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THE PENTATEUCH

Text-Books of Religious Instruction.

EDITED BY THE

REV. EDWARD L. CUTTS, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "TURNING POINTS OF ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY,"
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pleted by the Rev. C. HOLE.

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Text-Books of Religious Instruction

THE PENTATEUCH

BY THE LATE

A. C. Hervey

LORD BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS

AND THE

REV. C. HOLE

NEW YORK
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PREFATORY NOTE

THE late Bishop of Bath and Wells took great interest in the projected series of Text-books of Religious Instruction, and consented to write the volume on the Pentateuch. Having finished Genesis and Exodus, he was advised, on the ground of failing health, to spare himself this addition to his other work, and the Rev. Charles Hole undertook the completion of the volume.

In order that this volume may be of the utmost use to the student, he should first read over the portion of Scripture to be considered; then read it again with the notes; look out and carefully consider the illustrative texts referred to. In many cases the notes contain brief hints and suggestions intended to start the student on lines of independent thought.

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THE PENTATEUCH

HOLY SCRIPTURE

SCRIPTURE, ἡ γραφή, is the name by which we designate that collection of writings which stand on a different footing from any other writings in the world, because they are θεόπνευστοι, "inspired of God," or, as the word is rendered in the Authorised Version, "given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. iii. 16). Speaking of the Old Testament only, we know for certain which are the books to which this peculiar, this sacred character belongs; because the Canon, as it is called, of Holy Scripture is identically the same to-day as it was in the days of our Lord and His Apostles, and they always speak of Holy Scripture as possessing a Divine authority. To quote but one of many of the sayings of Jesus Christ, He says: "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John x. 35); and He quotes it with the distinctive formula, "It is written" (Matt. iv. 4, 9, 10, &c.); and the Apostles everywhere refer to the same Holy Scriptures as an authority from which there is no appeal.

The books contained in the Canon were divided by the Jews into three portions—the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa; a division acknowledged by our Lord, who in Luke xxiv. 44 speaks of "the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms," the Psalms being the chief book comprised in the Hagiographa. Of these the "Law" comprised the five Books of Moses, commonly called the Pentateuch; the "Prophets" comprised, besides what we commonly mean by the Prophets, the historical books, because they were justly considered as having been under the special

care and direction of the Prophets from age to age; the Hagiographa comprised all the other books which were not included in either of the previous portions. This collection, in its historical part, embraces outlines of the history of mankind from the Creation to about B.C. 400, together with a full history of the Israelitish people, detailed biographies of certain representative men, and copious accounts of a few leading events; and in its other portions contains original poems, oratorical addresses, and ethical treatises, composed in various ages, separated from one another by many hundreds of years; and yet it possesses the truly marvellous feature of a perfect unity of teaching throughout. Patriarchs in the remotest ages, poets of all ranks from kings to herdsmen, the great law-giver of the Hebrew people, warriors and statesmen, prophets and priests, all concur in identical views of Almighty God, of His government of the world, and of the duty of men to God and to one another. And not only so, but the views of the character of God and of the proper attitude of the mind of man towards God, which is given in these various writings, have that simplicity and sublimity, and breadth and height, which are worthy of the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, and have never been surpassed by all the wisdom and culture of succeeding ages. At the close of this nineteenth century of the Christian era, when we would speak worthily of God's glory, or approach Him in suitable words of adoration, supplication, or praise, the language of Moses, David, or Isaiah is the most suitable which we can find.

But besides this feature of Holy Scripture it is worthy of preliminary remark that in its long course of history not one single historical blunder has ever been detected by the keen eye of criticism or of unbelief. Epochs upon which no historical light, except that of the Old Testament, had shined fifty years ago, have, by the discoveries made since then from Egyptian hieroglyphics and Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions, come into the light of history, and in every instance the Biblical statements have been signally confirmed. Whole nations, of whose existence profane history

knew nothing, but to whom passing allusions were made in Scripture, such as Hittites, Elamites, the first Assyrian empire, &c., have had their early history revealed and the Scripture allusions fully justified. The enlarged knowledge of Egyptian history, manners, customs, topography, and the like, which recently deciphered papyri and inscriptions have afforded, has shown more clearly than ever before the accuracy of the Scriptural accounts of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt. Even in the domain of science where the Scriptures incidentally touch it, be it astronomy, or be it geology, they have never been convicted of error. With these characteristics agreed the unique position of the Bible as compared with all the literatures of the whole world. No other book has swayed the whole civilised world as for the last eighteen centuries the Bible has done. No other book has been translated into near three hundred languages, and speaks with a voice of authority wherever it is read. No other book has inspired and directed the opinions and actions of the wisest and holiest men whom the world has ever seen as the Bible has done.

Evidently these writings of such a character, which are the channels for communicating to the mind of man such human and divine knowledge, ought to be studied and well known by every man desirous of receiving a liberal education. The following pages are intended to give such help as is in the writer's power towards understanding that portion of Holy Scripture which comprises the first two Books of Moses and is commonly called the Pentateuch.

GENESIS

CHAPS. I.—II. 3.—THE CREATION.

THE first act of that great drama, the development of which was to fill the pages of **Scripture**, was the act of creation. Man, whether he lives in the far East, or in the lands of the setting sun, whether he belongs to one of the ruling races of mankind or to one not yet emerged from the condition of savages, finds himself an inhabitant of this planet which is called the earth. Born, endowed with life, and with the various faculties of mind and body which constitute a man ; surrounded by animals subject to him, and contributing in various ways to his wants and comforts—the camel, the horse, the ox, the sheep, the dog, and so on ; seeing the earth under his feet producing corn, and wine, and grass, and vegetables, and trees, and flowers, to minister to his necessities or to his pleasure ; lifting up his eyes to heaven, and seeing the glorious sun filling the sky with light, and pouring warmth and joy on the face of the whole world, or looking up at night and seeing the moon and the countless stars speaking out of infinite space, and telling him that his little earth is but a speck in a boundless universe—he asks, How came I here ? and who constructed this glorious mechanism, and arranged this wondrous order of things which I feel within me, and which I see around me ?

