surely the post-exilian chronicler might have put in a little of the heroic and marvelous for us. But Moses comes and goes before us as a bare man, and only as he is an instrument in relation to the great purposes of Jehovah. There is nothing of the humanistic interest in this tale. Nor is there such a literary filling up of the character as even the moral earnestness of Ezra would have been tempted to make, for the purpose of placing the character as an ideal before the people.

CHAPTER XII.

THE negative theory involves itself in contradiction in trying to explain its term "Mosaic." It assumes that the law was not by Moses, yet affirms that it was necessary for later legislators to frame and name the code as if coming from actual Moses. It maintains that Moses gave no laws but the decalogue, and yet teaches that Ezra found it necessary to promulgate the whole pentateuchal law, including the ceremonial, under the name of Moses.

There is weakness here. It is impossible to show cause for the necessity of terming the Ezraitic law "Mosaic in spirit." If Moses gave no laws, except perhaps a few moral laws, and if his personality was such a shadowy thing in all the prime of Israel's history, Ezra would not have fixed on him as the one to father such a mass of priestly and detailed ceremonial legislation. It is a question whether such an unnatural expansion, by which from a grain of one kind—the moral, a ton of another kind—the sacerdotal, is developed, would have occurred to Ezra. And if it did, the people would have regarded it as a very weak expedient. If the clergy of Germany today desired to introduce a full-fledged code of minute Sabbatarian laws, they could not and would not

go back to Martin Luther to father them, nor could they call them by the term "Lutheran."

According to the negative theory, first of all, there was a great antagonism between the moral and the ceremonial law: the prophets were always enforcing the decalogue as *over against* the sacrificial rites of their hearers. But if now *the decalogue* was in the spirit of Moses; the *priest's law*, which was the competitor of the decalogue, according to the new theory, could neither have been, nor have been considered as an evolution *out of* the decalogue. A development of the ritual law out of the decalogue is very much like a development of Roman Catholicism out of Puritanism !

Neither, in the second place, would such a real or assumed development have been accepted by the later Jewish people. If Moses was a very dim figure to them, if the law of Moses is not mentioned in the historical books and seems to have been unknown ; if the prophetic books, in which Moses is seldom mentioned at all, and in the few cases in which he is mentioned (except the late Daniel and Malachi) is not spoken of as a lawgiver, but only as a leader; ¹are the only books that are authentic and were in existence, previous to the exile, the priest class would not have found it either necessary or advisable or possible to call all their legislation "Mosaic."

When David or Solomon or other kings made laws, moral or ceremonial, they did not call them "Mosaic"

¹ Is. 53. 11, 12; Jer. 15, 1; Mic. 6. 4.

or in form ascribe them to Moses. When Ezekiel, who is alleged to have undertaken to introduce an elaborate ritual which was new for the most part to the Jews of his time, and was the fore-runner of the post exilian Levitical code, brought out his law, he did not call it "Mosaic." The principle that all legislation had to be in form attributed to Moses, here breaks down in the most conspicuous instance. If Ezekiel came with the authority of a prophet, needing no Moses to lean on, why did the author of Deuteronomy, any more than his contemporary Ezekiel, hide himself behind the name of Moses, especially if Moses as a legislator had been previously as good as unknown? ²

² Prof. C. M. Mead.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE negative theory **fails** in its own principle, **when applied to an explanation of the rise of the prophets.**

According to the negative theory, the prophets between 600 and 800 B. C., Isaiah, Hosea, Amos and their contemporaries, were the earliest writers of the Old Testament. While there was probably a Torah before the time of these writers, it was entirely oral, it is said ; and while there were some fragments of Israelitish literature, these, it is affirmed, were not properly of the character of sacred literature. So that, according to the negative theory, there was no literature of account before these prophets.

The principle of the negative theory is the law of natural growth. All Old Testament literature is a development ; first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. But what a blade we have in the early prophets ! Why, it excels the full corn. It is the acme of the Old Testament's literary development. These very first authentic utterances of the Jewish mind rise at once to the sublimest heights of Hebrew prophecy, and take a place among the grandest and most elevated writings in history!

Matthew Arnold, a literary critic certainly not prejudiced in favor of the orthodox view, writes that "The Hebrew language and genius, it is admitted by common consent, are seen in the Book of Isaiah at their perfection ; this has naturally had its effect on the English translation, which nowhere rises to such beauty as in this book." And another writer, Dr. Stalker, remarks, "The prophetic books are almost as artistic as poems. Their literary form is not exactly poetry, though now and then it crosses its own boundary and becomes poetical. It is a kind of rhythmical prose, governed by laws of its own, which it carefully observes. All the prophets are, indeed, not equally careful. Some of them appear to have been too completely carried away with the message which they had to deliver to think much of the way of delivering it. But these were not the strongest of the prophets. . . . At the head of them all stands Isaiah. All the resources of poetry and eloquence are at his command. His language ranges through every mode of beauty and sublimity, being sometimes like the pealing of silver bells, and sometimes like the crashing of avalanches, and sometimes like the songs of seraphim." And even the most negative of critical scholars will admit that parts of this remarkable book were written by Isaiah in the days of King Hezekiah. And they lay all emphasis on the genuineness of the earlier prophetic writings. This is indeed one of the foundation stones of their theory. Yet these are the very scholars who hold that the Jewish religion could

not have produced the *Psalms* till during or after the captivity, They “admit the genuineness of the prophetical writings, which are saturated with quite as lofty, pure and fervent a religious spirit as that of the best of the *Psalms*;” and deny the genuineness of the *Psalms*. “One could not well conceive of a more glaring self-contradiction than that which is involved in conceding, on the one hand, the genuineness of the prophetical books, and in contending, on the other, that the Jews could not have developed their religious poetry till centuries afterwards.

If Hebrew literature began in such a glory, and with such eloquent and artistic work, the law of literary development is an unreliable guide to go by in judging of the age of biblical books. How different and more natural is the account of the Bible, which attributes literary authorship by name to Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Gad, Nathan, Asaph, David, Solomon, Iddo, Shemaiah, Ahijah, Elijah and several others before the literary prophets of the eighth century.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE negative theory forces the Words of the Prophets into an interpretation against the existence of the ceremonial law. If it be true that the prophets fail to mention its existence, it is also true that they fail to mention the existence of the decalogue. And it would have been much more natural for them to have referred to the latter than to the former. For they were contending against immorality combined with superstitious trust in sacrificial offerings. They would have had occasion to lay stress on the observance of the moral law ; but they had no occasion to lay any stress on the observance of the ceremonial law. On the contrary as the ceremonial law was over-used and abused, the prophets strongly condemned this ritualistic formalism, Jeremiah even going so far as to say—very like the fashion of modern indignant emphatic speakers—for the effect of rhetorical emphasis—“I spake *not* unto your fathers nor commanded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices.” 7. 22

Now these are the words which the negative criticism would interpret against the existence of a ceremonial law. Taken literally they say just that. But these

were not spoken literally, as is very evident. Under the circumstances of their utterance they are a strong proof of the existence of the ceremonial law. And, besides, Jeremiah himself, unfortunately for the negative criticism, presents an additional and literal proof of the existence of the ceremonial law in his positive statement (34. 12-14) that the law concerning the redemption of Hebrew servants was given at the time of the exodus. If the first passage is figurative, this is literal. And if the first passage is literal, this *also* is literal, and shows that he knew of the existence of either Deuteronomy or of the Book of the covenant, and both of these show that God did command them concerning sacrifices.

Again where Jeremiah, 31, 31-33, tells of the new covenant, when the law of God is to be written on the heart of his people, he *also* tells of the old covenant made at the time of the exodus. He also, 11, 1-5, makes a formal quotation of what seems to be Lev. 26, 3, 12, which, on the theory, had not been written yet. And in general his references and those of other prophets show that a considerable body of laws is assumed by them to have been given at the time of the exodus. Their prejudicial expressions against sacrifices are due to the common abuse of sacrifices in that day. They cannot have meant to inveigh against them as such, for they represent the ideal future state as one in which sacrificial rites are to be observed. Thus Jeremiah himself speaks of the time when they shall come from many places bringing burnt-offerings and sacrifices, 17. 25.

And Isaiah, 33, 17-32, Zechariah, Zephaniah and Hosea say the same with equal emphasis. Nowhere do the prophets speak of an ideal future as characterized by the absence of sacrifice, while they repeatedly speak of such a future as characterized by their presence. And, though they did lay greatest stress on moral uprightness as the need of the moment, because that was the greatest lack then, yet since their great ideal church is conceived as one in which sacrifices are offered, they must have regarded the old law of Jehovah as prescribing such sacrifices. ¹ If it had not, their very bent toward morality would have swung them away from the ceremonial element.

¹ From the words of Isaiah 19:19, "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof", Robertson Smith draws the conclusion that Deuteronomy could not have been written before Isaiah. But Deut. XVI, 21, 22, only condemns idolatrous "pillars" and herein agrees with acknowledged old passages (Exod. 23:24). Moses himself erected twelve pillars at the side of the altar, (Exod. 24:4)! Here we find grounds again to justify us in holding that Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:4) recognized the binding character of the injunction of a central altar, and hence recognized the authority of Deuteronomy.—*Strack*.

CHAPTER XV.

The negative theory **requires a faith** in the assumption **that the most of the Mosaic law could twice be smuggled into general currency**, on two occasions about two hundred years apart. The Mosaic law was received by the whole Hebrew nation as the work of Moses written under the inspiration of God. This national reception of it as such by the whole Hebrew people,—a testimony in itself sufficient to outweigh conjectures of centuries away critical scholars—, we put aside for the moment, in order to discuss each of the two cases on their own merits.

The earliest case is that of the book of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy is held not to have been written until a short time previous to the reforms of Josiah, and for the purpose of aiding those reforms. It is held to have been then promulgated, as an ancient work, long lost, just come to light.

The first objection to this theory is that it does not correspond to the most important fact in the case. For the account of the discovery—"I have found *the* book of the law in the house of the Lord" (2 Kings 22.8)—indicates that its contents were known, not only to Hilkiyah, but to others, and that it was found in the temple, its

proper place,' Deut. 31. 26. The book found there in the temple must have contained at least a part of Deuteronomy; for the words of chapter 28 in Deuteronomy explain Huldah's utterances, and the contents of the book as a whole explain Josiah's reforms. Moreover the simple and natural explanation of the case is the one intended to be conveyed in the text, that the priest seeking among the records of the long-neglected sanctuary really found the old book from the time of Moses.

The second objection to the negative theory is that the book was at once so universally accepted. It must have been a book known, or heard of, and respected, before the time it was found. Otherwise it would not have received such rapid and universal recognition, unless indeed it was strongly attested by some official and universally respected personal forces of the day. Did Hilkiah and the priests thus attest it? Not if it was a new book to be smuggled in. It would not have been a book to suit them, according to the new theory of Hebrew history. According to that theory, the injunction of Deuteronomy 18. 6-8, must have been very unwelcome to the priests at Jerusalem. Nevertheless they and Hilkiah do cooperate to spread the authority of the book. So we here have a reasonably probable proof that the book was not just newly made, but that it already enjoyed irresistible authority at the time of its discovery. On the whole, and in view of the fact that party spirit has the same general qualities in all ages, it would probably not be putting the case too strongly to say that it

would have been as easy to originate and bring a smuggled book into general acceptance among both reform and anti-reform elements in those days, on the ground of its having been ostensibly written by Moses ; as it would be easy in our day and land to originate and bring a tariff reform bill into universal acceptance on the ostensible ground that it had been originally adopted as part of the organic law of the land by George Washington and the constitutional convention, but had been lost in the national archives, and had only just come to light.

A third strong objection to the negative theory of a newly written Deuteronomy is that the nature of much of its contents is inconsistent with the theory of its origin just before the reforms of Josiah. The book speaks in a friendly way of Egypt, 23. 8. How different is the tone of Isaiah, 30. 1 sqq. and Jeremiah 2, 18, 36! It speaks in a similar way of Edom, 23. 8, and condemns Moab and Ammon, 23. 4, 5, while the case is just reversed in Jeremiah 49. 17, 18, 40, 47; 49. 6! What was the appropriateness, in Josiah's time, of the injunction against the extermination of the Canaanites, Deuteronomy 20. 16-18, and the Amalekites, 25. 17-19, and in favor of conquests and war, 20. 10-20, and how could the legislation for the throne, 17, have originated so late!

The account of the discovery and the implied public knowledge of the book at the time are against the theory. The contents of the book is against the theory, and in the fourth place the *means* that it would have been necessary to employ are against the supposition.

Either Hilkiah, in order to do good in his reform, was willing to plan and tell a falsehood when he reported that he had found the book ; or the author, or an agent of his, had the book stealthily hidden in the temple in the anticipation that it would be discovered and be accepted as the work of Moses. Either supposition is unlikely.

“It is certainly not a light thing to ask Christian men to believe that the best men of the Hebrew nation, acting too, under divine inspiration, could find no better way to further their pious design than to perpetrate such a forgery” and then force it into acceptance by the use of falsehood.

The supposition is even more unlikely, when we consider the *source* to which the new theory is obliged to assign the book. It supposes it to have come from the prophetic party. But the prophets are just the ones who are rightly praised as the preachers of a stern morality. They denounce fraud, injustice and deceit in the most vigorous terms. Yet the new theory makes the devising and execution of this scheme, which, at the very least, verges on fraud, to be the result of their influence.

But the supposition seems utterly impossible when we look at the *results* it is said to have brought about. It is alleged to have accomplished what centuries of direct preaching had failed to accomplish. No amount of talk, uttered as the direct message of Jehovah, had succeeded in checking the prevalence of idolatry and worship on the

high places. This unknown prophet, by the happy device of deluding king, priests, and people into the belief that a hitherto lost work of the great deliverer had come to light, introduced a new era into the religious history of Israel. The secret never leaked out, and no one ever censured his conduct until to-day.

The supposition seems again impossible, when we consider the *nature* of the case, *largeness* of the scale, and the character of the times and people. Kings, priests, all the civil officials and even the prophetess Huldah, accepted such laws as are here found, and now brought forward for the first time, as the law of Jehovah given through Moses. "In an age of national decay, when the people had admittedly fallen away into idolatry and revelled in it, they permitted themselves to be coerced into reformation by a *fictional history*, invented for their benefit, but which neither they nor their fathers had known; and no honest man, nor any devotees of idolatry, denounced the 'pious fraud.' And, when after a long period of exile in a foreign land, a remnant of the people, humbled and impoverished, returned to Palestine, they calmly received more of this fictional history as truth; and submitted to having imposed upon them a complete and minute system of ordinances, rites and ceremonies, which was presented as having been divinely revealed to Moses long ages before, but which in that special form had hitherto been unknown."

It is true that the negative theory eases up the stringency of its position by making liberal allowance

for the preparatory influences of tradition. "There were strong and growing traditions about the law of Moses, and in accordance with these, and as a formulation of these, the two sets of writings appeared. They were only the crystallization of ideas already dominant." But while this supposition partly relieves the two schemes from the stigma of immorality and partly lessens the difficulties of universal acceptance, it merely lessens the latter and it adds still other and more complicated internal considerations.

In the first place a thousand or more years of traditional growth would not have left facts such as those under consideration, in the public mind. And the growth would not have been of such a kind as we have in these books. In the second place, the variations according to section and locality could not have been so suddenly exterminated. In the third place there would have been some ugly gaps in Israel's history, for such tradition to leap across. In the fourth place, the litterateurs would have had to do the impossible thing of so revising the latest growth that it should appear as the earliest in time. In the fifth place the proposed growth is not of such a kind as the people of Israel would have originated or tolerated. In the sixth place it is only to uphold a single idea, namely, that of development from morality to ritual formalism, for which the new theory introduces the growth of tradition, whereas that idea would be totally incompetent to sum up and explain the scores of influences and results at work, if all this law and history had

been only a matter of tradition. We are opening wide doors when we let hypothetic tradition in ; doors wide enough to swallow a hundred positive and negative theories, and end all science in conjectural confusion.

In the case of the other smuggled writings, several centuries later, including the greater part of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, which the returned Exiles are said to have accepted as coming from Moses, though they really came from Ezra or one of his contemporaries, the difficulty is in some respects greater. If Ezra did not know of their recent origin, he must have known that up to his own time no such laws had been heard of, and he must have made investigations. If he did know of their recent origin, we cannot reconcile the fact with either his or Nehemiah's character. Still less can we believe that their bitter enemies, those who rebelled against their rigor, those who conspired against the building of the wall, and more especially those priests and Levites who had their wives and children torn from them by the new law against foreign marriages, just put into operation, would either themselves quietly and unsuspectingly receive any such code as of Mosaic origin, or would allow others to do so, without ventilating the deception. Even where all the men of prominence in civil and ecclesiastical life have been a unit on such a matter, it would scarcely be possible to point to any similar instance of deception on such a colossal scale. The

case of the Pseudo-Isidore Decretals comes perhaps nearest to it. But it was less audacious and less successful.

And when we examine the historical setting into which this great questionable transaction is fitted, and carefully mark all that is said by the new critics in its favor, we cannot but feel the meagreness and the unconvincing character of the history upon which this great conjectural act is based.

“It is impossible to admit that a fraud so colossal could have succeeded under the conditions supposed ; that the Jews after the exile permitted through deceit and forgery, to be imposed on themselves a Draconian set of laws like those of Leviticus and foreign to their mode of thought. We cannot even conceive that the priests of that time could have harbored the idea. In order that a mystification of this sort should succeed the Jewish nation must have been composed on the one, side of a people utterly unlettered and stupified, with no memory of the past, and, on the other side, of a priesthood sensational and enterprising, all perfectly united and incapable of betraying the secret of their trickery. Between these two extremes there could have had been no middle class. Such was not the case. And as respects the prophets, can one conceive the priests of the fourth or second century B. C. suddenly coming before the people with books fallen from heaven, containing prophecies of events that took place centuries before, and the people, educated and ignorant, believing that these lucubrations, ridiculous as *ex post facto*, had existed

for centuries in the midst of a nation without ever being known by them? If there has ever been a miracle, this was one.”¹

In the last place, the supposition seems improbable when we consider that there could have been *no necessity* for it. It was the prophetic verdict of Huldah that confirmed the impressions of Josiah about the newly discovered law. It was again the authority of Ezra, their great ecclesiastical leader, that caused the returned exiles to accept the Levitical code. But this same authority, which was sufficiently weighty to overcome the presumption against the genuineness of laws proffering to be Mosaic, if they made their first appearance centuries after Moses' death, would have also been sufficiently weighty to cause the people to believe in a really new legislative revelation as coming direct from God. If they believed these prophets to be divinely inspired, they would have accepted what the prophets gave them under the latter's own name.

¹ De Harlez.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE negative theory **assumes a Pious Fraud on the part of Old Testament Writers.** In addition to the introduction of a non-genuine law on two great public occasions, it involves the practice of *pia fraus* on the part of a great many individual writers. Hear, for instance what Canon Cheyne says of the writer of the books of Chronicles:

“The Chronicles are inspired . . . as even a sermon might be called inspired, i. e. touched in a high degree with the best spiritual influences of the time. . . . That there are some passages in Chronicles which have a specially inspiring quality, and may *therefore* be called inspired, is of course not to be denied. But upon the whole, as Prof. Robertson Smith truly says, the Chronicler ‘is not so much a historian as a Levitical preacher on the old history.’ . . . He omits some facts and colours others in perfect good faith according to a preconceived religious theory, to edify himself and his readers, He also adds some new facts, not on his own authority, but on that of earlier records, but we dare not say that he had any greater skill than his neighbors in sifting the contents of these records, if indeed he had any desire to do so.”

And the Chronicler is but a single one out of many writers, according to the new view, who have been busying themselves in colouring, retouching, inventing, and

composing under more ancient names, large parts of the Pentateuch, Judges, Kings, Psalms and many of the books of the Prophets. Indeed to such an extent is the history idealized and imagined and adapted by both the numerous writers of the original documents and the various redactors, and so conflicting are the assignments of authorship by subjective experts of the negative school, that to the cautious and non-enthusiastic looker-on, it becomes a question as to the value of any of it. When he considers, for instance, the many persons who are said to have had a hand in writing the plagues, or the daring and detailed imagination of the legislator of the exile who invented both the extraordinary conception and also the elaborate description of the tabernacle, or the deliberate clipping and falsifying of facts on the part of the Chronicler, himself, when he rewrote Samuel and Kings in his own interests ; the onlooker is naturally led to feel that the whole Old Testament is so thoroughly honeycombed with fiction and pious fraud, perhaps also even in places which have eluded the instincts of the scholarship of this age, that the entire mass of writings have become valueless for the purposes of accurate history, and are not worth the pains which the negative scholarship is putting on them. This is a result which such critics as Canon Cheyne are illy prepared to meet.

For, strange to say, Canon Cheyne seems to think that people will have as much faith in a building which is tumbling down on their heads, and from

which he has removed the central pillars of support, as they used to have in it, while the pillars were still standing in their strength. This very illogical ¹ bent of mind proposes to feel as confident in its faith while standing upon the ruins of an objective Christianity, as it ever did in the well-built structure. Thus Cheyne expressly illustrates this assertion by saying, for instance, that if it should become decidedly probable that John did not originate the Fourth Gospel as it now stands, "I am sure that all truly religious students would believe, with heart and with head, as strongly as ever in the incomparable nature and the divine mediatorship of Jesus Christ. They would do so on the ground of the facts which would still be left by the historical analysis of the Gospels, and on the correspondence between a simple Christian view of those facts and the needs of their own and of the Church's life." All this is a great mistake, and if it is fair to take it as a sample of his critical judgment and of that fine historical sense and deep knowledge of human nature which he exercises on the biblical records, it is easy to estimate the uncertain value of his results. For, while he is perfectly justified in speaking confidently of his own type of mind, there are many other types of truly religious mind, less mystical and more hard-headed and scientific in their deduction from cold facts, who could *not* "believe as strongly as ever in the incomparable nature and the divine mediatorship of Jesus Christ." We may be mistaken, but

¹ That is, from a strictly scientific point of view.

perhaps Prof. Toy, of Harvard, is a case in point, and it is perhaps a question whether Kuehnen and Wellhausen themselves could come under Canon Cheyne's, "I am sure." The present writer believes Cheyne's judgment to be pretty well opposite to facts as far as men in general are concerned. For the authorized use of pious fraud has a tendency to vitiate faith in divine providence itself, and "the facts still left by the historical analysis" then no longer having any weight.

The defenders of the Old Testament sometimes incur rebuke for fastening such shocking and mis-leading epithets as "pious fraud" and "forgery" upon negative views. They are supposed to have originated these terms in dislike and ignorance, and are held responsible for them. But, excepting that some negative scholars repudiate them, both "pious fraud" and "forgery" are the negative theory's *own term*. Canon Cheyne says, "I quite enter into the dislike of reverent Bible-readers for the theory of 'pious fraud.'" But in the very next sentence he adds, "I think that dislike an exaggerated one."¹ While he does not adopt that theory in all cases, he virtually uses it in some. As to the term "forgery," he brings forward the test suggested by Mr. Gore, "viz: to find out whether the writer of a particular book could have afforded to disclose the method and circumstances of his production." We differ from him in believing that Hilkiah could have stood this test (on the assumption for the moment that Hilkiah *was* the writer of Deuteronomy);

¹ Founders of Negative Criticism. p. 271. Footnote.

but even if we grant that Hilkiab could be freed from the charge of forgery under this proposed test, there are a number of other writers, of whom Cheyne is not thinking just at this point, who on his own theory in regard to them, could not be freed under this test, but would be implicated.

At times the new theory is far less blunt, in its use of soft language to convey the exact shade of idea which it infuses into or impresses upon its results. It will not turn certain parts of writings into myths, legends, sagas, or even "inventions of a later age." It calls them idealizations of history. But such idealizations can have in their message to men no divine basis, or warrant, or promise, or strength, or comfort, other and more than any other purely human idealization. Nevertheless the point is that, in the Old Testament and in New Testament comment on the Old, they distinctly and prominently profess to have a direct divine basis and warrant and promise entirely different from that of purely human writings. And in order to cause the reader to believe the more strongly in that difference of basis and in their divine warrant, the purely human writers have clothed them with antiquity and put them into the lips of prophets who say they received them direct from God.

If our knowledge of God and hope of life eternal rise from such a cloudy well, faith is clean gone forever. Such idealization is perfectly permissible as long as it is intended to be understood as springing simply from the sum of human insight and knowledge, but it is no

more permissible for a human being to construct an utterance out of its own self-hood and then say to the world, "The Lord speaketh, hear ye Him;" than it is for a priest to fashion an idol out of his own mental consciousness, and say, "This is the Lord's image; bow ye down before it." Indeed, except, in the quality and kind of material used in the two processes, we do not see any difference between them. The prominent intentional element in each is pious fraud. And each of the two minds may sincerely consider itself inspired to do the thing.

To "invent fictitious narratives of events that never happened, to devise codes of laws that never were enacted, to compose speeches that were never uttered, and to describe in detail institutions that never had any existence," is proper to poet or preacher or writer of fiction. But to give these fictions currency and authority by solemnly attributing them to God Himself, or to utter them as revealed to men directly by God Himself, is pious fraud. And it is just here that the 'legal fiction' theory introduced by Robertson Smith, breaks down in the point of its analogy. The analogy is all right,—if we leave an objective God out of the Old Testament. But if we leave God out of the Old Testament, we are standing on useless ruins.

The whole matter is not a question as to whether the records have everything down in protocol form, even to the reproduction of the least circumstance, but it is essentially a question as to whether God's Spirit would speak

through such contents and oracles as have their origin in a pious fraud.

Both in the numerous different cases of individual writers of the Old Testament, and in the two special cases of Deuteronomy and the Exilian Priest Code, the whole matter is not a question of the mere subjective, personal truthfulness, or good intention of the writers, but it is a question of the objective result. The imposition, for example, of Deuteronomy on the people, as having been spoken by God to Moses when Israel was entering the promised land, was no mere literary fiction, but a political maneuver, which can be justified by no principle of morality except the Jesuitic one that "the end justifies the means." And when Canon Cheyne remarks, "Such conduct as that of Hilkiiah is, I maintain, worthy of an inspired teacher and statesman in that age and under those circumstances," he is falling back we suspect upon principles, the use of which would have made him an adept in the art of political priestcraft in bygone ages, and the particular detestation of secular rulers and upright men even in that early day. If the conduct of Hilkiiah was such, we do not see how it would have been possible for him to face king and people, on discovery of his conduct, without loss of self-respect and reputation, no matter how pure his intentions may have been. Benevolent intentions are no excuse for bad actions.

If the view taken above is correct, it would similarly and more conspicuously follow that the promulgation of

laws and invented narratives by the priesthood in the time of the exile for the purpose of securing prestige for their ecclesiastical order and divine sanction for their ceremonies, was also immoral, and greatly increases the already heavy burden which the new conjecture is compelled to bear on pure historical grounds.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE Negative Theory is essentially a Radical one, and tolerates no Half-Way positions. Its work is to level Scripture downwards. Its temper is, to eagerly advance further and further down the decline. For it, there is neither rest nor peace in an established position. It is "a movement." This is abundantly and almost amusingly illustrated by what is perhaps the most striking feature in Canon Cheyne's recent work. In this work the protagonist of the English criticism plays the part of paternal adviser, with fond and anxious pride, to the whole tribe of negative critics. He presses upon them the repeated exhortation that the one thing needful is to descend more hastily to the bottom levels. He tells us that "so *eager* and *rapid* has been the advance of recent criticism" that Schrader and Sayce, "both eminent Assyriologists," have been compelled to drop behind as Old Testament critics." He pushes and pulls and pushes, and cajoles, and expostulates, and laments, and will not be satisfied until he has brought the critics of more conservative build down to his present level. He says Davidson is the loser by excessive caution, and asks how can the work "which we are eagerly expecting from him, he produced without the aid of a wisely bold

'higher criticism.'” He deplores Prof. Sayce's position as an obstacle to progress and, throwing out a complimentary sop to him, asks why he should not “seek the assistance of the critics.”

But it is concerning Dr. Driver that he is particularly anxious, and for him he is overflowing full of mild reproach and strong exhortation. He thinks there is a “still more excellent way” than Dr. Driver's, namely to absorb the *full spirit* of criticism, and to stand beside the foremost workers. He considers Driver “a very clear-headed but slowly moving scholar, who stands “a little aside from the common pathway of critics,” And he says on the next page, “I do earnestly hope that he is not meditating a step backwards in deference to hostile archæologists. . . . I greatly regret this. To fall behind Ewald, Dillmann and even Delitzsch and Kittel, is a misfortune which I can only account for on the theory of compromise. I hesitate to contemplate the consequences which might possibly follow from the acceptance of this view.” It strikes him that Dr. Driver shows too much “cautious reserve” and too little “courage” in treating the books of Samuel, and that his remarks on the Psalms are “not untouched by the spirit of compromise.” As for Dr. Sanday, Canon Cheyne thinks that he “rests for the moment in temporary hypotheses and half-way positions, prepared to go either forwards or backwards as the case may be, and disposed to idealize Dr. Driver's hesitations and inconsistencies” in the matter of the Psalms. As for New

Testament criticism in England, Canon Cheyne does not feel that it is very hopeful (i. e. from his point of view). He says, "There is no doubt much good work being done, but for want of a disposition to learn from the 'higher critics' of the Old Testament, it appears to me to be, however fruitful up to a certain extent, singularly one-sided."

Canon Cheyne also tells us that he finds it rather difficult to learn from English critics, through their *unprogressiveness*, and speaking of the Proverbs, exclaims, "Alas! Dr. Driver has not thrown off that spirit of deference to conservatism, which, if I am not mistaken, injures his work elsewhere. . . Dr. Driver speaks as if some of the Proverbs in two of the greater collections might possibly be the work of Solomon. This is hardly the way to cultivate the critical spirit in young students"[!] Speaking of Driver on Job, the Canon still continues, "I think Dr. Driver should have taken some steps in advance of a book published in 1884. Both he and Dr. Davidson have a way of stopping short in the most provoking manner. At the very outset, for instance, they compromise rather more than is strictly critical [note the sense in which this word is used] on the subject of the historical existence of Job." In the matter of the date of the Song, the Canon says, "Here I must complain that such a thorough Hebraist as Dr. Driver hesitates so much," and adds, "That I reluctantly call an unwise compromising with tradition."

So we see the leader of the Negative School himself

making the most positive assertions that no half-way positions are possible in this movement. We see him standing in the deep hollow, and calling out in tones, now of pathetic appeal and now of public rebuke, to his more timid followers holding on with might and main half-way up the hillside: "Come down lower! Come down to me!"

Moreover, he traces for us the stages of the downward "advance." Comparing the moderately conservative position of Ewald with the radical one of his pupil Wellhausen, he says, "In one sense he [Wellhausen] has no doubt broken with his master. . . But in another he carries on his old teacher's work; he stands where so fearless a critic as Ewald would stand, could he begin his career again. . . . Wellhausen is a faithful disciple of Ewald, whose principles he does but apply more consistently, and therefore with different results." He states that Dr. Driver has now reached the point¹ which he himself had reached in 1888; and that while in 1881 Cornill still thought some psalms were Davidic, by 1891 he had come to see that the whole Psalter² was post-Exilic, which is essentially Cheyne's own present position. Though he takes Prof. Briggs under the special shelter of his wing, he says he is bound to group him with Prof. Toy of Harvard. And through all his writings and biographical descriptions we feel how entirely his sympathies and convictions both in literary

¹ Speaking of the Psalms.

² Except perhaps Psalm 89.

methods and results are entirely at one with the most pure school of destructive rationalists.

But here we come across an idiosyncrasy in Canon Cheyne and his school. While he is at the bottom of the hill as a philologist, and is trying to pull his associates and followers down to his present place; and while he is in intimate association, alliance and fellowship with pure continental rationalism as a philologist, he resolutely refuses to be considered at the bottom of the hill as a theologian, or to be classed with the pure rationalists in their philosophy. In all seriousness and reverence he thinks he is advancing the interest of "true evangelical religion," and he hopes that his work will tend to the strengthening of spiritual faith, and it is "in the name of the Apostle of Faith" that he very modestly, nobly and gravely advocates the use of his methods. As a scholar and linguist he is a master-workman overturning every wall and stone in the foundations of Christianity, and trying his best to show that only ordinary human and natural principles have been operative in this ancient historical structure. But as a religious man, he is still a firm believer; on the strength of some things he still finds in these foundations. As an investigator, he eliminates the supernatural; as a Christian, he finds the supernatural still present in some unexplained way. Moreover the existence of his Christian faith is no barrier whatever to closest fellowship and sympathy with those who draw the rationalistic theological inference, and, from the same standing ground as

Cheyne, ridicule the existence of such Christian faith. The mode of contact in him between faith and its object appears to be entirely mystical, and it seems strange to see a keenly rationalistic head illogically receiving its spiritual life blood from the outflow of a mystical heart.

The same "more consistent application of principles" which made Wellhausen a better exponent of Ewald's principles than Ewald himself; and the same thorough-going premises in theology which Cheyne wishes Driver to apply in history and linguistics, ought in all fairness to the principles be applied by Cheyne himself to the theological field. Then he would be where his principles belong, in the camps of rationalism, and would be less dangerous to the Christian faith he so earnestly hopes he is serving. And we feel rather certain that it is just in those camps that his whole following and his successors will ultimately land.¹ The Cheyne of 1888 is not the Cheyne of 1894, as he himself admits; and with time, and with the spirit of eager and ardent "advance" to impel them, the principles will work themselves out to a finish in that class of mind.

This statement will be probably be contested with considerable feeling, by the whole school of intermediate critics, so active and popular now, who are trying to combine a reconstructed Old Testament with devout

¹ The science of Comparative Religion will welcome their arrival, and assign the Old Testament a place in its catalogue of religions, from which by comparative methods of elimination it hopes to educe the ultimate religion of rational humanity.

faith in Christ. Many of them believe it to be both entirely possible, and also more satisfactory, to accept the principle of historical development in the Old Testament, without denying the authority of Christ and the principle of the supernatural in the New Testament. Indeed they become exceedingly restive when it is asserted that these two principles have any destructive bearing on each other. They consider the argument from the New Testament as to the character of the Old as being illegitimate, and feel that the opposition to the new views of the Old Testament comes chiefly from narrowness and ignorance. They feel that defenders of the orthodox view are "laying in a handicap on both science and religion." The irritation in their souls probably arises from a complication of causes.

Beyond question they have a grievance, in being hampered, and held back, and criticised and throttled by the orthodox world. Such treatment is certainly sufficient reason for great impatience, from their point of view. But they should remember that there is another point of view. Orthodoxy realizes how precious to itself and to the world that is which they determine to destroy. Orthodoxy realizes that their whole theory is still but a hypothesis, and as it believes, unprovable hypothesis, and it knows how eager they are to impregnate young and unformed minds with the theory, and if orthodoxy has the same right to act on its principles, as they have on theirs, they certainly should not be impatient when it acts. If they were in the position of orthodoxy, it is quite certain

that they would be not a whit more tolerant and they might be much more intolerant than it is. Again, orthodoxy knows only too well how that "eagerness to advance" which puts forth so many changing conjectures in the name of religion, is very hurtful to all religion. Men cannot change their religion a number of times, and yet retain it. It is either stability, or infidelity. And in any case, on the common sense question of the religious value of the new results, the judgment of men who are not scholars has both rights and weight.

No doubt too these scholars feel that their tendencies and their position are misrepresented even in works such as the one before the reader. But that is inevitable. It is the price of fame. It is the price of reform. When Luther was misrepresented, he did not sit down and whine about it.

No doubt, again, that these English scholars especially in past years have felt the lack of appreciation and the condemnation visited upon them by the great bulk of Christians. But they have not become martyrs yet for their convictions. And if they had, what a glorious privilege to have possessed! Is it not a privilege to lay down one's life for the truth? And is not truth more precious than life? If these men are really looking unto Jesus, as the author and finisher of their faith, ought they be so restless under tribulation. Some of these advance guards of the eternal truth seem to be in the battle with a heavenly glory in one eye, and a worldly aim in the other. None of them have resisted

yet unto blood. It is scarcely reasonable to expect to appropriate the martyr's crown, without bearing the martyr's cross. And much of the excitement that has been stirred up in the Christian world of late has perhaps come from the fact that several of the eagerly advancing defenders of the new truth, never learned to sing, with any real inwardness,

“Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sailed through bloody seas?”