And this first chapter of Genesis gives the God-sent answer.

1. There was a time when this wondrous scheme of nature was not. But God was. “In the beginning,” before the sun and moon and stars were brought into existence, there was

a Being, invisible but infinite in power, unsearchable in wisdom, of perfect goodness, whose name is **God**. He spake the word, and all that is seen in heaven above and in the earth beneath was created and made. But not at once did they assume their destined completeness. Through six great periods of time, each of unknown length, did this creative energy pursue its mighty work. First light shone upon the confused and shapeless mass. Then the spacious firmament enfolded the new-made earth. Then the multitudinous waters beneath the firmament were gathered into oceans and seas, and the dry land appeared. Nor did it long continue naked. A beauteous verdure clothed the mountain side and the plain beneath. The green grass carpeted the ground, the various herbs sprang up with their blossoms and their seeds to perpetuate their race through ten thousand thousand generations. The fruit-tree stretched out its branches laden with precious fruit.

But the earth, so to speak, was not sufficient to itself. It was not a solitary thing, it was a member of a great family which filled the boundless space around it, and depended upon those other bodies for its supplies of light and heat. The sun was set to rule the day, and the moon to give light by night. By the mysterious power of gravitation the succession of seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, were established for ever in a wonderful order, and God saw that His work was good. As yet no animal life moved upon the earth. But when the fifth great period had arrived a new wonder of creative power arose. First the waters teemed with life in marvellous abundance, and the winged fowl flew in the open firmament of heaven. Next the earth brought forth the living creature after its kind. Cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth in their curious variety, beauty of form, sagacity of instinct, strength of limb, swiftness of motion, endurance of labour. But as yet no conscience of right and wrong, no divine reason to apprehend moral truth, no spirit with which to hold communion with God, to understand His way, and praise Him for His mighty works, was

in any creature which God had made. At length the word went forth from the mouth of the Lord, and man stood upon the earth in his Maker's image, in the likeness of God. He stood erect with uplifted face—"Os homini sublime dedit, cœlumque tueri Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus." And he was made lord of the earth. God made him have dominion over the works of His hands, and put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.

And now, when the sixth great period closed, the work of creation, as far as this planet is concerned, was complete. The work planned "in the beginning," and carried on through countless ages with such unerring wisdom and matchless power, was now finished and ended, and "God rested from His work." The Heavenly Sabbath was begun. And God's priest was thus ready to celebrate his Maker's praise, and adore His glorious name.

But note one remarkable feature in the work of creation—the provision for the continuance and extension of each form of life. The grass, the herb, the tree had each its reproductive seed "after his kind." The living creatures in the waters and on the earth received their Maker's blessing—"Be fruitful and multiply." And to the man and his wife God said, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth," and that pair has grown into the thousand millions which now go far to fill the earth.

Such then is the answer which Holy Scripture gives to man's inquiry—How came I here, and whence came that material universe of heaven and earth which I see around me, with its wonderful order and its rich furniture of things useful and beautiful to behold? And here we shall do well to observe that while the language of this first chapter of Genesis is as far as possible removed from the language of science, and meddles not with any of those questions which are the legitimate objects of scientific treatise, its broad statements agree in the most striking manner with the conclusions to which centuries of scientific inquiry have led the

brightest intellects among mankind. Genesis tells us, alone among the cosmogonies of the ancient world, that Creation was carried on in successive stages, spoken of as six consecutive days. The earth contains in her own structure the indelible record of the different stages of her progress from chaos to maturity. Genesis tells us the order in which the things created succeeded one another. The great vegetable family first, the swarming brood of fish and fowl next, then the cattle and the beasts of the earth, and then man, the crown of all. And this exact order, unknown to philosophy of old, unsung by poets, unguessed by sages, is the very order which the voice of science proclaims to-day, as ascertained by scientific research, and vouched for by irrefragable proof.

Here then we leave this first chapter of the Scripture record. If we have read it right, we shall have learnt to adore the invisible Majesty of God. We shall have learnt to see Him in all His works, to admire the wisdom, the power, and the Providence which shines throughout them all. We shall have felt the awful dignity of our own manhood—our responsibility for our use of our splendid inheritance, the obligation to use our faculties of mind and body to the glory of the Giver, and the welfare of our partners in those gifts. And we shall now be ready to follow with awakened interest the history of that race whose beginnings we have here seen, as traced in those same "Scriptures" from which we have learnt the history of Creation.

CHAPS. II. 4-III. 24.—THE FALL.

The second chapter of Genesis (commencing at ver. 4) has a feature which we shall frequently meet with hereafter as characteristic of Hebrew narrative, viz., that it goes back to supply certain details which had not been given in the preceding narrative. These details are of great value. They relate first to the newly-created Adam, or man. The preceding narrative had told us of the creation of man in the image of God, but had not told us of what material the man

was made. This information, of special importance with reference to the approaching catastrophe of man's sin and death, is now supplied. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." A description, be it observed, of man only as he has a life in common with other animals. For this phrase, "a living soul," rendered in Gen. i. 24 "living creature," is common to the animals. The higher nature is described in Gen. i. 26, 27. The "breath of life" here spoken of is the animal life, just as St. Paul distinguishes between $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ and $\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ —the natural man and the spiritual man—the natural body and the spiritual—the first Adam, who was made a living soul, and the last Adam, who was a quickening spirit (I Cor. ii. 14, 15; xv. 44, 45).