There is probably however still another cause that renders some of the intermediate critics to be both hesitating and restless. The fact that there are men like Drs. Driver and Davidson and Smith and Cheyne and Gore, who both accept the theory of the negative criticism, and yet may be said to be believers in prophecy and possibly in miracle, shows how there are now, as there have always been, great scholars remaining in an inconsistent midway position between two things mutually exclusive of each other. These critics have adopted the theories and methods of the negative school without accepting the grounds on which the theories are based. They deny the validity of the one great forceful consideration which renders these theories and ideas and positions really cogent. They admit the supernatural, but not in such a sense as the Record itself really requires.

Though they are clinging with might to the heart of the Christian faith, there is likely to be a lurking uneasi-

ness for fear that their tendency may after all be verging away from faith, and that consistency may after all draw them down from their present unstable midway position into the abyss of unbelieving rationalism. Both history and instinct can scarcely fail to suggest to them the impossibility in such a movement, of establishing a bottom half way down hill. Both must suggest the insecurity of all the considerations by which they seek to avoid the conclusion pressed upon them, and which their bolder and less conservative brethren on the continent at once accepted. It may be only the forces of their early education and environment that are holding their reason in check, and temporarily preventing the landslide. Such a thought is uncomfortable in the extreme, and one from which they would naturally shrink. Without therefore pressing its irritating edge inwards any further, we turn to the negative theory as such, in its own thorough-going essence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE Secret Stronghold of the negative theory is the ever-present and ever-pressing Desire of the intellect to Deny the existence of the supernatural in history. The great problem which the radical critics set themselves to solve is to account for the Old Testament without admitting the presence of the supernatural. The strictly naturalistic method, governed—some one has said—by “the greatest of modern tyrants, the idea of development,” neither needs nor finds a God in Israel. Jehovah was a local deity of Israel, with no more real existence than Baal or Chemosh. Israel’s religion did not essentially differ from that of Moab, Ammon, and Edom, Israel’s nearest kinsfolk and neighbors. Narratives of miraculous events are mere legends, often recorded for unworthy ends.

These are the fundamental assumptions that underlie and are really at the bottom of the whole negative theory as such. They form its philosophical basis. Its ultimate spring, its “*fons et origo*,” is the rationalistic motive. This is a deeper and more final motive even than the love for historic truth. In its essence and innermost spirit, the problem of the newer criticism is not a mere literary problem. It is the question of “a philo-

sophical theory in conflict with the Biblical view of God and His working in the world." It is not a question of letters, or of literary analysis. There is a spirit back of and beneath the literary analysis that gives rise to and urges the latter on. This spirit occasionally exists in Christian minds, side by side with faith, and brings the believer into great mental conflicts. But where the human mind for any reason comes to a "practical denial by logical rationalism of the special and immediate working of God in the world and the progress of events," he also comes, a few steps further on, to the explaining away of the supernatural in Scripture, and finally to a denial of the possibility and fact of miraculous Divine revelation.

It is because of this philosophical theory *behind* the literary problem, and because it appears to veil itself so innocently in questions of literature and history, that evangelical orthodoxy 'scents danger from afar' and strenuously refuses to have anything to do with the new ways. It is true enough as the critics righteously maintain, that the ways may be harmless and in the line of progress; but it is not less true that behind the ways there is something deadly.¹ In and by itself, it might really be a very small matter as to who wrote many of the Psalms, or this and that part of the

¹ There is particularly one great teacher and scholar here in America who under the guise of simple grammatical and historical teaching insidiously infuses rationalism into the minds of students.

prophets ; but it becomes a vital matter because of the rationalistic presuppositions which are made the basis of the literary and historical determination. For instance, whether there are one or two Isaiahs may not be particularly important, but the important thing is that the negative criticism desires to establish two or more Isaiahs in order to prevent the original Isaiah from having predicted anything which happened long before his time. The fact in itself may be a very little thing. But the determination of the negative criticism to establish the fact in order to deny the prophet the outlook of any more distant prophetic prevision, than the natural power of a gifted man to foresee events which would be likely to take place in a very few years, causes the little thing to assume a very fundamental and important aspect.

“In rationalism, reason is the sole arbiter. What reason cannot comprehend and accept can never form part of the rationalist’s conviction. His intellect is consistent throughout. To him, Scripture is like any other book. He accepts it, only when it agrees with his opinions, and then only as an illustration and affirmation, not as an authority.”¹ Rationalism has always been a tendency in the history of the human mind, and of Christianity. Its course has generally been from orthodoxy to liberal Christianity ; from liberal Christianity to religion in general, “from religion in general to mere morality, and finally from morality to eudaemonism.” After

¹ Fr. V. Reinhard.

it is once fully seen that the negative theory of the Old Testament and the Higher Criticism in general are not something absolutely new, and are in their animating spirit but the tail-end of a well known way of thinking which has been coursing restlessly through all the centuries, much of its attractive power will have disappeared. It will sink to the position of a single joint in a long articulated and ever oscillating series of mental movements.

The spirit that brings the negative theory to the front today is the spirit that of old threw up Pelagius, and Duns Scotus and Abelard and the sceptics of Saracenic culture, and Erasmus and the Italian Humanists, and partly perhaps Richard Simon. After the Reformation and the Renaissance had caused historico-critical investigations to be possible, and they began to spring up; a new and modern type of this rationalistic spirit drew them to itself as its handmaid, and the resulting union gave rise to a whole progeny of movements, including the actual series by which we are still affected.

Des Cartes was the father of modern philosophy. His syllogism of universal doubt could not help invading the realm of theology. Its rationalistic animus was quickly carried to English soil and the school of the English deists sprang up. Among these deists rationalism first touched the Old Testament Scripture in Hobbes' Leviathan. Hobbes died in 1679. At the same time on the continent Spinoza, who died in 1677, in his *Tractatus Theologico-politicus* openly attacked the authority

and genuineness of Scripture. In 1753 Astruc the French physician published his book against the spirit of rationalistic criticism and in defense of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. In this book the documentary theory of the Pentateuch originated, being subsequently appropriated by the leaders of the rationalistic side for their purposes.

The soil of Germany was at this time being rendered rich and ready for the reception of the rationalistic critical seed. The great Prussian Frederick had surrounded himself with free-thinkers from France, and the self-sufficient followers of an extreme Wolfian philosophy brought on the period of superficial rationalistic illumination. Michaelis of Göttingen prepared the way for rationalism in exegesis of the Old Testament, and Ernesti did the same in the exegesis of the New. Ernesti laid it down as a leading law that the interpretation of the Scriptures was to be similar to the interpretation of a profane author.

Then came Semler. His restlessly sceptical mind became the instrument of the rationalistic spirit. Though privately devout, by undermining the genuineness of the biblical writings, he "reaped a whirlwind, at which he himself trembled." From him there went forth swarms of rationalists to occupy the chairs and pulpits in Protestant Germany. At this time Lessing published the *Wolfenbuettler Fragments* which attributes the introduction of Christianity to bold deception.

Meanwhile Eichhorn, who was a pupil of Michaelis,

began to exert a great influence on the trend of thought, approaching the Biblical writings through the portals of Oriental literature. Eichhorn's friend Herder, and Herder's friend Lessing, contributed greatly towards toning down the rationalistic spirit, which had been largely reinforced by the principles of the French Revolution, into a cosmopolitan humanitarianism, which began to act widely in literary and in theological circles. This new critical feeling, in conjunction with the introduction of comparative methods into the study of philology and religion, caused the books of the Bible to be viewed as merely human compositions like the sacred books of other religions. To prove this to be the case with the New Testament, the learned Ferdinand Christian Baur, in our century, made his famous effort of a lifetime, being at last unsuccessful; while his pupil Strauss and the French scholar Renan undertook a similar task in respect to the life of Christ.

Meantime Gesenius had been absorbing the rationalistic spirit from his teachers Henke and Eichhorn, and was combining his cold and almost frivolously sceptical criticism with accurate wealth of lexicographical and archaeological learning. De Wette, in his early training, was being steeped in rationalism of the worst kind. Ewald, influenced by Eichhorn, and drawn to the Arabic and Persian languages, came upon the scene to turn attention to Old Testament criticism. Vatke and Hupfeld followed. Vatke's father was a rationalist, and so was Hupfeld's. Hupfeld was probably the

first to proceed on the great idea that the religion of Israel was a natural development. Kuehnen was studying under his teacher, the rationalist Scholten, and was forming those rationalistic theological convictions which probably drew him to Old Testament Criticism. Wellhausen left Ewald and followed Kuehnen. Robertson Smith imbibed from both, and Canon Cheyne, taught of Ewald, was "fascinated," as he admits, by Kuehnen.¹ So we see, that with a few exceptions, the really representative negative Old Testament scholars have either been bred in rationalistic surroundings or have been strongly under their influence.²

Within the last half century, the greatest new philosophical idea since the days of Des Cartes, has become a dominating presence in science, literature and religion, and it is the use of this idea, applied to Old Testament results and methods as left by Ewald, that has brought forth the negative higher criticism of to-day.

¹ It is to the present chapter that the footnote in the Introduction, page 17, refers. To the earlier writers mentioned in the Introduction, Knobel should have been added, and Budde, Duhm and Kittel might have been added to the later ones.

² When Cheyne remarks that three such men as Reuss, Vatke and Kuehnen, reaching the same result by different paths, are not likely to have been entirely mistaken, he fails to remember that all three men were infected by the same literary atmosphere of the age; all three had the same literature and history behind them; all three were to a greater or less extent moulded by rationalistic training, and all three, in spite of their greatly differing natures, had that bent of intellect to which the rationalistic explanation would probably alone appear plausible.

The universal adoption to-day of the principle of evolution, as a starting point for the negative criticism is proof that the latter has dogmatic interests at stake, and not merely scientific interests. These dogmatic interests are the principles of rationalism. More important than the facts themselves, to the negative criticism, is the ability to show, that as all religion is a natural development through various stages to higher forms, so also it is the case with the religion of Israel. And as the history we have in the Old Testament shows a higher spirituality at the very start than afterward in its course, that history must be imaginary and unhistorical for the most part,—a projection from a later age into the past. To establish this dogma, not to apply a purely scientific method, is the point for which the negative theory exists. The facts are not the thing in itself, but the dogma is.

The dogmatic working of this intellectual bias is seen very clearly when the results it has reached in Biblical criticism are placed side by side with the results reached by it in reference to the other historical monuments of the race. The incongruity of the comparison is striking. On the one side the most distant antiquity, with great facility and against probability, has at least until very recently been accorded to works like the Avesta and the Rig-Veda. On the other side the greatest endeavors are made to bring down the date of the composition of the Bible as near as possible to our own times. On the one side everything is interpreted in favor of the sacred books of India or Eran, and, on the

other, everything is claimed against the sacred books of the Jews. This is due to the dogmatism of the intellectual bias.

From such a survey of the higher criticism in its historical connection, it may perhaps be seen that the negative theory of the Old Testament is another of the numerous waves thrown up by the ever rushing current of rationalism, and it is probably within rational limits to conjecture that though the same old underlying spirit of rationalism will perennially be renewing the old conflict with faith from a different point of attack, yet its present type, incarnate in the negative higher criticism, will disappear or be displaced—leaving some results to enrich the race—and men will be wondering how its fallacies were ever able to enthrall the powerful minds it held in its embrace. Bishop Lightfoot, speaking of the rationalistic criticism of the New Testament, from the view of the long time perspective, puts the matter in the following language:

“There is at least a presumption (though in individual cases it may prove false on examination) that the historical sense of seventeen or eighteen centuries is larger and truer than the critical insight of one late half-century. The idols of our cave never present themselves in a more alluring form than when they appear as ‘the spirit of the age.’ It is comparatively easy to resist the fallacies of past times, but it is most difficult to escape the infection of the intellectual atmosphere in which we live. I ask myself, for instance, whether one who lived

in the age of the Rabbis would have been altogether right in resigning himself to the immediate current of intellectual thought, because he saw or seemed to see, that it was setting strongly in one direction. . . . The comparison is not without its use. Here were men eminently learned, painstaking, minute; eminently ingenious also, and in a certain sense eminently critical. In accumulating and assorting facts—such facts as lay within their reach—and in the general thoroughness of their work, the Rabbis of Jewish exegesis might well bear comparison with the Rabbis of neologian criticism. They reigned supreme in their own circles for a time; their work has not been without its fruits; many useful suggestions have gone to swell the intellectual and moral inheritance of later years; but their characteristic teaching, which they themselves would have regarded as their chief claim to immortality, has long since been consigned to oblivion. It might be minute and searching, but it was conceived in a false vein; it was essentially unhistorical, and therefore it could not live. The modern negative school of criticism seems to me equally perverse and unreal, though in a different way; and therefore I anticipate for it the same fate.”

CHAPTER XIX.

THE Conclusions of the negative theory affect the Authority of our Lord's teaching. In a previous chapter¹ it has been shown that the new theory of the Old Testament is opposed by the direct testimony of the New Testament. But there is an additional and deeper point. It is the fact that Christ's own personal authority is involved by the new theory.

We fully realize the danger in reasoning on a point of this kind. We know how often and how wrongfully and harmfully the authority of Christ has been set up, in apriori argument against that which was subsequently found to be the truth ; and which, properly understood, was not in conflict with Christ. We know how this brings injury to the cause of Christ on the one hand, and pushes seekers after the truth towards unbelief, on the other. We do not therefore desire to use this argument in such a manner as to shut off investigation or any right of criticism. We appreciate all the force there is in the query of the newer critics, "Does the language of our Lord forever debar a Christian scholar from raising the question whether the Pentateuch is a composite doc-

¹ See p. 47.

ument or wholly the work of Moses?" We know the danger of taking any passage of Scripture to teach that which it is originally not intended to teach; and the difficulty of the human interpreter in distinguishing between the teaching of Scripture, and his own inference from that teaching.

Nevertheless, we may ask the critics the same question that they ask us. "Does the historical spirit of investigation presume for itself such certainty as to forever debar a Christian scholar from raising the question whether its conclusions are not sweeping away the authority of our Lord, and whether it is not in danger of teaching too rapidly, as facts, such damaging conclusions, before they are shown to be necessary and proven?"

It is with the feeling that equal rights must be granted to *both* sides in this case, that we proceed to state our own side, which we believe to be so strong.

It is admitted that our Lord accepted the Old Testament *as it stands*. It was part of God's Word for him and his disciples. Both the Law and the Psalms and the Prophets were one of the chief sources of the most important teachings of Jesus, and one can not make the whole originate in pious fraud, and yet say that he was "filled with grace and truth." He gave no hint either in his public teaching or in his confidential revelations to his disciples that the Old Testament was not authentic. "He blamed, indeed, the sceptics of His day—the Sadducees—for their attitude towards Scripture. And in so far as the Scribes were accredited teachers of the law of Moses (apart

from their traditions), He exhorted the people to 'do and observe' what they said."

At the very beginning of his ministry, and under the solemn circumstances connected with the great Sermon on the Mount, our Lord distinctly specified His own relation to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and especially to the Law, in what is really the text of the first part of the sermon. He says: "Think not that I come to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you,—see how solemnly and strongly he makes the statement,—“till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.”

He could not have spoken more forcibly or clearly. He does not mean merely the moral law, for the word is used which in all similar passages in the New Testament means the whole Mosaic law—"the books of the law, as every Jew of the days of our Lord would have understood this term to include and signify."

He came to set forth in his own person, in deeds and words, the whole priestly and moral law of the Old Testament, as the writer to the Hebrews so well shows. But the new theory maintains that the greater part of this law,—of every jot and tittle of which the Saviour speaks so seriously—was composed of the "idealizations of the pious Jew of the Exile." The new theory is responsible for making Christ at least seem to stultify himself here.

It has not yet successfully shown *how* it can hold to the authority of Christ, and at the same time to the post-exilian origin of the law.

Christ in his ministry went so far as to distinctly found, or illustrate or corroborate his teaching on both the deeds and the writings of Moses. In arguing with the Sadducees in regard to the resurrection, he said, "Now that the dead are raised up, *even Moses showed at the bush.*"¹ He said, again, "If you believe not the writings of Moses, how shall you believe my words?"² He illustrated his own redemptive work on the Cross to Nicodemus, that master in Israel, by saying that it should be "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," which certainly presumes both a historical miracle of healing and a historical personality to lift the serpent up as redeemer. When the Jews appeal to the manna in the desert as a miracle given to their fathers, he does not discredit the historical fact of the miracle, in order to strengthen by contrast his own greatness, but he admits its reality, and even introduces the personality of Moses, in the words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven."

"Did he leave his followers under the delusion that *mythical* was *actual* history? Did he permit his apostles to go forth and teach this mythical history as truth, stamped with the impress of his authority? Is this what men would have expected from him, on consider-

¹ Luke 20, 37.

² John 5, 47.

ing his life and character?" "Is this in accord with rational ideas of what a divine revelation should be,—to conceive of it as given in such a form that fact in it can hardly be distinguished from a fable. Is this a reasonable hypothesis that through Christ men were not enlightened as to the true nature of the elder revelation, but that the discovery of this was left, after the lapse of centuries, to men who either altogether rejected the idea of revelation, or who sought to explain away the supernatural in Scripture, i. e. to deny really that it is a *special* revelation at all?"

CHAPTER XX.

THE Negative Theory **throws overboard all External and Traditional Evidence.** I admit that it is very difficult to prove the trustworthiness of this class of evidence. But it is equally difficult to prove its untrustworthiness. In our lack of knowledge either for or against such evidence, it is only fair to accept, and not to reject it, especially in view of the tenacity with which Orientals retain a definite traditional record.

The folly of allowing a series of internal probabilities to weigh decisively against external evidence,—and this is the essential method of the higher criticism—has been shown recently to the humiliation of the higher criticism, in the New Testament field,—where discovery and discussion of external evidence are more possible—, in connection with the date of the Gospel of John and the recovery of the lost Harmony of Tatian, which Prof. J. Rendell Harris calls the greatest Patristic discovery of the century. And the consequence that the literary funeral of St. John, which the negative criticism had announced and was so desirous of officiating at and attending, has, because of the recovery of the Harmony, as well as for other reasons, been postponed indefinitely, ought in all good grace and conscience have made the negative critics

a little less sure and confident of their method in the Old Testament field.

Mr. Harris, who imagines that the advanced critics are so named by compliment, chiefly because they have a tendency to run ahead of the facts of the case which they discuss, says that in the question of the genuineness of St. John's Gospel, the negative critics occupied themselves chiefly with the discussion of the internal probabilities, to the exclusion, almost entirely, of the external evidence and the ecclesiastical tradition. It would have been better to stay a while longer by these latter, he thinks, for they constitute the real facts of the case, at all events in regard to the antiquity of the book.

But instead of doing that, Prof. Reuss,¹ for instance, who is the original founder of the post-exilian hypothesis, expressed himself as follows in his History of the New Testament, on the question of the external evidence for St. John's Gospel:

"The positive testimony does not begin . . . until Theophilus of Antioch, after 170 A. D. But the universal recognition of the book by the Church immediately thereafter, sufficiently attested, would be inexplicable did it not reach back much farther. . . . The unspeakable pains that have been taken to collect external evidence only shows that there is none in the proper sense of the term."

Similarly, Dr. Davidson, wrote of the same Gospel²

"Whatever may be said about Justin's acquaintance with this Gospel, its existence before 140 A. D. is incapable either of decisive or probable showing, The Johannine authorship has re-

² Canon of the Bible, p. 99. ¹ Reuss and Kuehnen died in 1891.

ceded before the tide of modern criticism; and, though this tide is arbitrary at times, it is here irresistible. Apologists should abstain from strong assertions," etc.

"Reuss had only ventured to fix an inferior limit for the date, but Davidson went so far as to fix a superior limit (which would be necessarily the death-blow to the Johannine authorship), and even to intimate that the tide of critical knowledge on this point was irresistible. At the same time he warned apologists against strong assertions, from which it is least fair to conclude that he was not conscious of having over-stated his own case!"

But, says Prof. Harris, neither of these statements will bear repetition in view of the additions that have been made to our documentary knowledge; the only thing that will bear repeating is Reuss' admission that the "universal recognition of the book by the Church immediately" after the time of Theophilus "would be inexplicable did it not reach back much further." The external testimony to St. John's Gospel, says Prof. Harris, does not begin with Theophilus, nor even with Tatian, who is historically his senior; it is no longer lawful to say that, anterior to Theophilus, the external evidence is practically non-existent; and it is extremely doubtful whether any person, who is even moderately acquainted with the subject, would to-day fix the lower limit for St. John's Gospel at the year 140, to say nothing of turning the lower limit into an upper limit. This has come about partly by the magnificent reasoning of Bishop Lightfoot, and principally by the coming to light

of the Harmony of Tatian in two different forms. The very existence of the Harmony was denied in the strongest and most categorical terms by such negative critics as Renan and the author of "Supernatural Religion," against whom Lightfoot wrote.

Its discovery shows that Tatian was so well acquainted with the Fourth Gospel as to have transcribed the whole of it at least once, and to have carefully examined the relation of the contained narratives to that given in the Synoptic Gospels. Tatian had quoted John's words in another and a well-known work of his,¹ but the negative critics called all these quotations in question, throwing the testimony overboard on the ground of internal probabilities, and in the interest of their theory. The author of "Supernatural Religion" for instance devotes six pages to the demonstration that the passages referred to have nothing to do with the Fourth Gospel.

If it is possible for an early Christian writer, profoundly acquainted with John's Gospel, which he had at least once written off with his own hand, to compose a religious treatise which would fail to convince critics in later ages that he had any acquaintance with John's Gospel at all, and a treatise which would be entirely thrown overboard as unreliable external testimony, unworthy of consideration, how much greater must the temptation be in the Old Testament field, where external testimony is more scarce, and inconvenient corrobora-

¹ Apology to the Greeks.

tive discoveries are less likely to be made, to the negative critics, to throw external traditional testimony overboard as unreliable, on the ground of internal probabilities, and in the interest of a theory. And this illusion of the negative theory, in throwing overboard external testimony, can scarcely be overestimated, when we remember that in the case of Tatian and John's Gospel, Tatian had actually made verbatim quotations from John with whom nevertheless the negative critics strenuously maintained he was unacquainted.

The newly discovered fragment of the Gospel according to Peter, another document that brings fresh and unexpected evidence for the antiquity and authenticity of John's Gospel, again shows the folly of casting aside traditional evidence. For this Gospel must be much later than John, because it aims at accommodating the story to a well-developed theory of Messianic tradition, which grew up in the post-apostolic age, and which the older authentic Gospels do not reflect. This is the opinion not merely of Prof. Harris, but of Prof. J. H. Thayer, of the Harvard Divinity School, who writes: "Half a century of discussion is swept away by the recent discovery at a stroke. Brief as is the recovered fragment, it attests indubitably all four of our canonical books." The going back of the date of John's Gospel, and enforced admission of quotations that were formerly thrown overboard must, says Mr. Harris, be very good news to the apologist, of whom he does not profess to be one, and equally satisfactory to those who

like himself know from their experience as investigators, "that the Catholic traditions have a peculiar habit of justifying themselves against those that impugn them,"

CHAPTER XXI.

THE Judgments of the Negative Critical Mind are **not Free from Prejudice and Prepossession.** This point would not be urged, if it were admitted. It is tacitly denied in a certain tone assumed by the school in referring to or dealing with the uninitiated. It is not urged as a suggestion to modesty, but as a presumption in favor of the school's fallibility.

The critical mind considers its reasonings, its investigatory apparatus, its modes of dealing with facts, its scientific furniture, its power of insight and vision, its points of view, its premises, and its results to be so superior, that opponents are out of range and out of date in a contest with it.

If we concede to the school every advantage of newer method, and of accurate detail machinery,—a concession not necessary,—the school is still obliged to use, as the ultimate decider and judge, the same old human mind on which we all rely, and whose ineradicable limitations, and capacities for prejudice, narrowness and mistake, are likely to vitiate the results of the negative critical school as frequently as they do the results of any other careful and powerful order of intellect. **Moreover,** the very excellencies of the critical equipment from **one**

point of view, are defects from another point of view. Kuehnen, for instance, was disqualified by his critical bent for a proper appreciation of the forces of history and of their movement.

Every type of mind has its own peculiar weaknesses and dangers, and from a purely formal point of view is naturally more accessible to one mode of argument than it should be, and less accessible to another mode than it should be. Thus Cheyne, quoting Pfeleiderer, points out a weakness in Ewald's mind, and, quoting Prof. Oort, shows how that weakness led Ewald into a *petitio principii*. So, on the other hand, the weakness of Prof. Cheyne's own judgment might be pointed out, especially as shown in his most recent work. And—what is more to the purpose—the weaknesses of the whole school as such may be indicated. They are those naturally inherent in the critical type of mind.

There are prepossessions against the established, against the traditional, and against all external authority. There are prepossessions in favor of revolution and radicalism and liberalism. There is a constitutional drawing towards the more free and spiritual side of things. There is the exaggerated estimate of the value of a new, or an "advanced" theory, when proposed as an explanation of objective realities. There is an illusion, very common in the scientific mind, that a hypothesis accepted by a whole group of scholars, because it works pretty well with the facts and accords with the common *Zeitgeist*, is really a part of the constitution and course

of history, though in fact it may still be a thing floating at almost every essential point. There is the same temptation to "*principii petitio*" for critical purposes, which arises in the ardent or artistic mind for rhetorical purposes. There is the same inability to see weakness in the line of one's own special instincts, that exists in other types.

In opposing *each other*, these critics have no hesitation in charging each other with being the victim of the defect of some fundamental mental quality, which is able to interfere with the solid value of results. For instance, Cheyne, in criticising Robertson Smith, says, "He appears to me to be too much of a prey to the love simplicity." On the other hand, Robertson Smith believes that Cheyne himself is "fanciful." Now if mental qualities in the critic, and not objective facts in the record, are the sources of a critic's conclusions, as here acknowledged between two of them, the same thing may be true as between one type or class of mind, and another type or class.

But still worse for the negative school, Canon Cheyne in answering the charge that he is "fanciful," himself confesses to the nature of the fabric of which the "positive" and sure conclusions of the negative school cannot avoid being built.¹ He says: That my view is 'fanciful,' should be no objection to a historical student like

¹ It is not to the use of this kind of fabric that we here object but to the constant and cool assumption that this is the kind of stuff out of which certainly flows, and that this fabric *is* history.

the author. There are as Milton has told us two kinds of fancy: the nobler kind some of us prefer to call 'imagination.' Professor Smith, as we have seen, is himself not devoid of this priceless gift, without which there is no piecing together the scattered fragments of history, no vivifying the lifeless conclusions of a cold criticism."

So that after all the "cold criticism" depends for constructive strength upon a warm imagination, and the result is not stronger than the weakest of the defects in that imagination. And after all the very fundamentals in what the negative theory regards as settled and sure, are bound together by the glue of imagination, so long as external evidence is lacking, and may in the future fall entirely into pieces.

"These

As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air
And the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces
shall dissolve;

And

Leave not a rack behind."

What Cheyne says of Ewald may to some extent be said of the whole critical school. He says, "Much that Ewald in his later years considered himself to have settled, has now become very properly the subject of debate." The same is true of his remark on Hitzig: "The application of that method of criticism, which seeks to determine the date of a book from internal characteristics alone, led him to many results, especially

in his work on the Psalms, which are not likely to hold their ground," and his other remark on Hitzig, may be applied to the fundamental position of the very best of the higher critics. "As a 'higher critic' he errs . . . he forgets the necessary limits of human knowledge."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE whole Theory of the Pentateuch, from beginning to end, and in every particular, excepting the a priori introduction of the principle of natural development, **is dependent entirely upon internal evidence.**

There is no other evidence for the post-exilian composition of the Pentateuch. Not one tittle of external historical testimony is alleged for the list of authors, Jehovists, Elohist, and Redactors, whom the critical world has learned to know so well. The exceeding weight of this consideration is frequently forgotten.

Whatever external evidence there is, in the frequent statements of the work itself, in the references of subsequent literature, in tradition, in the testimony of prophets, apostles and Christ, is all in the other direction.

Internal evidence has a very important function. ¹ Differences and discrepancies and contradictions—if they are proven to be really such—may be very damaging to the credibility and truthfulness of those who in times gone by were in a position to bequeath us objective and external testimony. But internal evidence, while it is a very useful instrument in tearing structure down, is a

¹ Compare page 29.

very delusive thing on which to lay the foundations of new structure. It is valuable for being always suggestive of theories, including both true and false. It is invaluable in incidental confirmation of an already positively established theory. But it is a very dangerous and flimsy thing on which to entirely rest a new theory. The difficulties in the case are so great that there are many presumptions against it, to one in its favor. Yet it is only by the use of this evidence that the Pentateuch can be cut up and parceled out among the supposed various early and later writers, who are said to have had a hand in its composition. Prof. Matthew Leitch, of Belfast, speaking on this point, says :

“To divide a book into two or three parts and assign each to a separate author, judging solely by internal evidence, might in certain circumstances be possible, but it is very difficult. Shakespeare in some of his plays has worked up the writings of older dramatists, and it is very difficult to decide what is Shakespeare’s own and what is taken from others. No one is able to do it with any certainty unless he has some external evidence to guide him. And no one would attempt it, judging merely by style and phraseology if he has only brief scraps and extracts of the writing used. He must have long and varied passages if he is to judge by style at all.

Yet here are critics who can judge of the style and phraseology of a single verse, or half verse, and assign it with confidence to an author of whom they know little or nothing. They can tell not only what parts of

lost documents were adopted by the compiler, but what were passed over. They can split up a small book like the Pentateuch into fragments, and assign them to above a dozen otherwise unknown authors. Wellhausen actually divides the Hexateuch among twenty-two different authors and redactors, and Kuenen, among at least eighteen. It would be far more suitable to have only four or five. But the critic is obliged by the necessities of his theory to add on Elohist to Elohist and redactor to redactor. A passage, for instance, which by his usual criteria is assigned to the Elohist, is found to have imbedded in it the name Jehovah, and so he must bring in a Jehovist redactor for the word or the clause that contains it. Again, a passage which has the criteria of one redactor is found to have a word or clause that the critic has shown elsewhere cannot have been used by him, and so he has to bring in a second or third redactor. It will not, therefore, do to say, with our British adopters of these theories, "I will accept Wellhausen's four or five authors, but not his twenty-two." You are obliged for the same reasons for which you accept his five, to accept his twenty-two. He himself sees that, carrying out the principles that are essential to his theory, and judging by the criteria which have guided him all through his work, he is obliged to add document to document. You have no right to repudiate the fundamental principles of your theory only when they lead you into absurdities. And surely there is absurdity enough to condemn any theory in the supposition that a book like the Penta-

teuch, which has vindicated its literary unity and powerful individuality by winning its way through charm of style and matter to the hearts of young and old throughout a hundred generations, is the result of the artificial combination of heterogeneous documents from different centuries patched together by half a dozen unknown compilers.”

Moreover, if the Pentateuch were a mosaic of earlier fragments, one might feel that there ought to be at least some trace of the original documents from which the fragments were taken. If any of the unused fragments had been found, and the used fragments were seen to fit precisely into them, the theory would have had something on which to rest.

We shall see that internal evidence of the kind offered for the composite authorship of the Pentateuch might be devised to prove the composite authorship of almost any piece of narrative writing in the world, and we might subjoin, for instance, a critical analysis of say the parable of the Sower, showing how it must have been written by two authors, one redactor and two sub-redactors, if there were sufficient space.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE negative theory is obliged to introduce a large number of reckless internal assumptions in order to make its hypotheses meet the case. The fact that there are already over thirty different proposed theories of reconstructing the Old Testament text, and of parceling out the various portions to the original writers, and their still later redactors, though not as damaging as at first sight it appears to be, yet of itself shows how subjective and uncertain the methods of such critical analysis must be. But each of these theories finds its own set of difficulties to solve, and obstacles to overcome, in order to cut up and fit the text into its own point of view. To get rid of these troublesome difficulties and obstacles there is a really reckless assumption of the presence of redactors and sub-redactors and interpolaters of the manuscripts. Only by such a method can refractory portions be thrown into a different, especially a later age.

The negative criticism deals thus, also with whole books of the Bible, changing authors and dates with ease and inconsistency. "It would seem as if the books of the Bible were pieces on the chessboard, which may be placed anywhere in time," to fit the plan of the critic.

Negative critics, not less than Christian apologists, have shown a disposition to change things to fit according to *a priori* judgments. Prof. Sayce remarks of the former, "As regards their historical conclusions I am very much at issue with them. I think they have endeavored to demolish the history contained in the Old Testament upon most insufficient evidence, and in accordance with a method which could not, and would not be applied to secular history."

The fact that a new theory shifts its ground a number of times is not necessarily against it. It may each time be approximating nearer the truth. But in the case before us, the large increase of the subjective assumptions above referred to, with every succeeding change rightly raises presumptions against it. The original documentary hypothesis could not hold its ground and was abandoned, and Vater's fragmentary hypothesis arose. This died away, and the supplemental hypothesis of Von Bohlen and De Wette succeeded it. But their hypothesis succumbed to its difficulties and the new documentary theory was invented. By this time the analysis has become exceedingly complicated, the supposed documents and fragments being delimited verse by verse, and sometimes even word by word.

The theory now assumes not only that there are several great documents, some earlier and some later, composing the Pentateuch, but that in the course of centuries unknown individuals have so altered and patched the Historical books of the Old Testament that it is sometimes im-

possible to divide the supposed original documents from each other, and from additions by later writers. It assumes that the order of events has been disturbed. It assumes that events really distinct have been fused together and mistaken for one and the same. It assumes that statements which are misleading have been inserted with the view of harmonizing what cannot in fact be reconciled. It assumes that traditions have been dealt with very freely by successive writers, and been warped from their proper original intent by the mistaken efforts of redactors. It assumes that this meaning has been seriously altered in repeated instances, and creates a presumption that changes have been freely made in other places which can now no longer be detected.

AT the same time the theory fails to show why the redactors who altered so freely, did not make more consistent work of their reconstructions. If the originals are to be suspected for their inconsistencies, the reconstructions ought to be an improvement in the mat-

ter of consistency.¹ But they are not. They are not only at variance with each other in their statements respecting numerous particulars, thus invalidating each other's testimony, and showing that they are mutually inconsistent, but they are very fragmentary and incomplete. The internal difficulties of the supposed original sources are many and great.

Thus the new theory lays all stress on the "Levitical code" code (P) which was written in the time of Ezra. Now it has been shown that this legislation thus thrown together by the new theory is just precisely not a *code*. "It treats the same topic in various places. What is laid down in one section is supplemented in another at a distance from it, or is repeated with no essential change, or is replaced by something different. 'This treatment by repetitions, digressions, dis-memberments, and insertions is not the exception so much as the rule, and gives the Mosaic legislation the interspersed and

¹ "The vast army of German commentators, with Mr. Leaf and others in England, dissect every book, exhibiting here a fragment of an older lay, there the work of a rhapsode; here the additions of a later poet, there the intrusions of an interpolator. They fight like fiends among themselves as to what portion is old, what new, what genuine, what false. There is little consistency, there are hundreds of flat contradictions among the exponents of the Higher Criticism. Their ideas are sometimes even ludicrous . . . Among other pleasing circumstances Fick's Iiad makes Agamemnon, unarmed, in cloak and slippers, rush into the fray, where we presently find him fighting with a spear and protected by complete armor. This is by way of restoring the original consistency."—Andrew Lang on "Homer."

fragmentary character of a painted window, broken and patched together without design.' If Ezra or the priests of the post-exilic period regarded themselves as authorized to codify and complete the earlier legislation, what possible reason could they have had for leaving it in this disjointed, confused, and *un-codified* state? 'Can any one conceive a priestly conclave, with nothing else to do, and ample time in which to do it, turning out such a piece of work as this for the practical guidance of a restored community?' "

YET THE negative theory Rejects the Pentateuchal legislation because It is not digested into one self-consistent code, "as might be expected if it all belonged to one period, and sprang from a common source." The theory holds that the Pentateuchal legislation could not have been all the work of Moses and his times because it contains repetitions, incongruities and contradictions.

There are four separate and satisfactory replies to this position, each of which shows that the argument proves the contrary of the theory's inference from it.

In the first place after the new theory has itself made selection of a part of the Pentateuch, and declared it to be from Ezra and the school of the scribes, who had time to construct a consistent whole, the part turns out to be full of variations and inconsistencies. The ground of the negative criticism's rejection of the Pentateuch is untenable by its own advocates' demonstration, after

they have had a choice of the matter to which it is to be applied.