Again, in the first chapter we were told that God created man in His own image, male and female created He them (ver. 27). But now, ii. 21–25, we have a fuller account of how the woman was made—for the man, and out of the man. And we have enunciated in consequence that fundamental law of the human race—the law of marriage, sacred and indissoluble; the ground of the distinctively human institution, the **Family**, with its holy and happy relations; that law, the breach of which is the most fruitful source of human crime and human misery, causing the degradation of the nations where polygamy is sanctioned, no less than the shame and wretchedness of the homes polluted by adultery; sowing hatred and murders, strife and discord broadcast, and proving an absolute bar to happiness or to progression of what is good. What foresight, what wisdom shine forth in placing this law of marriage at the very head of that stream of human life, which was now just having its beginning.

Another detail necessary for understanding the history which was to follow, was to describe man's first happy abode in the garden of Eden, *i.e.*, of pleasure, or delight. And to this end a further description of the condition of the earth is given as it was in those primeval days, long before the creation of man, when the earth was still too hot for vegetable

life, when it was still surrounded by a thick watery vapour, and the meteorological arrangements which provide rain to water the earth had not yet come into play. But preparatory to the dwelling of man, the earth, in the course of we know not how many ages, had assumed a different condition. God then prepared the garden of Eden for man's abode; and now, the ground having cooled down, and the vapours cleared off, and, it is to be presumed, refreshing showers having been sent to water the earth, the newly-formed Adam was placed in the garden to dress and to keep it.

And now a further detail is brought out as regards the animal creation and man's dominion over it. Gen. i. 28 had simply recorded man's dominion over the inferior creation. But Gen. ii. 19 adds a most interesting incident arising from that dominion, viz., that all these creatures were paraded before him, and he gave to each the distinctive name by which it should be called.

Before leaving this chapter I would again impress upon the reader the importance of remembering that it is essentially a supplemental chapter—not progressive from the first chapter, but filling up details there omitted.

And now in chapter iii. the narrative progresses, and a new and terrible feature is revealed, mysterious, inexplicable, but one the truth of which has stained the whole current of the world's history, and is a matter of daily experience to every one who has reason and intelligence—the existence of evil. Hitherto all has been sunshine in this garden of delight. God's love, God's wisdom, God's power have filled the earth with light, and opened a prospect of unmixed and unending joy for the man and the woman whom He had made. Now suddenly a dark shadow passes across the scene. A suspicion of God's wisdom, of God's power, and of God's love has arisen like a foul, poisonous vapour, and stood between man and God. "God's commandment is grievous, and stands in the way of man's happiness." "God's word is not true." "God's mind towards man is not perfect love." "The penalties attached by God to sin will never come to pass." "Not death, but a brighter, fuller, higher

life will be the consequence of disobedience." So spake the Evil One, and man believed the father of lies more than the God of truth, to whom it is impossible to lie ; and so he disobeyed and fell.

One has seen sometimes a glorious summer day. In the still heat everything looked bright, beautiful, and happy. Profound enjoyment, a tranquil stillness, a delicious repose was on every side. Man, the cattle, the birds, the trees, the flowers, all seemed to be basking in the sunshine. But in a moment a distant growl of thunder was heard, a rough wind sprung up, angry clouds gathered together, the lightning flashes were quickly followed by crashing peals of thunder, a downpour of rain ensued, and the whole scene was changed—agitation, fear, and gloom have taken the place of serenity and peace. The cattle are scared, and men rush where they can for shelter. A similar change, as sudden and ten thousand times more awful, took place when the tempter's voice was heard in Paradise, and sin first lodged in the human breast. A whole cluster of evils burst in at once. Shame, hitherto unknown, trod quickly on the footsteps of departed innocence. The dread of God's Presence, and endeavours to hide from it, took the place of delight in beatific communion with Him. Falsehood and guilty excuses are not far behind. Reproach and recrimination cloud the intercourse of husband and wife ; and then follows all the train of the penalties for sin. The woman shall bring forth children in pain and sorrow ; the man shall have toil and labour for his portion in life, and in due time the threat of death shall take effect. From the dust was he taken, to the dust he shall return. (Gen. iii. 19.) Meanwhile there is a break up of his happy lot. Paradise is lost for him and his. He who was lord of that happy home is driven out to earn his living with the sweat of his brow. The very ground, as it were, resents his sin, and refuses to yield its increase. It brings forth thorns and thistles to him, apt emblems of the sorrow of man's troubled life.

Now, whether we understand this narrative of the temptation and fall of man literally, or view it as dressed more or

less in the garb of oriental allegory, the lesson is the same ; equally striking, equally impressive, equally momentous to every rational child of man. The deceitfulness of sin, its lying promises, in the nature of things impossible to be realised, yet trusted and acted upon by the silly credulity of man ; the debasing, corrupting influence of sin, seen in the fact that each single act of sin weakens, lowers, deteriorates the moral agent, and makes him less capable to resist sin at each return of temptation ; the infectious nature of sin, which makes each sinner at once an accomplice with the author of evil in seducing others to sin ; the rapid growth of sin from what might be thought trivial acts of disobedience to murder and violence, and every abominable wickedness, as seen in the following chapters—these are some of the obvious lessons of this impressive narrative. And then if we look a little deeper, we see strongly brought out the inseparable union of religion and morality. Departing from absolute trust in God was the first step to open sin against God. Had the lying suggestions of the Evil One been rejected at once with abhorrence by Adam and Eve, the fatal act of disobedience would never have followed. Immovable love of God, absolute trust in His perfect wisdom and goodness, a firm grasp of the truth of His Word, form the security of man for steadfast continuance in well-doing. For thus the strength of God supports the weakness of man.

Another momentous truth also stands out in clear, strong outline—the personality of Satan, the Evil One, the Tempter, the adversary of man. His wisdom suggested the fatal doubts ; his subtlety forged the persuasive lie, “Ye shall not die” ; his malice urged the hope, “Ye shall be as gods” —partially true, but essentially false. We see the very same spirit at work in the temptations of our Lord, but foiled and baffled by his unmixed goodness. How strange it is, that with these two examples of the first and second Adam before their eyes, with the visible fruits of sin staring them in the face on every side, with all the lessons of Holy Scripture, and their own observations of the world in which they live, and the experience of the successive generations of

mankind, all telling the same sad story, men still go on believing and acting upon the promises of Satan, go on expecting that the fruit of sin will be to their advantage ; that adulteries, thefts, violence, and falsehood will promote their well-being ; that sin will never be overtaken by the righteous vengeance of God, and that workers of evil will on the whole be better off than those whose whole study it is to do the will of their Father which is in heaven !

Nor can we pass away from this chapter without devoting a few words to that most mysterious subject, the existence of evil in a world ruled over by a good and Almighty God. The mystery can probably only be fully explained by minds to which the whole boundless time, past and future, is known, together with the concerns of countless worlds and their inhabitants ; but we can see a few things which help to throw light upon it.

1. Freewill cannot exist without the possibility of its choosing wrong. If, therefore, it is desirable that beings should be created of such high order as to possess freewill, it is perhaps inevitable that the possibility of evil should exist also.

2. For the preservation of innumerable free agents in other worlds from the danger of doing wrong, perhaps the most effectual method was to let them see what the actual fruits of wrongdoing are in one little world like our own.

3. The condition of beings who have fallen and risen again ; who have gone through the deadly conflict with evil, and by God's grace have overcome ; may be a higher one than could be attained without such conflict, and so on the whole there may be gain.

4. Many of the highest graces of the Christian character could have no existence amidst surroundings of faultless goodness and perfect happiness. The charity which suffereth long and is kind ; the patience which faints not in tribulations ; the meekness which renders good for evil ; the courage with which the saint confronts danger and death for his Master's sake ; the bowels of mercy which yearn over others' suffer-

ings, and spend themselves to retrieve others' wants, can find no place to flourish in except where sin has entered in.

5. And once more, what is it which sets forth in most exceeding glory the goodness of Almighty God, but His method of dealing with the sin of our fallen world? Not in the wisdom and power which the structure of the earth displays ; not in the boundless firmament with all its glorious array ; not in the creation of men and angels, with all their faculties, do we find our highest conception of the mind and character of God ; but in the Cross and Passion of the Son of God. That wondrous love of our fallen world, that infinite compassion for our ruined race, that boundless mercy towards His rebellious creatures, which shine forth in the redemption of the world by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, give us a knowledge of what God is which nothing else could have done, and this could not have been had not evil entered into the world.

We notice, lastly, a new feature in this second and third chapter, viz., the introduction of the sacred name of Jehovah * —englished throughout the Authorised Version by “the LORD,” after the example of the Septuagint, which uniformly renders it *κύριος*. This is supposed by the German critics to arise from the Scripture narrative being made up of two distinct sources, among others, one of which used the name of Elohim for God, and the other the name of Jehovah, whence they call the one “Elohist” and the other the “Jehovist.” But this explanation, though adopted by some English writers, is uncertain, and rests upon no sufficient foundation. For the origin and meaning of the name **Jehovah**, see Exod. iii. 13, 14.

* The true pronounciation of the name is not known, because the Jews never pronounced it, but read in its stead *Adonai* (lord), to which word the vowel points of Jehovah belong. The Germans always write it Jahveh.

CHAP. IV. 1-24.—EARLIEST HISTORY OF MANKIND
OUT OF PARADISE.

In this chapter we have the earliest record existing of the life and actions of mankind immediately after the fall. Like all the earliest histories of which we know, it takes the form of a Genealogy (see Dict. of the Bible, *Genealogy*), and it is the genealogy of Adam's first-born son Cain, marking the principle of primogeniture which afterwards prevailed. It is not the genealogy of the family whose record fills the pages of Holy Scripture—the race of Seth, Noah, Abraham, Jacob—the Israelites, David, Jesus Christ the Lord. That follows afterwards. But it is the history of the descendants of Adam's first-born. It is stained by the account of the first murder, and that the dreadful one of fratricide. The account is in some points very obscure, but the main drift of it is clear. Cain and his younger brother Abel each brought their offerings to God. Cain offered of the fruits of the earth, Abel offered the firstlings of his flock. But God had respect to—*i.e.*, accepted graciously—Abel's offering, but had not respect unto Cain's offering. We are not told what was the exact cause of Cain's rejection, but ver. 7 seems to say plainly that it was for some misdeed, some sin which lay at his door, that he was not accepted; with which 1 John iii. 12 agrees, for he tells us that the cause of Cain's hatred to his brother was that his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Neither are we told how God's rejection of Cain's offering was manifested. But the effect of the slighting of his own offerings while his brother's were graciously accepted, was greatly to rouse Cain's anger,* and excite his envy and hatred against his brother to such a pitch, that he seized or made the opportunity, when they

* The Hebrew text of ver. 8 cannot bear the sense given to it in the A.V., "Cain talked with Abel." It can only be rendered, "Cain said unto Abel"—but then nothing follows. The Septuagint supplies, "Let us go into the field"—*i.e.*, Cain decoyed Abel into the field, of malice prepense, for the express purpose of murdering him.

were alone in the field out of sight, to rise up against his brother and slay him. And thus was the earth first stained by man's blood being shed by man.

Other hints given us of this earliest stage of man's habitation in the earth are of considerable interest, though of another kind. Thus, we learn that there was already on the earth some localised Presence of God, some place where He specially manifested Himself, where His blessing rested on those who sought Him rightly, and where His worship was performed. For Cain in his pathetic lament says that when he is driven out from the face of the earth, meaning the home where he had hitherto dwelt, he shall be "hid from God's face"; and in ver. 16 it is said that Cain "went out from the presence of the Lord." And the land to which he fled was called the land of Nod, *i.e.*, of banishment. There must, too, have been some altar on which Cain and Abel laid their *minchah* or offering to God.