In the second place, it is not during a time of social peace, quiet and reflection, that a priesthood with either much or little intelligence would originate a work of this kind. A work, with want of order, with repetitions not identical, with incongruities, with facts difficult to harmonize is not a work of the school or the study. It could only be the product of daily journals for instance, or the union of many documents *considered worthy of too much respect to be altered at all, even to better the form of it.*

In the third place, discrepancies nearly always occur, in the narratives of intelligent and truthful men concerning famous events of recent occurrence; or in the sworn testimony of truthful witnesses to recent events, and how much more would that naturally be the case in such an ancient and primitive document containing in compressed form, narratives of such great and complicated character. In a recent periodical the most distinguished newspaper correspondent of Europe, describing the defeat of Napoleon the Third at Sedan, points out that while there is an agreement of the various narratives as to the salient facts connected with the surrender and defeat of the French army, yet there are "hopeless and bewildering discrepancies in regard to details," even as these are reported by eyewitnesses, including Bismarck, General Sheridan and others. If then testimony of fifteen years standing has bewildering variations and yet it does not invalidate either the event or

the narratives, how much less is that a sufficient cause for dismembering and repudiating narratives and testimony of the greatest antiquity.

In the fourth place, the variations in the pentateuchal narratives and legislation are largely, perhaps entirely, explainable from the nature of the case itself. If there are several distinct bodies of law, which both differ in the matters to which they severally relate, and also contain divergent regulations concerning the same matter, we must not fail to bear in mind that there were different occasions upon which they were prepared, and different ends which they were respectively designed to answer,

For instance, that detailed regulations are given in Leviticus respecting matters not alluded to at all in Deuteronomy, or only summarily referred to there, is not because the former is a subsequent development from the latter, or because it belongs to a period when a new class of subjects engaged popular attention. It belonged to the priests to conduct the ceremonial. While it was important for the people to be instructed how to distinguish clean and unclean meats,¹ since this entered into their daily life, it was sufficient in respect to leprosy, for instance, to admonish them in general² to heed the injunction already given to the priests, in Leviticus. It was enough for the people to be told where to bring their various offerings³ and that the animal must be with-

¹ Deut. 14.3 pp. comp. Lev. 11.

² Deut. 24. 8.

³ Deut. 12. 6.

out blemish. But the specifications respecting the offerings⁴ and the ritual to be observed,⁵ were entrusted to the priests.⁶

Again, it was quite natural that some modifications of pre-existing laws should be made in Deuteronomy after the lapse of nearly forty years, whether with the view of rendering them more explicit,¹ for the sake of a further extension of the same principle,² or because rendered necessary by the transition from the wilderness to Canaan.³ No objection of any moment can be drawn from the fact that many of the laws are framed with reference to the condition of the people after they should be settled in Canaan; for in most cases their very terms⁴ imply that this was prospective.⁵

Again, some laws have been represented as mutually inconsistent, which really relate to distinct matters, and supplement, instead of contradicting each other. Thus the titles of Deut. 12. 17 ff., 14. 22 ff. are additional to those of Num. 18. 24. Deut. 18. 3, is distinct from Lev. 7. 34. Num. 4. 3, belongs to the transportation of the tabernacle, and 8. 24, to its ordinary ministrations.⁵

⁴ Lev. 22. 19-25.

⁵ Lev. chapters 1-7.

⁶ Prof. W. H. Green.

¹ Ex. 21. 2 ff. comp. Deut. 23. 19, 20, etc.

² Ex. 23. 10 ff. comp. Deut. 15. 1 ff.

³ Lev. 17. 3, 4; comp. Deut. 12. 15, etc. The omission of Lev. 11. 21, 22 from Deut. 14.

⁴ Lev. 14. 34, 25. 1; Deut. 12. 1, 19. 14.

⁵ Prof. W. H. Green.

It is thus easy to see that the theory in rejecting the legislation because of its variation fails to perceive that these are actually amongst the strongest proofs of its naturalness and historicity.³

³ Even if there were actual inconsistencies in the narrative, or errancy in the writings, that fact would not constitute any real argument, for the composite or against, the Mosaic authorship. Speaking of the errors in Homer, Mr. Lang says, "All writers fall into such errors. Thackeray makes Master Francis Clavering grow, in six years, from the age of five to that of thirteen. He says, in the first number of "Pendennis," that Arthur's mother is still alive; he kills her in his seventeenth number. He gives Mrs. Bungay two different Christian names in two consecutive pages. In the "Antiquary" Scott makes the sun set in the east. All these, and a thousand similar slips, the Germans, if they found them in Homer, would account for as 'interpolations.' Now, Homer, whether he could or could not write, had no proof-sheets, no revises, and no James Ballantyne to mark his proofs with minute comments and inquiries."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE negative theory deals violently with many passages, either in our exegetical or in a critical sense, to make the records agree with its hypothesis. For instance, one of the main points of the new theory is that in the olden times sacrifices were offered on the high places, and the tabernacle worship was unknown. It would therefore be greatly to the interest of the new view if a passage could be found in that part of the Pentateuch which it declares to be old, which permits or sanctions sacrifices at any locality instead of in one place. Now there is a place in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, which directs that the people shall make an altar of earth (not of stone) for sacrifices, and adds, "In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."

In reality the passage forbids an arbitrary choice of place of sacrifice, and, while it does not exclude a plurality of such places, it neither presupposes nor demands them. And another passage in the same section, 23. 17, commands all the males to appear before the Lord three times a year, and seems to presuppose a centralization of the worship.¹

¹ Prof. W. H. Green.

Yet the new theory says the first passage means nothing more than that the people did not want the place of communion between heaven and earth to be looked upon as having been chosen arbitrarily ; but that they regarded it as chosen in some way (!) by God himself.

Again the picture of Ezra, as given in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and by tradition, does not at all accord with the picture which the new theory draws, and which must read into the narrative what is not there, and do violence to it otherwise.

Again, in order to overthrow a proof of the law of inheritance which prevailed among the priests of the line of Aaron, the false conclusion is drawn by Wellhausen from 1 Sam. 2. 27ff., that Zadok was the "first of an absolutely new line," and was neither of a Levite, nor of the line of Aaron. But the divine threat is made only against Eli's house, and not against the entire house of his father.

Still again, the difference in the aim of the law and the prophets is ignored. So also the moral character of the ceremonial law is ignored. It is assumed that the prophets were opposed to the observance of the sacrificial ritual. This is not so. They were opposed to practises of the people in connection with this observance.

Still, again, the distinction between the prophets of the northern kingdom, who prophesy more against the introduction of heathen rites, and the southern kingdom, who prophesy more against an external service, is ignored.

So the book of Job is put after Jeremiah, though Job 1. 5 does not fit within the new theory of the history of offerings. Ps. 40. 6, is put after the exile, though if it be so late, the mention of sin offerings in Amos 5 and Jeremiah 7 does not exclude the existence of the law of offerings at an earlier period. But if Psalm 40 was written before the exile, then the mention of sin offerings occurs before Ezekiel.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE negative criticism asks us to assume that the Writings are Not Authentic, where a Better Theory is possible. According to the negative criticism the writers of the exile went to the greatest pains to tinge their productions with the colouring of a remote time. They attempted a reproduction of the ancient phraseology and of the archaic type of doctrine, and they worked their material into a minute conformity to the local and historical circumstances of the time.

The negative criticism claims that it is able to get back to the real facts, by an elaborate critical process. By disentangling the several strata of writings and subjecting them to a searching comparative analysis; by discerning and weighing the points in which they agree and those in which they differ, the negative critics are positive that they have ascertained, from out of the mass of conflicting testimony, how much can be relied upon as true, how much has a certain measure of probability, and how much must be rejected altogether.¹

¹ "I confess that I think poets better judges than professors, of poetical matters. But we probably have the people, as well as the poets, except Coleridge, on our side. We see the forest; the critics cannot see the forest for the trees For one, as

The fact is that the negative criticism makes a great blunder in treating the material of literature as if it were essentially one with the material of physical science.

‘The grouping and classification, the telling of the links of cause and effect, which are so helpful—indeed, absolutely essential—to the fruitful study of geology or chemistry, can be applied with profit to the study of literature only by a student who remembers the essential difference in the nature of the facts which have to be dealt with. The various authors of a well-marked period (say, the period of The Renaissance and Reformation) have much in common, just as the members of a group of stratified rocks or of vegetable alkaloids have much in common; but it is clearly impossible to generalize with the same confidence or to define with the same exactitude in the case of the first as in the case of the

a reader of poetry, I can believe in almost anything more readily than in the contradictory, the inappropriate and pedantic set of notions which make up much of the Higher Criticism. Where Shelley said that Homer truly began to be himself, in the glorious final book of the Iliad, notably in the last, Peppmueller discovers ‘the work of a mere imitator, who could hardly write a single line, unless he had a passage of the Iliad or Odyssey from which to copy it.’ Are we to hesitate between Shelley and Peppmueller? . . . These things are enough to make one despair of the Higher Criticism. But Homer, could he hear them, would only smile, as of old with Lucian he smiled at his ancient critics in the Islands of the Blessed. ‘Which of the pieces considered unauthentic did you write?’ asked Lucian in this interview. ‘All of them!’ answered the happy spirit of Homer.”—Andrew Lang.

other two. The action of a glacier on the rocks subjected to its abrasion must needs have a uniformity which cannot be predicated of the action of a great public event upon the men brought within the range of its influence ; because, though there is something that may be called individual in a rock or in a salt, the individuality of a man is a much more complex affair, which has to be reckoned with after a very different fashion. The flood of the French Revolution landed Wordsworth in a calm conservatism ; it landed Hazlitt in vehement radicalism ; on Keats and Lamb it seemed to have no influence whatever ; and yet every one of these four men was a noteworthy product of his period,"¹ and according to the method of negative critical science, they ought to bear a common impress.

The old theory, that the books are authentic, is far more natural, and less open to vital objection, than this one by which it is to be supplanted. If to-day a printed book were found which professed to be by a certain author, and which subsequent works, bound up with it, also sustained in the claim of authorship, the fact that there were anonymous footnotes, and annotations and explanations, even though the latter were from a later pen and anachronistic, would not at all cause or justify the conclusion that the main work was an unauthentic forgery. And so the fact that in Deuteronomy, for instance, are found some later editorial and explanatory observations of a minor character, does not at all justify

¹ The Spectator. Nov. 11, 1893.

the conclusion that the main part of the book is not from the author it itself assumes, and whose name it bore in the time of Joshua¹ of the Judges,² of David and Solomon,³ of Amaziah,⁴ of Josiah,⁵ on the first return of the exiles,⁶ and in the time of the second return of the exiles.⁷

The critics who postulate interpolations at their own convenience and discover evidences of numerous writings pieced together, single words and phrases inserted here and there, passages transposed, added, or omitted, cannot consistently object to a theory which necessitates a few minor suppositions, when they take liberty to themselves for a hundred radical suppositions. Which is most probable—that editorial additions should be inserted in an ancient book for the sake of explanation, or adaptation to modern circumstances, or that interpolations and changes of the most varied and radical character should be made to cause a book of this kind to appear older than it really is.⁸

But, worse yet, if the Pentateuch is not authentic, but post-exilic, the whole general historical setting must be set down as an invention, and one without adequate ex-

¹ 1. 7, 8.

² 3. 4.

³ 1 Kings, 2. 3. 2 Kings, 21. 8.

⁴ 2 Kings, 14. 6.

⁵ 2 Kings, 2. 8; 23. 24, 25.

⁶ Ez. 3. 2.

⁷ Neh. 8. 1.

⁸ Prof. C. M. Mead.

planation.¹ Why, for instance, should the Levitical laws have been uniformly worded as if designed for life in an encampment, and not as if Israel were established in Canaan. What was the object of manufacturing such a story as the one about Moses searching for the goat of the sin-offering?² If there never was a tabernacle or offering of incense, the story of Korah, Dothan and Abiram³ could not have happened. What would the people think of such stories, when the Pentateuch was presented at the later time. On the "legal fiction" theory, they would be senseless and useless, and without any intelligible purpose. And, besides, if the story of Korah was invented, it would have been an insult to the descendants of Korah, who had attained an honorable place in the later Jewish church. So, on this point, there is the strongest possible internal and circumstantial evidence that the Levitical law is not post-exilic.

Another additional, and equally strong consideration against the post-exilian theory is found in the peculiar relation of the Israelitish nation to these books. As George Ebers says, "The events of the exodus were too firmly impressed on the memory of the Hebrews, the

¹ "For the creation of a master-work of literature," says Matthew Arnold, "two powers must concur,—the power of the *moment* and the power of the man: the man is not enough without the moment." The negative theory fails entirely in providing the latter factor, and it does not even provide a satisfactory power of the man."

² Lev. 16. 16-20.

³ Num. 16.

Bible too often refers to them, and especially the recollection of Sinai, which the wanderers touched, appears too early in their history, and is too distinct, to be considered merely the fiction of later generations.

“Besides this, the Israelitish nation was too high-spirited, was too proud of its dignity as the chosen people, to have ever allowed its spiritual leaders to represent it as former slaves and serfs of a neighboring people, if the recollection of their sojourn in Egypt, and the exodus, had not been kept alive in their own midst.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE negative theory **assumes that the same or similar things will not happen twice in the same history ; and that they will not be described twice, from different points of view, in a single record.** The fact is that both of these peculiarities are true to human nature, to literature, and to life. How often is the same fact repeated in conversation, in writings of various kinds, and in legal records. And on the other hand, how frequently do strange things happen two or three times over at different periods and in a slightly different manner to the same individual. The aphorisms "Truth is stranger than fiction" and "It is the unexpected that happens," and "What doubles itself, triples itself," bear testimony to this fact.¹

¹ Just after I wrote these words, the family physician, coming in to attend a sick one in my house, reports that he cannot remain long, for he has been sent for by two women, each of whom have fallen down stairs, and broken their legs, at the same time, one in the northern and the other in the southern part of town. On subsequent inquiry I learned that one of the women had dislocated her knee cap, the other suffered chiefly from contusions ; that one had fallen down from a step ladder, and the other down the cellar stairs, and both about the same time. Here is a double event, very unusual, in a small place.

But in dealing with the Old Testament, critics at once assume that two distinct events, if they have certain features in common, are thereby proved not to be two, but are in reality one and the same event. They do this on the ground of a certain measure of correspondence, and as though history never repeated itself. Having used the correspondence thus, they use the differences, not to show that the events are distinct, but that there are several varying accounts of the one one event. They, further, infer that as the same writer would not have written such variations of the same event, there must be two different writers. And, hence, again, the book containing these accounts, could not have been written by

The correspondences are numerous. Both persons are women. Both were injured by a fall. Both fell *at the same hour*. Both injured the leg. Both suffered great pain. Both had the same physician. Both sent for him at the same time. The variations are also very noticeable. One lived in the northern, the other in the southern part of town. One fell down the cellar stairs, the other down a step-ladder. One injured herself through contusions, the other by dislocating the knee cap. When the chronicles of this town come to be written, there must in this instance be a record of a double event, occurring at the same time, with many correspondences, and some striking variations. But when the Higher Criticism of thousands of years later goes over the record, the critics will stumble at it. They will say: "Impossible. There was but one fall, one woman, one leg injured. But we have here a combination by a redactor of several inconsistent traditional accounts of the same event, originally recorded in different documents, and as they do not agree, there is probably only a grain of truth at the bottom of the story, or it may be entirely fabulous!"

one person but is made up from a number of separate documents, each diverse from others and at variance with them.

Thus, for example, it is assumed that the Bible opens with such a double document, in the records of creation. But there are not two records of creation. The first chapter of Genesis deals with the world at large and all that it contains. The second chapter deals with the garden of Eden and the relations of the first human pair. The first section gives an all-comprehending account of the creation, in the order of time. The second section is not arranged in the order of time, but starts at the end of the second day's work, and shows how the earth, upon which no vegetation had begun, was formed into a dwelling place for man. It has neither the same plan, nor the same aim as the first section, but tries to show how the earth was prepared for *man*. Each has its own respective theme, treated in its own individual and natural style, and there is no reason for regarding them as two varying and discordant accounts of the same event.

Thus, again, Abraham twice alleged to an Egyptian king that Sarah was his sister. The new critics say there could have been only one such transaction, and that we must regard the two narratives as varying accounts of the same event. But why could there have been only one such transaction. A man who acts once in a certain way, under certain circumstances, is surely liable or tempted to act the same way again under a recurrence of the same circumstances. And it is very pos-

sible for the same circumstances to have recurred in this instance.

Another such double record is inferred in the case of the deluge. The critics lay stress on the fact that in 6. 19 *two* beasts of every sort are to be taken into the ark, while in 7. 1-5 *seven* of every clean beast are prescribed. But there is no discordance here. The first instruction was given over a century before the time, when particulars were not necessary, it being simply stated that the animals should be preserved by pairs. The second instruction was given just before the animals were about to be collected, and it was added that in the case of clean beasts used for sacrifice, not one pair, but seven pairs, should be preserved.

Still another example is found in the case of Abraham and Isaac who are each said to have made a covenant with the Philistine king Abimilech, in respect to wells of water at Beersheba. The critics say that these are varying accounts of the same transaction, and what the one tradition ascribed to Abraham, the other ascribed to Isaac. But why should we come to such a conclusion? The transaction is so natural, and so important in all patriarchal life, that it was likely to recur again and again and again. That both treated with Abimilech at different periods of time, does not weigh against two transactions, for Abimilech was the permanent title of the Philistine king, as Pharaoh was the permanent designation of the Egyptian king. It is more natural that both Abraham

and Isaac made such a covenant, than that only one of them did so.

Another illustration of the slender foundation of good judgment on which the analysis of these double records rest, is the case of the promise of a son to Sarah. This promise is twice described. But that is natural. In Gen. 17. 16-19 we simply have the first intimation that the the promised seed was to be Sarah's child. Gen. 18 : 10-14 belongs to an event that occurred later.

So, if there were space, one might proceed through the Pentateuch and take up all the cases of supposed double record, and find even from internal evidence alone that the critical hypothesis is doubtful and inconclusive.