Then we learn how early the division of labour amongst mankind begun. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." And a little later (ver. 20) we read of Jabal, the father of such as dwell in tents and among cattle, *i.e.*, who led a nomad life, in opposition to those who, like Cain himself, built cities and dwelt in houses (ver. 17).

Then, again, we find the arts already beginning to embellish life, and cause a further division of labour. Music came in to cheer and refine mankind. The great musician of the day was Jubal, the son of Lamech (vers. 19, 21). He invented both stringed and wind instruments, called harps and organs in the A.V. Then, too, sprung up artificers in brass or rather copper, and iron. Whether they wrought the metals for agricultural implements, for coins, &c., or for warlike instruments, does not appear. But it seems probable from the connection of Lamech's slaughter of the young man with the sharpening or forging of iron mentioned in ver. 22, that Lamech slew him with a weapon made by his son Tubal-cain. Anyhow, this use of metals, and specially of iron, marks a considerable progress in civilised life.

One more token of culture may be seen in Lamech's song,

the earliest specimen in existence of poetical composition. If we have it not in the language in which it was originally spoken, it is doubtless a faithful translation of its form and meaning. Lastly, by the side of those evidences of the early civilisation of mankind—so contrary to the theory of human life beginning in the lowest savagery, and advancing through slow degrees upwards—we have the sad instances of departure from God's laws, in the institution of polygamy (ver. 19), and the repetition of the crime of Cain, the founder of the line. Here we see how, as in the history of later races, Greek, Roman, and others, progress in the arts of civilised life may run side by side with progressive vice and wickedness, and that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom" with a view to national as well as individual happiness.

CHAPS. IV. 25—V. 32.

We now come to the main stream of the Bible History, the history of that race of men to whom was entrusted the mission of preserving in the world through many successive ages, amidst the surrounding darkness of heathen idolatries and abominations, the knowledge of the One true and living God, of His will and His word; that race to whom were committed the oracles of God to be kept, and in due time communicated by them to the inhabitants of the whole earth; that race from whom were to spring in successive generations such men as Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Daniel, and all the prophets; and from whom, when the fulness of the time was come, was to be born the Christ of God, the Saviour of the world, **Jesus** our Lord. We notice this carefully, both that we may feel the vast importance of this genealogy, standing as it does at the head of such a history, and also as marking the wonderful unity of Holy Scripture running with one unbroken plan, and displaying one unwavering purpose, and testifying to the action of One Mind and One Hand, through so many

successive generations, to have the termination of its course only in the Ocean of Eternity.

At the head then of this, which we may call the Messianic line, stands Seth the son of Adam (Luke iii. 38). He seems to have been born after the death of Abel (Gen. iv. 25). Noah, who stands last in this pedigree, was the tenth generation from Adam, inclusive. The whole time, according to the numbers of the Hebrew text comprehended in this genealogy, which goes down to the 500th year of Noah's life, was 1556 years. But the Septuagint version, by adding 100 years to the age of Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, and Mahalaleel respectively, before the birth of their son, and by one or two other slight differences, raises the total to 2162 years. It is difficult to decide which is right. Numbers are always more liable to change in the process of transcription than any other records.

The longevity of man at this early period of his history is remarkable. It does not seem unnatural that the sentence of death for man's sin should work gradually. Man's original frame was made for immortality. Death was the penalty of sin, and the change in the constitution of man which reduced the period of human life from 930 years of Adam to the normal three or four score of human life to-day was gradual. From Adam to Noah human life ranged from 900 to 700 years; from Shem to Haran, from 600 to 200; from Abraham to Joshua, from 175 to 110 years. After that it seems to have come down to the present average. For the opinion of Haller and Buffon on the early longevity of men, and the traditions of Hindoos, Babylonians, Greeks, and others, in active accordance with this account in Genesis, see "Aids to Faith," pp. 278, 279.

CHAPS. VI.-IX. 17.—THE FLOOD.

The narrative has now brought us to the time of that terrible event in the history of the earth and of man upon it, the destruction of "the world that then was" (2 Pet. iii. 6) by the waters of the Deluge. It is remarkable that the

traditions of almost all the nations of the world speak of the Deluge. The Babylonian account discovered and published by George Smith is nearly identical with that of Genesis. Some account of the traditions of the Chinese, Hindoos, Armenians, Phrygians, Goths, the Polynesian islands, and others will be found in "Aids to Faith," p. 264 ff. The question whether the flood submerged the whole earth, or only that portion of it which was then inhabited by man, is one rather for physicists to determine. The Scripture narrative is capable of either interpretation, the main point being the destruction of the world of the ungodly. The flood is spoken of in the New Testament (Matt. xxiv. 37, 39; 1 Pet. iii. 29; 2 Pet. ii. 5; iii. 5-7; Heb. xi. 7). See the allusion to it in the baptismal service in the Prayer-Book. The sacred writer then is about to give the detailed account of the Deluge to which the genealogy of Noah had now brought him, and he begins by an incident which apparently had much to do with it, the intermarriage of "the sons of God" with "the daughters of men." The meaning of this statement has been much disputed. (1.) One opinion is that the "sons of God" means the descendants of Seth who feared God and lived righteously, in opposition to the "daughters of men," *i.e.*, the daughters of those who had cast off the fear of God, and had "corrupted their way upon the earth." But the words are hardly susceptible of such a meaning. (2.) The other opinion, taking the phrase "the daughters of men" or "of Adam" in its natural sense, and "the sons of God" as opposed to it, and implying that those spoken of were not sons of Adam, is that "the sons of God" were those fallen angels spoken of by Jude, who "left their own habitation" (Jude v. 6) and came to the earth, and took to themselves wives of "the daughters of men." The result of their marriage was the birth of "gibborim," mighty men, men of renown which were of old. If this is the true interpretation, it finds its counterpart in heathen mythology, which so often speaks of "the gods" coming down from heaven to earth, and of heroes whose fathers were gods, and their mothers daughters of men.