But the new theory has a still heavier burden upon it in this matter. It not only assumes a single transaction on the ground of resemblance in a number of particulars, but it does so in defiance of the explicit statement of the record. It sets the direct testimony of the sacred historian aside. It sets up its own uncertain judgment on the internal evidence as a certainty, and at the same time sets aside the historian as being in error.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE negative theory assumes that any writing which can be Decomposed into Two or more continuous and self-consistent Narratives, is a **Compilation of those narriatves.** By extracting all the double and triple records, and all the different points of view of the same subject from a historical work, and then sorting them according to their likenesses into two or three lots, and piecing each of the lots together into a narrative, one can decompose almost any work of this nature into "original" documents. If there are any parts left over, which do not fit into any particular lot very well, those parts may be assigned to one of the redactors or editors, as the connecting link by which he united the several lots into one. If, on the other hand, there are gaps in the connection in any one of these pieced up documents, there is a place where the original document contained matter that is now missing, because the redactor in cutting up the document into parts and intertwining it with parts of other documents, failed to use or insert the matter in any place, and so it was not preserved from loss.

This is the only possible way to decompose a book on internal evidence. How insecure it is, can be seen with-

out reflection. A certain Professor sarcastically decomposed the book of Romans, whose unity is not doubted, on this very plan. Another Professor¹ is certain that Knight's History of England could be thus decomposed. One strand could be extricated which, taken by itself, might quite well be named, A History of English Literature. Another would read well as, A History of the Christian Church in England. Still another could be disentangled which would unfold the historical tale of the English colonies. Still another original document would treat of England's Civil and Foreign Wars. And a final one would describe the progress of the English people in the fine and useful arts and the effects thereby produced on their social condition. Here are five original documents, prettily delimited. Going back to ancient history, the Professor says he could decompose Cæsar's Commentaries on the Gallic War into four similar documents. If the same pains, scholarship and learning were put upon Cæsar's narrative as have been put upon the Mosaic writings, no doubt the conclusion that Cæsar never wrote the Commentaries, might be made as imposing as the conclusion that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. And if, in spite of that conclusion, our judgment tells us that Cæsar, politician, observer, scholar, soldier and historian, was just the man to have written the whole himself; so similarly it is possible that our judgment may tell us that, in spite of the negative conclusion of the post-exilian origin of the Penta-

¹ Prof. Breckenridge.

teuch, Moses, acquainted with all the learning of the Egyptians, liberator of an enslaved people, legislator, founder of religious institutions, soldier, historian, was just the man to write what the records have always said he did write.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE negative theory assumes that, in two compared writings, Similarity of Style assures Identity of Authorship.

This is a fallacy. It is more easy for *two authors*, if they have the same order of mind, the same subject and thought, the same training, the same atmosphere and environment, the same common fund of information, to *have some striking resemblances and similarities, than to avoid them.*

An illustration of the viciousness of the application of this fallacy, is the attempt on the part of the higher criticism, by Ignatius Donnelly, in his "The Great Cryptogram," and by others, to prove that there never was a Shakespeare and that the latter's plays were written by Francis Bacon.

It appears that Bacon kept a commonplace book, which is now in the British Museum and which contains 1655 entries. Many of the suggestive and striking phrases, proverbs, aphorisms, metaphors and quaint turns of expression jotted down in it are also found in the plays of the traditional Shakespeare. Mrs. Pott counts 4,402 instances of reproduction, "some of them in more or less covert form." They appear to a limited

extent in Bacon's prose, but they were his "particular storehouse for the composition of the plays."

For instance, "two of these entries appear in a single sentence in *Romeo and Juliet*. One is the unusual phrase, 'golden sleep,' and the second, the new word 'uproused.' "To one familiar with the laws of chance," says the critic of the new school, "these coincidences will have nearly the force of mathematical demonstration."

Many other coincidences, even more amusing, and so absurd as to constitute a rich satire on the methods of the modern Higher Criticism, are also cited in proof of the negative theory. To the strongest ones, shown in the following comparative table, the critic prefixes the statement that "Peculiarities of thought, style and diction are more important in a contested case of authorship than the name of the title page."

FROM SHAKESPEARE.	FROM BACON.
To thine own self be true And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.— <i>Hamlet</i> , i. 3.	Be so true to thyself as thou be not false to others.— <i>Essay of Wisdom</i> .
Losers will have leave To ease their stomachs with their bitter tongues.— <i>Titus Andronicus</i> , iii. 1.	Always let losers have their words.— <i>The Promus</i> .
The ivy which had hid my princely trunk, And sucked my verdure out on't.— <i>Tempest</i> , 1. 2.	It was ordained that this wind- ing-ivy of a Plantagenet should kill the tree itself. — <i>History Henry VII</i> .
Brother, you have a vice of mercy in you, Which better fits a lion than a man.— <i>Troilus and Cres- sida</i> , v. 3.	For of lions it is said that their fury ceaseth toward any- thing that yieldeth and prostrateth itself.— <i>Of Charity</i> .

With this internal evidence we must take that of the

cryptogram, and also the following points of circumstantial evidence. Bacon's high birth, his aristocratic connections, his projects for philosophical reform, his aspirations for official honors and employment, and his fear of compromising himself at Court, would have caused him to shrink from openly producing plays for the theatre of the day, and have compelled him to write them anonymously. Again, Sir Toby Matthew, receiving "a great and noble token of favor" from Bacon, wrote to him: "The most prodigious wit that I ever knew, of my nation and of this side of the sea, is of your lordship's name, though he be known by another." There is no reason, says the new theory, why the token presented was not the folio edition of the Shakspeare plays. Finally, Bacon was known to be the most original, imaginative and learned man of his time, while of Shakspeare we know little. From this evidence the Higher or Literary Criticism arrives at a conclusive demonstration that there never was a Shakspeare!

The Higher Criticism makes extensive use of this line of evidence in Biblical fields. It combines the internal and the circumstantial, or failing in the latter, relies on the internal alone, to prove that a writing *could* not be the product of its purported author. Its facts in some instances make a case that is far more feeble than the case made out against Shakspeare, referred to above.

Indeed, it goes to the length of separating out parts of single writings, in a group of writings, and of assigning the parts to various unknown authors on the strength

of internal literary evidence alone. Thus it says, in comparing parts of the Old Testament, wherever, in certain writings, we find a certain free, flowing and picturesque style, excelling in the power of delineating life and character, in ease, grace and directness of narration, in delicacy and truthfulness of dialogue, in forcible portrayal of personality, and in lack of recurring phrases, then we may be sure that these parts are the product of one redactor's pen, JE.

On the other hand, it says, where we find an unornate, measured, precise style, with frequent recurrence of stereotyped phrases, prosaic utterance, definite proportions and figures, systematic arrangement and concrete detail, whether the writings be found in Genesis,¹ Exodus, Leviticus, Chronicles or Ezekiel, there we may be sure that they are all the product of another redactor's pen, P. The same principle is applied with equal confidence and riskiness to the Psalms and the prophetic writings.

¹ See Prof. R. F. Weidner on Genesis, Studies II and III.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE negative theory assumes that Dissimilar Style assures Diverse Authorship. It takes for granted that because an Old Testament writer has a characteristic style and vocabulary, he could have had no different one in a different writing, and that all writings differing from this recognized characteristic style, could not have been produced by him, but must be assigned to another. It allows him no spontaneity or versatility in style. If he diverges but a hair breadth from what the critic considers the writer's characteristic manner, a redactor is at once brought in to account for the divergency.

When men judge the Bible from purely literary standards, it should at least be treated fairly, in accordance with those standards. In every age and literature, authors show the influence on them of circumstances, of surroundings, of their own change of character and life. Some authors display surprisingly contradictory traits of style in different parts of their writings. "If history had not given unimpeachable witness, could we believe that the author of 'The Cid' was the author of 'Otho and Attila.'" If we had no other guide but that of our own personal literary sense, would we not be ready to

laugh at the very idea that certain authors wrote what they actually did?

Who would suppose that the youth who in a forgotten little volume, in 1844, echoed the voices of Byron, Scott, and Moore, would two years later be writing a book of travels in genuine prose, peerless as to popularity, and without a trace of sentimentalism. Or that, twenty years later the unstudied freshness of "Views Afoot" would be transformed into the polished prose in which "Egypt and Ireland" is written. Or, that the author of these travels which tell us of scenery and external things, was also the author of those charming private letters in which he puts all that he has to say of the men and women whose friendship he had gained in going over the world. Or, that the same man was a daily newspaper correspondent, a public lecturer, an editor of books of biography, a composer of prefaces, all in simple, clear, good English; and a literary critic whose compact and learned criticisms are the most precious portion of his prose labor, and whose reviews in later years were so catholic, so correct of canon and exact in detail as to be models.

Or that he was also the author of those picturesque pioneer paintings of the new Eldorado in the far West in 1849, entitled "Californian Ballads"; and that a few years later his voice would be sounding from the far East in those vivid and harmonious "Poems of the Orient," so redolent of the life and sentiment of the lands depicted, that in them we hear the rich and languorous notes of oriental exuberance, and see the verg-

ing skies of Egypt, the Desert, the Syrian Coast, Damascus and Persia. Who would dream that this author would then turn to chaste and simple home scenes of rural life in "The Pennsylvania Farmer," and "The Quaker Widow;" and that he, a Quaker born and bred, would write ballads founded on our Civil War, and drifting to the Hindoo mythological realm evolve a faultless idyl celebrating the legend of the coming of Camadeva. Or that he also looked to the cold and dreary land of the Norse and produced a pastoral poem of Norway which is said to excel in interest and finish every idyl in English, of similar length, except *Evangeline*. Or that then finally he would put forth a series of serio-comic papers, revealing abundant humor and talent for parody and the burlesque.

Who would believe that he would be the one too to so teach himself the classics that, according to our greatest living literary critic, he was more infused with the antique sentiment than many a learned Theban, his "*Hylas*," for instance, being a classic, its strong blank verse being rendered liquid and soft by feminine endings, its Dorian grace being infused with just enough sentiment to make it effective in modern times.

Or that, still more surprisingly, he in addition also mastered the German language and style, writing in it, and thinking in it, until it became a native tongue with him, his translation of Goethe's *Faust* being so great and so quickly done that the literary world at first refused

to believe that he was not humbugging it ;¹ and his English style becoming so affected by the change in his mode of thought that it now seemed involved, and touched with a metaphysical vagueness even in his lyrical writing.

To cap the climax of the critic-in-the-corner's astonishment, he began to write novels, which sold largely. He turned to the drama, taking his theme from Joe Smith and the Mormons. He expressed his views on theology in "The Masque of the Gods." And, finally, he wrote and in person recited the "Centennial Ode" at the Old State House in Philadelphia, on July Fourth, 1876.

He was only a country boy, a farmer's son: he became a cosmopolitan. He was a Quaker: he became a leader of æsthetic thought in New York. He was a poet: he became minister of the United States to Germany and resided in Berlin. And every phase of his life and thought was reflected in his writings.

What shall we say to these things? They *sound* like romance. They *are* history. If Bayard Taylor in our own day and under our own eye has given us an illustration of the possibilities in variety and range and almost contradiction of style and subject, and aspect, that is far greater in compass than any that is claimed, by even the most conservative Biblical scholar, for any of the writers of the Old Testament; can we not see how

¹ It became the dream of his life to write the biography of Gœthe and of Schiller. He made extended researches for that purpose.

foolish it is for the negative critics to say that a Moses or a David, whose history and education and opportunities were equally romantic, must be limited to one single quality of style, all variety having been added by redactors. Truly there is nothing more deceptive than internal literary characteristics as a criterion of authorship; and if Bayard Taylor had been in Moses' place, and his writings had contained the inspired supernatural features of Moses' writings, the Higher Criticism would now be proving with positive certainty, from internal criteria, that Taylor was a Myth !

The applicable objections that may be brought against this illustration will, if searched to their inner essence, but confirm its validity. Diversity of styles in different productions, at different periods, can be admitted, and yet a single production, it may be urged, must have a necessary unity of style, possible to be detected. But it is not necessary to assume that the Pentateuch is a single production, or that it was written all at one period. And even in a very short section, or within the unity of a single literary form, there may be the greatest variety of form and style. If Moses were as versatile as Oliver Wendell Holmes—and why should he not be—he could show the most opposite contrasts of thought and style in close juxtaposition, or even in alternate lines. The supposed *interblending* of styles, even if it should become necessary to concede that the style is not itself a unity and could not arise naturally from the diversity of subject matter to be treated, would not be an objection. Moses may have been his own blender.

THERE can be no objection by the negative critics to the use of analogy, by way of illustration, as applied to the Old Testament, from other literatures and writings and authors, in the foregoing pages. For it is on analogy that the negative system is built. And the analogy is not simply by way of illustration, but it is the foundation. That the Old Testament religion must be analogous to other religions ; that the Old Testament Writings cannot be exceptional, in their origin, from other writings ; that the principle of development operating in the physical world and in the history of the race, must extend by analogy to the History of Israel, this is the centre and core of the negative theory. And it is but analogy. Moreover the critics are accustomed to refer to other writings, to Homer, to the sagas, and formerly to the Vedas, as analogies by way of illustration, and they cannot really complain if their own method is fairly turned against them.

IN estimating the critical value of Internal Evidence, in the foregoing pages, we have examined, in a series, the literary principles of probability, inconsistency, fairness to single passages, double events, double narratives, single authorship and diverse authorship.

The negative theory fails to note that the application of all such internal canons, on either side, must ever be subjective, and sometimes arbitrary, depending on the shifting insights of the individual mind and moment. We have seen, for instance, that there is no external

landmark for the list of authors, Jehovists, Elohist, etc., or for the demarcation of the fragments that are said to have come from them. What reliable judgment can be passed upon the original form and authorship of those documents and fragments? If further undiscovered changes and unsuspected alterations are still among the possibilities, and if unreal conjectural emendations may be "summoned up to clear difficulties and stumbling blocks out of the path of the hypothesis," what actual result can it arrive at? Canon Driver himself admits¹ that "the analysis is frequently uncertain, and, will, perhaps, always continue so." Much of it is an impossibility. "Moses may have used documents. But he has so woven them inextricably into the texture of an original work, that they cannot now be separated. He may have used scribes as Bezaleel used carpenters and goldsmiths. But if so, all the material used has been combined by the force of one great mind inspired for the work, so that every attempt to separate the materials is in vain, the completed work coming down to us fused by the power and stamped with the authority of Moses, the man of God."

BUT Internal Evidence, the only and chosen witness for the negative theory, when we come to examine its testimony, presents some general considerations of which the new theory fails to note the significance, and which as we shall see in the next chapters, may turn out to be damaging evidence against it.

¹ "Introduction," p xiii.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE negative theory fails to note the force of the argument from general internal consistency.

Take the Pentateuch. It is a strong presumption in its favor, that the whole, as a whole, forms a unit in plan, purpose and theme. In spite of such divergencies as the details of history and of actual life ever verify, the book is not an artificial construction, but an organic growth. Its laws are interwoven in the historic background, and there is no intimation that they ever existed separately. The Book of Deuteronomy consists of three addresses by Moses to the people and an historical appendix. "These addresses are intimately related to one another and to the laws which are included in the second address; the aim of the whole being to urge Israel to obey these laws. The style and language are identical; one spirit reigns throughout, and like recurring phrases frequently reappear. The objections to the unity of the main body of the book, and to Moses as its author, are of the most trivial description. In the appendix, Moses is expressly said to have written the song, and to have spoken the blessing. That he did not write chapter thirty-four is plain from its contents.

"The laws in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, are so

intimately blended with the history as to be inseparable. Whoever wrote the one must have written the other likewise. And Genesis is plainly conceived and written as introductory to the Mosaic history and legislation. One consistent topic and method of treatment is pursued throughout the Pentateuch; the genealogies are continuous, and mutually supplementary; a consistent chronology is maintained; there are implications and allusions in one portion to what is found in other portions by way of anticipation or reminiscence, which bind all together."

Let us turn from the Pentateuch to the Psalms. There are Psalms in which all the events of the exodus and the history of Israel *as far as* the first king, are recalled. What rational principle allows their composition to be assigned to a period eight or nine centuries further on? "These form a large number whose date would be irrevocably fixed, if it was a question of any other book than the Bible." Then there are numerous Psalms in which royalty plays an elevated and prevailing part. Could these have been written centuries after the kings had disappeared; in the very centuries when it is supposed the Jews were given to satire against kings?

The chief arguments for the post-exilian date of Davidic Psalms virtually rest upon the improbability, that "the versatile, condottiere, chieftan, and king"¹ composed such spiritual and saintly songs as those attributed

¹ Cheyne.

to him. At the same time negative critics have not hesitated to hold that the Psalms are "the war songs of the Maccabees." So that "at one time we are told that these sacred hymns are irreconcilable with the military character of David; and, again, that they form the hymn-book of a people always under arms!"

It is true beyond the possibility of argument that David was a warrior king. But it is not entirely true that he was a warrior by nature. War was forced upon him. He was for a long time "the player of the harp who charmed Saul, and stilled the latter's frenzy by his song and music." There have been many other great men who combined arms and song. The military cares of Frederick the Great did not prevent his cultivation of the poetic art, and we Americans have had a general of whom it was said that "His pen is greater than his sword." Is it at all strange that the king, who danced and played on the harp before the holy ark, who was the restorer of the sacred ceremonies and of liturgical song, should have composed or caused to be composed a great number of songs? Many of those attributed to him fall in so completely with the circumstances which are said to have occasioned them that they cannot be torn apart except in an arbitrary way." For instance, the 132d Psalm, where David speaks of himself and swears that he will not enter his palace until he has found a place of habitation for the God of Jacob,—can it be imagined that it was composed at another time, and of all times, two or three centuries before our era? And then there is the

eulogy on the death of Saul and Jonathan as well as the hymn of 2d Samuel 7, composed by David.

It must not be forgotten also that our acquaintance with David's history may be incomplete ;¹ that he may have stood in situations similar to those in which others were placed in later ages ; and that he may have given expression to Israelitish thoughts, which, though not of general human interest, did not change with the changing times.

In the case of the Historical Books, if we take such an account as that of the procession that escorted the ark to Jerusalem as given in Samuel, and compare it with the account in Chronicles, we shall find, not incompatibility, but two great complementary types of history, "that which leans to epic narrative, and the scientific history that makes selection of details upon some principle,— in the case of Chronicles, with a view to their bearing upon the priestly service."¹

On the whole the argument from internal consistency militates against the theory of a post-exilian pious fraud, unheard of in the history of the world. The nature of the books said to have been written then is incompatible with the state of Asiatic civilization after Cyrus.