Leaving this obscure question, which is one among many marks of the great antiquity of this record, we notice the stress which the history lays upon the prevalent wickedness. Before relating the awful catastrophe which was about to overwhelm the human race, the writer is careful to justify the ways of God by showing the fearful wickedness of man. "The wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (ver. 5). "The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (ver. 11). "All flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (ver. 12). Yet even so had "the long-suffering of God waited" 120 years to give them opportunity of repentance, while Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," in vain exhorted them to turn to God, and so at length the threatened judgment came. But meanwhile Noah, who, like his ancestor Enoch (vers. 22, 24), walked with God, found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and was exempted from the general destruction. God communicated to him His purpose to bring to an end the whole of the ungodly race who polluted the earth with their evil deeds, and showed him a way of escape for himself and his house. He was told to make an ark of huge dimensions, and instructed exactly as to its construction. It must have been a long and difficult work, how long we know not, and probably carried on amidst the ridicule and obstruction of his neighbours. But at length it was completed by the good hand of God upon him, as many other no less difficult tasks have been accomplished by the servants of God, notably the building of the Church of which that ark was a type. When it was finished, and a sufficient store of food (vi. 21) laid up, and there remained but one short week before the fatal day, then Noah gathered into the ark the beasts, the cattle, the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air, by two and two of every kind, male and female, but by sevens of the clean beasts, those fit for sacrifice,* and then he took in

* If the deluge was limited to that portion of the earth which was inhabited by man, a comparatively small number of animals, chiefly cattle, may have been included in the ark.

his own wife, and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives, in all eight persons (1 Peter iii. 20). And then, when all were safely housed, "the Lord," doubtless by the ministry of one of those angels who are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, "shut him in." Awful solemn moment! The world of the ungodly—men grown old in deeds of violence, young men in all the pride of life, and reckless confidence in their youth and strength, giddy women given up to pleasure, all alike hardened in their lawless ways, and impossible to rouse to any sense of danger, or any fear of God—there they were standing on the very edge of destruction, Noah's solemn warnings scarcely faded from their ears, yet they still intent upon nothing but the affairs of this life. Noah and his family withdrawn from their company, and shut up in that strange ark, were they credulous fanatics, or specious hypocrites, or men beside themselves? Well! and their thoughts were still, what shall we eat, what shall we drink? wherewithal shall we be clothed? Or another was saying, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. Or some were quarrelling and striving, or the strong were oppressing the weak, and deeds of violence were being done, and deeds of grasping dishonesty, or works of lawless lust and pleasure. When lo! the sky was darkened with clouds, and then the sheets of rain came pouring down, and at the same time "the fountains of the great deep" were broken up and poured out their floods upon the land. Some doubtless fled to the hills, some perhaps rushed to the ark before it began to float—but "the door was shut" (Matt. xxv. 10). The day of grace was ended. They were all swept away. Meanwhile, Noah and his family were safe within the ark. For forty days the rain continued, and the flood increased, but the ark rose majestically upon the rising waters. It was a full year before the earth was sufficiently dry for Noah and his family to go forth from the ark (viii. 13-19). Noah's first act on once again setting foot upon the earth was to build an altar to the Lord, and to offer sacrifices thereupon: sacrifices expressing his thankfulness for the

wonderful mercy shown him in his preservation ; sacrifices expressing the consecration of himself and all belonging to him to the service of God his Saviour.

Of the many moral lessons contained in this wonderful and beautiful narrative, we will select only one.

The example of Noah cleaving to that which is good in the face of universal corruption. He was living in the midst of the world of the ungodly. Rich and poor, mighty men and men of low degree, men and women, old and young, were all with one accord following the way of their own evil hearts. But did the practice of that evil world change the nature of things? Did right cease to be right because men did wrong? Was God no longer God because men rebelled against Him? Was sin no longer sin because men loved it and wallowed in it? Nay, verily—and Noah felt this, and he acted upon it. Look at him! A just man, and perfect in his generations. He stands upright, fearing God, and doing right. He perseveres in what is right, year after year, century after century. Nothing moves him. Neither the force of example nor the solicitations of sin, nor familiarity with the sight of evil, nor the fear of ridicule, nor the danger of persecution. He steadily fears, loves, and obeys God. And so he found grace in the eyes of the Lord in that day of judgment.

In reading the preceding chapters the reader should remember what was said above of the peculiarity of Hebrew narrative, which goes back, again and again, to add some detail, or explain some particular, in what had gone before.

CHAPS. IX. 18-XI. 26.—THE DIVISION OF THE NATIONS.

The first act in the great drama of human life upon the earth is ended, and the second act has begun. Mankind now makes a fresh start. From the eight souls who were saved in the ark the population of the earth begins afresh, and the inhabitants of the renewed earth begin their fresh course with this signal advantage. They have had a terrible

experience of the consequences of sin and ungodliness, and they have had an encouraging experience of the tender mercy of God to them who love and fear Him. Will this suffice to fix men in the practice of virtue and religion, and so secure the peace and happiness of the world? The subsequent narrative will show.

The history, as usual, takes the form of genealogy. We read at ix. 18, "The sons of Noah that went forth of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. These are the three sons of Noah, and of them was the whole earth overspread." The progress of the genealogy is arrested by the incident of Noah's intoxication, and the conduct of his three sons respectively, which led to the prophetic announcement of the destinies of their respective descendants. To Shem was assigned the pre-eminent blessing that Jehovah should be his God: a blessing realised in the whole subsequent history of Shem's posterity, and specially in the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham. To Japheth the prophetic blessing was given that God would enlarge him—make wide his border, and that he should dwell in the tents of Shem: a blessing realised in the enormous growth and wide diffusion of the Western nations, Greeks, Romans, Teutonic, Slavonic, Celtic; realised, if we consider Asia as "the tents of Shem," in the conquests of Alexander the Great in Asia, and the foundation of the Greek kingdoms of his successors in Asia, and later in the vast Eastern Empire of Great Britain; realised also in a spiritual but very striking sense, in the succession of the Christian nations of the West to the great inheritance of Israel, in being made "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph. ii. 19). While Ham's undutiful conduct to his father drew down upon his descendants, through his son Canaan, the prophetic curse, "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren:" realised in the subjugation of the Canaanites by the Israelites in the days of Joshua, and perpetuated in the name given to the remnant of them as "Solomon's servants" (2 Chron. ii. 17-19; Ezra ii. 55; Neh. xi. 3); and probably also in the servile condition of the

negro races, so long-suffering under the curse of the slave-trade.

After the completion of this episode, the genealogy resumes its course ; and the statement in chap. ix. 19, that from the three sons of Noah the whole earth was overspread, is now (chap. x.) verified in detail. The descendants of Japheth come first, and ver. 3 sums up by saying that they peopled the "isles of the Gentiles." This phrase and analogous ones seem always to denote the western countries, the sea coasts, whether of islands or continents, specially those bordering on the Mediterranean. Thus Esther x. 1, "the isles of the sea," in contrast with "the land," denotes Xerxes' Western provinces, as opposed to those on the Continent of Asia. "The isles of Chittim" (Jer. ii. 10, xxvii. 6) denote the coasts of Greece, Italy, and the great islands of the Mediterranean, such as Crete (Jer. xlvii. 4). Here then "the isles of the nations" denote the "countries of Europe, and the coasts of Asia Minor, to which the inhabitants of Palestine and Egypt had access only by sea" ("Speaker's Commentary"). The names of Japheth's descendants given in vers. 2-4 are striking evidences of the truth of this ethnology. **Gomer** represents the Cimbri, the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and the Cymri, or Cambri. **Javan** represents the Ionians ('Ιάονες). **Elishah** = Elis, and perhaps Hellas, and Ἑλληνές. Tarshish = Tartessus in Spain, and so on.

The sons of Ham came next. **Cush** comprises some, at least, of the dark-skinned races of Africa. **Mizraim** is the Bible name for Egypt, and found occasionally on Egyptian monuments ; **Phut**, found also on the monuments, is the Libyan race ; and some South Arabian tribes, indicated by the names Seba, Havilah, and others in ver. 7, also belong to Cush. We are surprised, at first, to find Nimrod (Micah v. 6), with his cities of Babel and Nineveh, assigned to Cush, and consequently to Ham. But the recent revelations of the most ancient history of those countries, made by the cuneiform inscriptions, fully confirm the truth of the statement, "As the cuneiform inscriptions were deciphered, it gradually became evident that before any inhabitant of the

Semitic stock had entered Chaldea, it had been peopled by the Accadians, who had been the builders of the cities, and the founders of the civilisation, afterwards borrowed by the Semites" (Note to Gen. x. 10 in Bishop Ellicott's Commentary). The same writer observes, with reference to the name *Accad* in ver. 10, that whereas it "was meaningless fifty years ago, it is now a household word in the mouth of Assyriologists" (ibid.). So surprisingly have these ancient Scriptural records been confirmed by the recent discoveries of long lost monuments. To Ham belong also the Philistines, and all the tribes of Canaanites, including the Sidonians. These, under the name of Fenike or Phœnicians, are often mentioned in the Egyptian inscriptions. It is worth mentioning, as an indication of the great antiquity of this document, that in ver. 19 Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain, are spoken of as still standing.

The sons of Shem, "the father of all the children of Eber," follow; but in this chapter (x.) the Messianic line is only carried down to Peleg, "in whose time the earth was divided." From vers. 31, 32, which look like the end of a pedigree, as well as from the fact that chap. xi. 10, which is the heading of the subsequent generations of Shem, looks like the heading of a pedigree, we may, perhaps, conclude that the older document ended when chap. x. ends, and that chap. xi. 10 ff. is a later pedigree, made out in the days of Abraham. Anyhow, this genealogy in chap. xi. carries us down through ten generations, from Shem to Abraham, and is repeated exactly in 1 Chron. i. 24-27, and in Luke iii. 34-36, with the exception of the interposition of a *Cainan* between Arphaxad and Sala in Luke, which seems to be clearly a scribe's error. (See "Genealogies of our Lord Jesus Christ," chap. viii.) Of the sons of Shem, the most remarkable names are Elam, named as a people in Gen. xiv. 1, and appearing frequently in the cuneiform inscriptions as a powerful nation; Asshur, from whom descended the Assyrian race; and Aram, whose descendants were the various tribes of Arameans, or Syrians, —as the A.V. calls them—in Mesopotamia, at Damascus, at Zoba, &c. Eber was the father of the Hebrew race.

Before quitting the tenth chapter, we ought to notice that there is some doubt as to the order of birth of the three sons of Noah. They were always named as Shem, Ham, and Japheth; and the A.V. of Gen. x. 21, "Shem . . . the brother of Japheth the elder," is, to say the least, doubtful. The more natural rendering is that of the Revised Version. "Unto Shem . . . the elder brother of Japheth." But on the other hand, Shem being named first, is no proof that he was the eldest. Abraham is named before Nahor (chap. xi. 29), though Nahor was the eldest. Ephraim is almost always named before Manasseh, though Manasseh was the eldest. Jacob is named before Esau (Josh. xxiv. 4). And in Gen. x. 2, Japheth's genealogy being given first, is rather indicative of his being the eldest. And Gen. ix. 24 looks as if Ham was the youngest of the three sons, so that some doubt hangs over the order of the sons of Noah.