¹ Dr. E. Koenig of Rostock, who in his very recent work on "Introduction to the Old Testament" verges again more toward traditional beliefs.

¹ Prof. R. G. Moulton.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE negative theory fails to note the true drift of the argument from kind of subject, nature of thought, progress of style and literary development.

One would not put the Nibelungen Lied, the Chronicles of Froissart and the Tales of Chaucer down as the product of the reflective and philosophical writers of the last century. Yet that is about what the new theory does in respect to the writings of the Old Testament. In any other literature we would expect first the national epic, then the national lyric, and then the philosophical and critical eras. But here, the magnificent epics of Genesis and Exodus are considered the result of a scribe's or a whole school's constructing an artificial and ingenious piecework in the very latest period of Israel's history. It seems to us impossible that this should be so—that the kind of subject, the nature of thought and method of literary development should be so inverted and unnatural. Examine the narration of the Plagues of Egypt, for instance. They occur in their *epic* and *archæan* form in the eight chapters of Exodus. Then ages after, they are reproduced in *lyric* form by the Psalmist; ¹ and finally they appear in a *picturesque* mod-

¹ 78. 42 ; 105. 23.

ern form in the book of Wisdom. ² In Exodus, "the successive physical convulsions pass before us like a moving panorama, and against this ever-darkening background are coming more and more into relief two heroic figures,—Pharaoh with the hardening heart, and Moses the wonder-working deliverer,—until the whole finds a double climax in Pharaoh with his hosts overthrown in the Red Sea, and Moses leading the delivered Israelites in a song of triumph. In the Psalms we again come upon the plagues of Egypt. But now the description is lyric; each incident appears artistically diminished until it is no more than a link in a chain of providence; each plague is told in a clause, with only the lyric rhythm to convey the march of events. A third account is found in the Book of Wisdom. Here the reverent curiosity of a later age has ventured to read into the reticence of the earlier narrative a whole array of terrible details. Where Exodus spoke of a "darkness that might be felt," the author of Wisdom imagines all that the imprisoned Egyptians felt in the overpowering dark: the strange apparitions, the sad visions with heavy countenance, the sound of falling noises, the dread of the very air which could on no side be avoided, and themselves to themselves more dreadful than the darkness. Thus on this one topic we have three literary styles perfectly illustrated; and no more possibility of controversy in the whole than if we were listening to Handel's oratorio of Israel in Egypt."³

² 11. 5-26. 17. 1-18.

³ Prof. R. G. Moulton.

Prof. Margoliouth, of the University of Oxford, a most brilliant Semitic scholar, arguing against the positions, and replying to the attacks, of Cheyne, Driver, Neubauer and Noldenke, maintains from a study of the original language of the book of Ecclesiasticus, that the original language of this book of the Apocrypha, written about 200 B. C., which was then "the classical language of Jerusalem, and the medium for prayer and philosophical and religious instruction and speculation" is so different from that of the books of the Old Testament" in its philosophical and religious terms, in its idioms and particles as well as in its grammar and structure, that between the language of Ecclesiasticus and that of the books of the Old Testament there must be centuries—nay, there must lie, in most cases, the deep waters of the captivity, the grave of the Old Hebrew and the Old Israel, and the womb of the New Hebrew and the New Israel." If he be right, not only the post-exilic Pentateuch and the Maccabean Psalms, but the Babylonian Isaiah, and the second-century Daniel, will be impossibilities. In any case the riddle would still remain, how the best religious lyrics of all antiquity were written at a time when Judaism was a downward tendency, and when there were neither great men to write nor great events to evoke such lyrics.

That the Psalm-book is only the expression of the religious experience of Israel in the Persian, Greek and Maccabean periods, is conspicuously improbable. "Ptolemy Philadelphus in Psalm lxxii is a poor substitute for

Solomon as a type of the coming Messiah, and few will make Psalm cx centre around Simon the Maccabee, an apocryphal character, in opposition to the plain teaching of our Divine Master." It is impossible to go into the many special difficulties encountered by the new theory in this view of the Psalms. Dr. Koenig, in his recent work referred to before, comes back to the Davidic origin of a number of the Psalms: "The point within the traditional seventy-three at which we can say 'the prayers of David the Son of Jesse are ended' is uncertain." The existence of Maccabean psalms is almost denied.

But the new theory cannot afford such a denial. It needs to assume the late origin of the Psalms to bolster up "the great post-Exile Jewish church" of which it makes so much, and of which we know so little. The psalms are needed to be "a monument of the best religious ideas of that church."¹ It cannot afford to have them earlier, because it needs to find in the earlier days "too germinal" a condition to appropriate the advanced religious ideas of the Psalms. The real ground for assigning so late a date is not the use of certain names for God, but it is the necessity of consistency in maintaining the idea of religious development, and the criteria laid down by Cheyne for determining Maccabean Psalms, if there were space to discuss them, would be found exceedingly light and vague either in their essence or in their applicability, for such historical criticism, especially when it involves such results.

¹ Cheyne.

THE negative theory misinterprets the true drift of the argument from the use of language, constructions, and linguistic forms. Any profitable discussion of the views of the new theory from a mere linguistic point of view, is not possible, on either side, owing to the state of the Hebrew text. Many books require to be written on the subject, and it will be years before textual questions can be regarded as settled, even from a negative point of view. Internal evidence from mere verbal comparison has always proved precarious, and in this instance it is still more so. Canon Driver has shown, in his work on Samuel, how much must be done in the matter of lower criticism. Only where there is better assurance as to the purity of the text can there be a solid foundation for the higher criticism.

It may be said, however, that the general argument from language is not in favor of the new theory. "The language of the Pentateuch is throughout the Hebrew of the purest, with no trace of later words, or forms, or constructions, or of the chaldaeisms of the exile. There are certain archaisms which are peculiar to it, and which it always uses, rather than the forms of later development."¹ In wielding the linguistic argument, on the other side, it must be remembered that a form which occurs in prose only in late Hebrew might conceivably be used in poetry at a far earlier period. The shorter form of the first person pronoun, for example, the frequent use of which in prose is considered an indication of late-

¹ Prof. W. H. Green.

ness, may possibly have been used under certain circumstances in the poetic diction of comparatively early times. In general, when a supposed late form occurs in a writing which, by its own account of itself, ought to be of earlier date, the presence of the form does not by itself prove the lateness of the origin. "The fact that the form appears in a passage of whose early date there is some historical evidence is proof of some weight that the form itself is as early as the passage."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE negative theory assumes a primitive rudeness in the age of the Exodus, and a lack of culture in its leaders, which history now disproves. With our present knowledge of the age of Moses, it would be a strange thing to be accounted for, if Moses had led Israel out of Egypt, and given laws, and established a new nation, without putting anything into writing.

The original main pillar of the new theory was the assumption that writing was unknown to the Israelites in the age of the Exodus. But the establishment of the proof that the art of writing was known a thousand years before ¹ Moses; yes two thousand years before ² Moses; that it was common in Egypt before the Exodus, and practised in Palestine among the Hittites as early as Abraham, and in the home ³ of Abraham earlier still, has rendered it necessary for the new theory to abandon all the work done for it on the supposition of the comparatively late introduction of the art of writing among the Hebrews.

¹ The Gudea Inscriptions in Babylonia, discussed by Pinches.

² Inscriptions of Sargon I, assigned to 3800. B. C.

³ Discoveries at Niffer.

Even after abandoning this position, the new theory is not out of the toils. Its principle of gradual evolution requires a low state of rude and primitive beginnings at the start, and recent historical discoveries do not corroborate such an assumption. All archaeologists agree that with the earliest monuments man appears before us with language fully formed. Never afterwards are the signs of language more beautifully shaped and chiseled than on the oldest Gudea statue in Babylonia, on the numerous diorite statues of Tello; on the granite and limestone of the tablet of Senoferw; of the pyramids of Unas, Pepi, Mirinri, of the tomb of Ti in Egypt. The long and many inscriptions of Tello and of the pyramids show the language capable of expressing all religious thought, rich in the terms of settled, civilized, refined life, abundant in geographical names, and speaking of precious woods and minerals as of common possessions." Here is a full development of literature and civilization, before Israel left Egypt. And it is entirely against the primitive evolution and gradual development hypothesis of Israelitish literature, which is the very foundation of the negative criticism.

Up to 1880 there were many attempts to trace the evolution of the religion of Egypt; but by the opening of the inscribed pyramids in 1881 all historical ground was taken from these speculations—for these inscriptions display all the main doctrines of the Egyptian religion fully elaborated. This again is against the primitive evolution and gradual development hypothesis of the Israelitish

religion, to establish which is the reason of existence of the negative criticism.

All scholars agree that the art of Tello in Babylonia and of the pyramid times in Egypt was the highest art ever reached in these lands: their earliest art was their best. It shows "a mastery of all details, an ease and grace of handling, a refinement of conception never attained again in the centuries of these people. The statues of Tello, the intaglios of early Chaldea, the statues and bas-reliefs of early Egypt, the pyramids, enormous in mass, yet with exquisitely finished, inscribed, painted inner passages and chambers; the tomb of Ti at Sakpara, with its wealth of sharp-cut letters, all bear witness to this fact." And this fact is the direct reverse of the general presumption upon which the negative criticism relies and proceeds.

And even development critics themselves are obliged to admit that "there is nothing known of Egypt either by its records or in its traditions, that goes to show a history that antedated a high state of civilization." Thus Dr. Edward Meyer¹ says: 'Whoever undertakes to study the ancient history of China or Egypt expecting to receive information about the gradual improvement of civilization, or to become acquainted with movements that throw light upon its development, will be greatly disappointed. It is a complete, yea even a superior, standard of development of government, of art, and of religion, that we meet with in the ancient monuments of Egypt.'

¹ Geschichte d. alten Egyptens, p 2. Berlin, 1877.

Besides the writings of the monuments, we have also the writings of the re-discovered manuscripts. Since 1885 and 1886 we have a critical edition of the Book of the Dead, "the Bible of the Old Egyptians" from about 1700 to 1200 B. C. We now know that even before Moses' day, before the eighteenth dynasty, there was a sacred text in Egypt being handed down, and that this text was scrupulously copied by succeeding generations of copyists.¹ No less than seventy-seven different manuscripts of this book, which consists of one hundred and eighty prayers, magical formulas, etc., have been found, and collated.

One of the vital premises of the negative theory is that "before 600-400 B. C., men cared little for, and took the greatest liberties with, their sacred texts." But these manuscripts prove the very opposite. Brugsch says, "Every change of the words of the text was as vigorously excluded as the change of the ancient Egyptian form of the year."² Maspero says, They "have come to us without many interpolations." Prof. Erman of Berlin says, "If we have hitherto believed that

¹ When the pyramid of Unas, of the fifth dynasty, was opened in 1881, a series of chapters of this book was found in it. This same series of chapters had also been found on a tablet of the era of the thirteenth dynasty at Abydos, and also on one of the halls of the era of the eighteenth dynasty at Thebes. Here then, before the age of Moses we have a sealed pyramid holding one copy for 1700 years while the same text was being faithfully copied and preserved during all that time in other eras and localities.

² Quoted by Prof. Osgood.

the immense literature of the Dead arose gradually during the long history of the Egyptian people, and that it must be possible to follow the development; . . . we can hold that idea no longer. This literature was made in an epoch that lies almost beyond our historical knowledge, and later times did no more than pass it on."

"If the Hebrews, living between and in constant touch with Babylonia and Egypt, carefully copied and preserved from interpolation their sacred books from the days of Moses, or long before, they were only following a custom prevalent from hoar antiquity among the heathen nations around them, and pre-eminently in Egypt, where they grew to be a nation, and from which they had just come out. If the Hebrews believed that they possessed the very words of the one true God, they had far greater reason to guard their treasure than the heathen had." ²

Not only was all this the case before Moses' day, but history and poetry and novel-writing were cultivated in Egypt, and literature was reckoned one of the most honorable of professions centuries before the date of the Exodus. If the Egyptians had a rich literature, why should not the Jews, who were always open to foreign influences, have imitated them in this regard, and especially Moses, who had been brought up in all the wisdom of the Egyptians?

"Moses is expressly said, not only to have written laws, but in two instances at least, historical incidents as

² Prof H. Osgood.

well, which shows both that matters designed for permanent preservation were committed to writing, and that Moses was the proper person to do it. The statement respecting Amalek was to be written for 'a memorial in the book,' which suggests a continuous work that Moses was preparing, or had in contemplation." That the explicit mention of writing in these instances does not justify the inference that he wrote nothing further, is plain from the analogy of Is. 30. 8; Jer. 30. 2; Ezek. 43. 11; Hab. 2. 2."¹

¹ Prof. W. H. Green.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE post-exilian theory is improbable in view of the recent discoveries in Egyptology and Assyriology. It should not be beyond the power of rationalistic scholars to recall their proudly-taken position of twenty years ago. The then prevailing spirit of agnostic science, applying its positive methods to the early periods of secular and sacred history, entirely swept away, as untrustworthy myth, a great part of what had hitherto been received as credible ancient history. Greek history was declared to be a blank before the epoch of Peisistratos, or even before Herodotos and Thukydidēs, and the history of Rome was said to begin with its capture by the Gauls. "What the higher critics had so successfully demolished was again built up by the spade of the excavator and the patient skill of the decipherer. Schliemann, strong in a belief which no amount of skilful dialectic could shake, dug up the ruins of Troy and Mykenae and Tiryns, and demonstrated that the old tales about the culture of the Akhaean princes were not so far from the truth."¹ Further East, and nearer the cradle of mankind, entire civilizations have been revealed to the gaze of this generation. "Records belonging to periods from

¹ Prof. Geo. H. Schodde.

which we are separated by an abyss of thousands of years have been rescued from oblivion. The Egypt of the Pharaoh's has come to life again, and the Babylon of Semiramis and Nebuchadnezzar, the Assyria of Sargon and Sardanapalus, rise like phantoms from their graves." ¹

The literature thus unearthed exceeds in compass the whole of the Old Testament. As a help in historical investigation it can almost rival the Greek and Latin classics. M. Meunier maintains that the texts already discovered in Egypt and Assyria would fill five hundred octavo volumes. Only a year or two ago a clay literature of over two thousand tablets was excavated at the temple of Bel at Niffer, ranging in date from 2,000 to 1,500 B. C., with a stamped brick well preserved of the Babylonian king who reigned in the north about 3,750 B. C.

This extensive literature, not merely of the time of Moses, but from the days of Abraham and Jacob, produced by the peoples of the "two rivers," with whom Israel came into contact, and to whom they were tied by descent, language and customs, is now stored in the world's great museums, and is being studied by Egyptologists and Assyriologists of all nationalities. One result, is their agreement on the facts already pointed out in our last chapter, facts that, so far, completely overturn the gradual development theory of primitive art and civilization.

¹ Prof. Morris Jastrow, jr.

Another result is that the general course of events in Babylonia and Assyria have become clear. "We have histories of Assyrian kings who up to a short time ago were known only by name. The lists of the occupants of the Babylonian and Assyrian thrones are now virtually complete, onward from the fifteenth century before our era. We know far more of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon than we do of their contemporaries, Hezekiah and Manasseh of Judea; of earlier times we have at least as copious records as of the early days of Greece and Rome; and if the hopes of the present are fulfilled, in another fifty years our knowledge of Assyria and Babylonia bids fair to rival in completeness what we know of the middle ages."¹

A third result is the information that at the earliest known age of man, Babylonia and Egypt both civilized, were intimately acquainted, and in commercial exchange with the Sinaitic peninsula and the Syrian coast.

The earliest monument of Egypt is not found in Egypt, but in the Wady Magherah of the Sinaitic Peninsula. On the other hand, the materials for the statues of Tello were brought to the Euphrates from the Sinaitic Peninsula. We know that two hundred years before the exodus there was constant intercourse between Babylonia and Egypt. The ambassadors would write their official letters and reports in the ordinary Babylonian script. In Egypt not only the priests, but the kings depended largely on written documents. The Egyptian

¹ Prof. Morris Jastrow, Jr., in *Century Magazine*, January, 1894.

state was "a well-ordered bureaucracy"¹ In the middle and later empires there is a "clerk of the court, 'the royal writer of truth' as he likes to be called, who keeps the minutes,"¹ and draws up the record of the criminal case to be submitted to the king. The thousands of correspondence tablets unearthed recently in Tel-el-Amarna show that the Pharaohs carried on an extensive exchange of letters and official writings with scores of cities and kingdoms in Western Asia.

Moreover, in Southern Arabia, Dr. Edward Glaser has found over one thousand inscriptions dating back to 1500 B. C., and earlier, which not only confirm the existence of a Sabeen kingdom there, and make the visit of the Queen of Sheba possible, but also make it certain that at that period the peoples of Western Asia were anything but unlettered nations.

Now the negative theory rests upon the supposition that the authorship of so large a work as the Pentateuch at so early a date is a historical impossibility. But here we have abundant and independent witnesses, after the negative critic's own heart, though not to his taste, proving that long before the era of Moses, literature flourished throughout Egypt and the whole of Southeastern Asia; that all the nations that surrounded the Israelites of that period possessed and used letters, and that consequently the most natural thing in the world is, not that Israel had *no* literature, but that she should have an extensive literature. The composition of the Pentateuch by Moses

¹ Prof. H. V. Hilprecht.

accordingly stands in the best possible connection with its own historical background.

The negative critics are naturally rasped by these things, and do not relish the prospect of being left high and dry by an ebb tide. Canon Cheyne shows this decidedly in his remarks, in his recent work, on Sayce and Ramsay. He fully admits that "until Schrader and Sayce arose, Old Testament critics did not pay much attention to Assyriology," and that Kuehnen did not give enough attention to it, and that Wellhausen and Robertson Smith in former years displayed an excessive distrust of the study. He claims that now the theory has "absorbed" all the facts of value in the case. In other words, the negative theory ignored the results of Egyptian and Assyrian research at first, and now reluctantly admits them, as far as they do not clash with the preconceived premises, fundamental to the existence, of the negative theory. And even now, with some of the old arrogance, Cheyne writes, "That Mr. Pinches should have come forward on the side of conservatism . . . is of no significance. . . . The same remark probably applies to Mr. Flinders Petrie."¹

But "as in the case of Greek history, so too in that of Israelitish history, the period of critical demolition is at an end, and it is time for the archaeologist to reconstruct the fallen edifice." While he, no more than the classical archaeologist, cannot corroborate every statement, he can still show that the materials on which the history of

¹ P. 366.

Israel has been based, are historical and not mythical materials, going back in time to an early age, which the negative theory always declared to be impossible.

The Assyrian tablets, from the land from which Abraham came, and of the seventh century B. C., contain an extra biblical account of the creation. "The similarity between the two descriptions extends even to a partial identity of expressions, for the same word *tehom* occurs in both the cuneiform tablet and in Genesis with the signification 'deep.' . . . The fragments accord with the biblical narrative in two essential particulars. Both accounts assume a chaotic condition prior to the creation. Secondly, the creation proceeds in both according to a certain system, the heavenly bodies, for example, forming a distinct division, the animals another."¹

These same tablets contain an account of the flood, "equivalent practically to an identity with the biblical version. The variations are slight, and effect only such minor points as the measurement of the ark, the continuance of the flood, and the sending out of the birds. Besides this, the biblical narrative is somewhat more elaborate, and gives details concerning the animals. . . . In the cuneiform record the dire decree is simply a whim of the gods; in the Bible the Deluge is sent as a punishment of wrong-doing. . . . The cuneiform story ends as it began—with caprice; the reconciliation of Bel is as capricious as his anger. The Bible begins with the pro-

¹ Prof. M. Jastrow, Jr.

mulgation of righteousness, and closes with the confirmation of law."¹

In an inscription on a stone found by an American traveler, Wilbour, at Luxor, a singular confirmation of the historical character of the story of Joseph has been discovered. In this, mention is made of seven years of want and of the attempt of a sorcerer to banish the calamity. Brusch-Bey, declares that "notwithstanding the mythical character of the contents, the stone of Luxor is for all time a valuable extra-Biblical evidence of the existence of the seven years of famine in the days of Joseph."

In connection with the Exodus, the location of the land of Goshen is established beyond a doubt. It is known that at the period just preceding the exodus, the land of Goshen was full of Semitic people. This is proved by the fact that Hebrew words were mixed with the Egyptian vocabulary at this time, and that there were Hebrew geographical designations of the region of Goshen. In the papyrus Sallier I, Semitic pastoral tribes are expressly mentioned as roaming all over Goshen, and are those of whom it is said, "And a mixed multitude went up also with them."²

The Gudea inscriptions, at least a thousand years before Moses, say, with other things, that slaves were given a seven days holiday and festival, "thus not foreshadowing the time of Moses, but showing that the di-

¹ Prof. Jastrow.

² Ex. 12. 38.

vision of time by seven was known many centuries earlier than Moses, which indeed is implied in the creation story.² There was a subject people of Egypt in the time of the Pharaohs of the Exodus. They are figured on the monuments of Rameses II and Meneptah I as foreign slaves, engaged in building, and compelled to carry brick, having taskmasters over them.³

In 1883, Pithom Succoth, one of the "store-cities" built by the forced labor of Hebrew colonists in the time of the oppression, was discovered by M. Naville. Situated near the border of the land, it is a halting place of caravans and armies marching toward the east.

In the same year the Zoan of the Bible was unearthed by Mr. Petrie. A year later Naukratis and other historic sites in Goshen were discovered by the same explorer. These and further corroborating identifications⁴ actually locate the route of the Israelites to the Red Sea, and forward. We cannot enter into the large matter of the Pharaohs of the Exodus, except to say that shortly after the Exodus, Palestine itself was lost to the Egyptians, and therefore no mention is made of the Pharaonic power in the biblical narratives which relate to the conquest of the promised land by the Hebrews.

From the Assyrian monuments we know that by the twelfth century B. C., the Assyrian king had established

² Wm. Hayes Ward.

³ The name of these people, Aperu, has been pronounced by George Ebers to be the same word as Hebrew, in spite of several difficulties against the derivation.

⁴ See also "Kadesh-Barnea" by H. Clay Trumbull.

his power over the lands of the Mediterranean. In the ninth century the army of Shalmaneser II was arrayed against Benhadad and Hazael, Syrian princes well known to us from the Books of Kings. An Assyrian monument seven feet high informs us that in the Syrian army were "2,000 chariots and 10,000 horsemen of Ahab of Israel." We are also told that "there were three years in which there was no war between Aram and Israel." From this time on down there are references to facts mentioned in the Books of Kings, together with the the names Israel, Judea, Jerusalem, and such names of the Jewish kings as Jehu, Ahaz, Hoshea and Hezekiah, in a very wonderful manner. Of Nebuchadnezzar, we have a large number of inscriptions. When the annals of his military expeditions shall be found, "we shall no doubt read of his expedition against Judea, of the attack upon Jerusalem, of the destruction of the city, of the capture of King Jehoiachin, and of the carrying away of Judeans to 'the waters of Babylon.'"¹

THERE is probably no other book in the world which at first stood so alone in its historical statements; and which at last was so confirmed in them, at independ-

¹ Prof. Jastrow. We have quoted from this author partly because of the lucidity of his statements and the recent date of his writing, and also that the facts might not be suspected of being coloured in the interest of orthodoxy. For he is himself a follower of the negative theory, that being the theory in which his Hebrew descent and rationalistic views can most easily be combined.

ent points, centuries apart, by an actual resurrection of the buried past.

And yet in spite of these witnesses coming from the grave to testify for the Old Testament, the human reason is not ready to believe. Said Dives to Abraham, 'If one went to them *from the dead*, they will repent.' Abraham replied, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.'

It is true that the Ingersollian infidelity, in regard to the Old Testament, is doomed. But the rationalistic mind will survive. It will still be explaining the Old Testament as real history indeed, but as history mixed with myth. It especially objects to the Levitical System. For here is the root of the doctrine of expiatory sacrifice, culminating in Christ. And he who does not believe that a supernatural expiatory sacrifice ever took place on the cross, is bound to use his best endeavours to cut the whole prophetic foreshadowing of that sacrifice out of the Old Testament, by attributing the origin of it to a pious fraud of the priests. And, more broadly, he who does not believe in a direct entrance of the divine into the constitution and course of nature, but attributes everything to evolution, is compelled to attempt to explain all Old Testament supernatural events as myths. Is such an explanation tenable?

Attempting to determine dates and authors from a correspondence between historical surroundings and internal

evidence, the negative theory has not noted that **the accurate correspondences between the external surroundings and internal details, between the natural life and life depicted in the writings, overturn the hypothesis of Fraud and that of Myth.**

If a great part of the Pentateuch was written by the waters of Babylon, over a thousand years after the exodus, where—apart from the priestly preponderance¹—are the internal historical earmarks that betray the fact. Every blade in the field points away from Babylon, and toward the desert and the land of Egypt. Both the Laws, and the Scenes, and the accurate Topography, and the Sinaitic centre, and the characters of the Pentateuch are incompatible with the idea of fraud or myth.

ALL the **Laws**, scattered through Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, which are assumed to have been written so late and so far in the east, bear the impress of the age and the region in which they themselves claim to have been written. The occasion, the circumstances, and the facts connected with their actual observance in the time of Moses, are in many cases recorded in detail.

“The law of the passover was given when each father of a family was priest in his own house ; and atonement could be made by sprinkling the doorposts. The minute details respecting the construction of the **tabernacle** and

¹ This is entirely an assumption, but does not here enter into the question.

its vessels, and respecting their transportation through the wilderness, sufficiently vouch for their authenticity. The laws respecting offerings contemplate Aaron and his sons as the officiating priests. The law of leprosy has to do with a camp and with tents. The law of the day of atonement was given after the death of Nadab and Abihu, and contemplates Aaron as the celebrant, and the wilderness as the place of observance. The law that no animal except wild game should be slain for food, whether 'in the camp' or 'out of the camp,' unless it was offered at the door of the tabernacle, would have been preposterous, and impossible of execution, in Canaan. The law of the red heifer is directed to Eleazar the priest, and respects the camp of Israel, and dwellers in tents. The terms in which the laws are drawn up make it evident that they were not only enacted in the wilderness, but that they must have been committed to writing at that time. Had they been preserved orally, changes would insensibly have been made in their language, to adapt them to be altered situation of the people in a later age, when settled in Canaan, and occupying fixed abodes, and when Aaron and Eleazar were no longer the priests."

ALL the **Scenes** in the Pentateuch are so soberly and accurately drawn to nature and to life, that the explanation of myth or of pious fabrication are excluded. The Levitical law corresponds closely with its external scenes, and the whole story corresponds natur-

ally with its Egyptian surroundings. The physical geography and natural products, the races and social customs, the spirit of the age, the historical associations, the conduct of war and nature of fortifications, the character of Pharoah, the ark, the bathing of the princess, the very atmosphere of the story, shows that its author and the giver of the Levitical law had an intimate acquaintance with Egypt and the desert. This familiarity with Egyptian objects and institutions could scarcely have been possessed by anyone not a resident in the country. If Exodus was written in Babylon, would there have been any reason for forbidding the Jews to imitate the religious usages of *Egypt*, so far away !

And the Egypt which is so accurately delineated is not the Egypt of the time of the exile or of the kings of Israel, but the Egypt of the date of Moses. If the Pentateuch was written during the exile, we must suppose that the writer devoted himself to the study of the history and archaeology of Egypt of a thousand years before his day, and projected himself so thoroughly into the spirit of the distant times in a foreign country, that when he came to write of them he moves among all the thousand details of ancient Egyptian life with easy and confident step, and never makes a stumble.

THE accurate description of the **Topography** of Egypt and the wilderness show that the author must have had a knowledge of these countries, such as one without the vicissitudes in the life of a Moses, could hardly possess.

In the scenes of desert life, contrasting with Egypt,

every line is true to nature. The maidens at the well watering their flocks; driven away by the rough shepherds, who treated women as inferiors; the welcome of Moses to the tents of the sheik, their father; his marriage to one of the daughters; and seeing that he brought no dowry, his consequent subordination to Jethro,—all this was properly and distinctly Arabian. In Egypt on the other hand, the water was drawn up from the river and its canals; the people were not nomadic but agricultural. The thought of shifting encampments, according to the transient fluctuating supply of water, upon which the life of the flocks depended, leading Moses to some spring-clad wady near Horeb was an incident that came not into the mind of one who never lived in the desert. “These pictures of desert life are like the photographs of the Sinaitic peninsula taken by the ordnance survey.”

The greatest revelation of the Old Testament is associated with Mt. Sinai. The Book of the Covenant was drawn up there. Canaan, the dearest land on earth to the Babylonian Jew, is scarcely mentioned. Jerusalem, and Mt. Zion, which the Babylonian Jew prized above his chief joy, are not mentioned at all. If the Sinaitic revelation was a myth, the faith of latter-day Israel in it is unexplainable, as the scene is altogether outside of the territory of Israel, “the holy land to which as the critics tell us, Jehovah and his worship were so strictly bound. No reason can be given why this most sacred transaction, which lay at the basis of the entire history and worship of Israel, should have been referred

to this remote point in the desert, away from the sacred soil of Canaan, away from every patriarchal association, away from every spot that was venerated in the past or that was hallowed or resorted to in the present, unless that was the place where it actually occurred. That laws first issued in Jehovah's name in Canaan should be attributed to this mountain in the wilderness, with which Jehovah had no special connection before or since, is inconceivable."¹

The negative theory cannot explain these continuous annals of a most serious and historical character, of a people living for centuries with one of the most civilized nations of antiquity, whose leader is thoroughly educated in that wisdom, who frees the people and leaves them a code of laws corresponding with the circumstances and necessities of the case, and with the external historical surroundings, which laws are righteous beyond those of any other nation in the world. and which Jesus Christ, the supernatural Son of God, claimed that He came to fulfil, all forming a part of the only strictly historical narrative of events beginning where the world began.

Still less, if these annals are Myths, can it explain the **Characters** of the Pentateuch.² The characters in the Norse and Germanic and Classical and Oriental myth-

¹ Prof. W. H. Green.

² If there is anything at all of the nature of idealization in the Old Testament, certainly we would look most of all for some trace of it in the Old Testament *Characters*.

ologies are not characters. They are characterizations of certain qualities. Or, as human beings, they are heroes.

From all of the mythologies, there cannot be extracted a single character like that of Adam or Abraham or Moses. Charles Reade says, that the twenty-four books devoted by Homer to Ulysses, have not engraved "the much enduring man" on our heart. The heroes of Homer's epics are immortal in our libraries, but dead in our lives. "Now take the two little books called Samuel. The writer is not a great master like Homer and Virgil. But the characters that rise from the historical strokes of that rude pen are solid. . . Yet this writer had no monopoly in ancient Palestine: he shares it with about sixteen other historians."

It is true that the negative theory explains the difference between these characters and those in the mythologies by saying that the Hebrew nation was a nation of high moral ideals and ideas. But just therein lies the vital weakness of the theory. For it cannot explain the fact that in spite of the high moral ideals of the earlier prophetic writers, and still more in spite of the strict ceremonial precepts of the later compilers, the heroes of earlier ages, even the grandest and most national ones, are not idealized. Neither the pre-exilian prophet, nor the precise post-exilian legalist, who had no compunctions in suppressing what was not to his purpose, or in committing a pious fraud for the common public good, at all smoothed down the terrible sins of the greatest characters.

Noah became disgracefully drunk. Abraham persuaded his wife to pass as his sister. Moses gave way to an unworthy fit of passion. David was guilty of adultery and murder. Solomon was an idolater and wrought folly. Just the ones of whom Israel was the proudest, and through whom the Hebrews had to teach their children righteousness, were fatally unfit to be set up as models. Do myths of a "moral" and "righteous" nation "grow" in that way? Do you suppose that if the Pentateuch had been written to impress and reform the common people, by some legalists of the exile; or if it has been interpolated and revised by a learned committee of Ezra's scribes, with the express object of piously deceiving the people into obedience to it, that we should ever have heard of Noah's drunkenness, of Abraham's deception, of Lot's disgrace, of Jacob's cheating! Even to-day some politic historians and moralists would advise the suppression of these facts on grounds of the public good. But those strict formalists, who according to the negative theory, were piously writing entirely with an eye to effect, and did not scruple to revise and remodel history to fit what they regarded as the needs and great emergency of the present, when they came to such an incident in the mythical tradition, would unanimously have concluded, "There is no use in saying anything about that. It will do no good. It will hurt the cause greatly. It is something the people better not know."

Let us take a crucial case—the story of Samson. There

is so much that is extraordinary in his life and exploits; the coincidences between events in his history and current classical legends of the mythical Hercules are so remarkable that he is an unusually good specimen for the negative theory to cite.

But Prof. Blaikie, in a recent article, has shown why the character of Samson cannot be explained as a myth. "Myths are subject to laws and conditions, and have marked features that differentiate them from history; they are usually directed to glorify their hero, whom at last they place virtually, if not formally, in the ranks of the gods. In the Hebrew story of Samson, on the other hand, there is an utter want of harmony between the supernatural element and the character of the hero. The twofold annunciation of his birth might have been expected to herald the appearance of a servant of God, lofty in character. But in Samson we are surprised, if not shocked, at the wild, rollicking life, the uncouth methods even of delivering his people, and the savagery which marks his exploits. So far from his showing anything of the solemn dignity of the prophet, he is wanting even in the gravity of a responsible citizen. The most extreme rationalist would find it impossible to reconcile, as the creation of a poetic fancy, an annunciation so spiritual with a career so carnal. Then, too, his consecration as a Nazarite is another circumstance, incompatible with the idea of a mythical origin. So far from his fulfilling the ideal of that office, his ordinary demeanour, except in the matter of abstinence from the

fruit of the vine, outraged it. A third point where any legend-theory must fail is, to explain the peculiar nature of the service which Samson rendered to his country. Personally, he does not seem to have hated the Philistines, but rather the contrary. When he attacks them it is in revenge for some personal injury. This would not excite the spirit of legend, or create a desire to make a hero of the performer. A strong man that in return for personal injuries had inflicted much havoc on a people with whom he was usually on friendly terms, is not the man round whose memory the spirit of admiration, love, and honour rises to its utmost height. There must be more of the disposition to identify himself with his people, more ordinary forgetfulness of self, to rouse the legendary spirit. A fourth conclusive argument against the legendary theory is its incompatibility with the treatment received by Samson from the tribe of Judah. So far from being roused by his example, they blamed him for irritating their foes, and actually had the meanness to lay hold of him, that they might deliver him to the Philistines. 'Would anything like this ever have occurred to a maker of myths? What glory could such legends bring either to the hero or to the nation? The rejection of Samson by the tribe of Judah was a greater ignominy than his having his eyes put out by the Philistines, or his being called to make sport for them at their feast. It spoiled his public life, and reduced him to the position of one who had only showed how

great things he might have done if he had been properly supported by his nation.”

There is a vast difference between a religion of myth, and a religion of divine inspiration. “The Old Testament religion, like the Christian, did not come forth out of humanity, according to the mere law of natural spiritual development. It rightly regards itself as called into existence by God . . . by the clear separation of this one people from the life of the other peoples of the world. . . . Indeed, the natural life of Israel, where it follows its own promptings, comes constantly into conflict with the religion of the Old Testament. Hence it can be explained only by revelation, i. e. by the fact that God raised up for this people, men who possessed religious truth not as a result of human wisdom and intellectual labour,”¹ nor as a result of mystical insight, and through whom God gave us in the Scriptures, “an infallible and inerrant guide for all the purposes for which God has given us a revelation.”

There are persons whom no new theory of the Biblical writings can ever disturb. They are those who are sure that they have been redeemed from sin, death and the power of the devil with Christ’s holy and precious blood, and with his innocent sufferings and death. In their own experience they have known the need and the power of the blood of the Lamb. No amount of learning and no number of witnesses can shake their faith. They have in their own heart a witness for the very thing

¹ Herman Schultz.

which is the negative critic's stumbling block and rock of offense in the Old Testament, namely the presence of the supernatural.¹ They know that they are "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and that the presence of supernatural power has made them such.

There are other persons who can be completely captivated by such a theory. Over a large class of minds it has attained a power like, says Delitzsch, the spell of Hartmann's Philosophy of the Unconscious. There are still other persons whom it will entirely unsettle and confuse. And there are others who will greet any release from the Bible with gladness. On the whole, the history of such movements in the Christian Church shows that they do present harm, but through the struggle they inaugurate and the examination they necessitate, they in the end further the cause of Him who is the same, Yesterday, To-day, Forever.

¹ Stearns: The Evidence of Christian Experience.





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