The only historical event mentioned in this genealogy is the remarkable one of the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of mankind to the several countries assigned to them in the preceding chapter. The narrative goes back, as is usual with Hebrew narratives, to explain what had gone before. It seems that shortly after the flood men had journeyed eastward,* and settled in the rich plain of Shinar, or Babylonia. Here they found abundance of brick-earth, which, whether dried in the sun, or baked in the kiln, supplied excellent material for building. Here, then, they resolved to build a city and a lofty tower. It seems from ver. 4 that their object was, not as has been thought without any sufficient ground, on the authority of Josephus,† to build a tower so lofty as to secure them a place of refuge from another flood, but to check the dispersion which they had some reason to fear would take place. It seems, too, that there was some spirit of defiance of God in what they pro-

* מִקְדָּם might mean "from the East," as it is rendered in the A.V. of Gen. xi. 2. But it may also mean "in the direction of the East," "eastwards," which is doubtless its meaning here. The ark rested to the west of Shinar, and the first inhabitants journeyed eastwards.

† Compare Ps. lv. 9.

posed to do, though from the conciseness of the narrative, it is not clear in what it consisted. Anyhow, this purpose was defeated by the confusion of tongues, and the result was the dispersion of mankind, and their settlement in their various localities.

The obscurity of this history of the dispersion which took place in the days of Peleg is probably due to its antiquity. When it was first put on record, circumstances might be known by tradition which explained it, but which have since been forgotten. But the two main facts of it, the original unity of language, and the spread of the population of the world from one centre, are matters for scientific research. Thus, not only are the widely spread members of the Indo-European family springing from Japheth, and comprising the Sanscrit, Greek, Latin, Teutonic, Slavonic, and Celtic languages closely connected with each other, but they have also a clear, though less close connection with the Semitic family. At least 900 or 800 Hebrew roots are found in Greek or Latin words alone. Philology discovers a like connection between other families of language. We know, too, how the great streams of European population have flowed from the East to the West. All the evidence we have confirms our belief that the different races of mankind were not *αὐτόχθονες*, springing up like the indigenous flora of particular districts, but that they all migrated from the place of their original settlement to that which they afterwards possessed, so that the statements which lie at the root of the narrative are unquestionably true.

CHAPS. XI. 29-XII. 18.—THE CALL OF ABRAM.

The genealogy of Shem now brings us to a most important incident, the birth of Abram, whose history follows at length down to chap. xxv. 10. This illustrates a marked feature in the Scriptural narrative, viz., that it treats certain epochs very fully, as the life of Jacob, the sojourning of his descendants in Egypt, and their Exodus under Moses, the times of Samuel, the reigns of David and Solomon, the life

of Elijah and Elishah, and so on ; while other long periods, like the lives of the Patriarchs, the first thirty years of Saul's reign, the long reign of Uzziah, &c., are passed over in comparative silence. There is a gap of nearly sixty years between Ezra vi. and vii. in which nothing whatever is recorded.

This section of the history is also remarkable as bringing forward for the first time that purpose of God, which for between one and two thousand years had so powerful an influence upon the world at large, and still affects materially the condition of mankind, I mean the planting of Abram's descendants in the land of Canaan. Infidels can of course, if they please, shut their eyes to the most colossal truths. But the fact remains firmly embedded in the history of our race that the separation of the Israelites from the nations of the earth, their establishment in Palestine, their religious institutions, and the great gift of Holy Scripture entrusted to them, has been for between 3000 and 4000 years a living influence affecting more powerfully the moral condition of mankind than any other event that can be named, including as it does the coming of Christ into the world. Nor do we know what further benefits to flow from Israel to the world are in the womb of time (see Rom. xi. 12, 15). It is well therefore to fix our attention upon this first appearance of the Divine purpose which we see in Gen. xi. 31, where we read that "Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and led them forth (so LXX.) from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan." But what was the motive of this journey? for none has hitherto been given. It is given in chap. xii. 1, which, as usual, goes back to supply something that is wanting in the previous narrative. Let us hear St. Stephen's explanation (Acts vii. 2-4), "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldæans (*i.e.*, Mesopotamia), and dwelt in Charran : and from thence, when his father was

dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell." Clearly then the call to Abram was given in Ur of the Chaldees, as is indeed clearly implied in Gen. xv. 7, and it was in consequence of that call that Terah with Abram his son, and Lot his grandson, and Sarai, Abram's wife, left the land of their birth "to go into the land of Canaan." Why they stopped at Haran or Charran, in the extreme north of Mesopotamia, some 500 or 600 miles from Ur,* does not appear. It may have been merely Terah's age, which made the fatigue of travelling too great, or it may have been a want of resolution in Terah, to which Abram in filial duty yielded. But whatever was the cause it is certain that they tarried some years there, for they had time to acquire a considerable property in cattle and in slaves (Gen. xii. 5). Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Charran after his father's death, and this shows that, though named first, Abram was not the eldest son of Terah, for Terah was seventy years old when he began to have children (Gen. xi. 26). If Abram was his first-born, then Terah would only have been 145 years old (70 + 75) at the time of his death, whereas he was 205 years old when he died (Gen. xi. 32). So that obviously Abram was not the eldest son. But how magnificent was his inheritance, view it first in the promises. "I will make of thee a good nation, and I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." And again, after Abram had reached the land of Canaan, and had separated from Lot, "all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. . . . Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee" (Gen. xiii. 14-17). And once more, when his name was changed from Abram (high father) to Abraham (father of a multitude), "I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee, and I will establish

* Assuming Mugheir to be the Ur of the narrative.

My covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee . . . for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. . . . I will be their God" (Gen. xvii. 1-8). And yet again, after the incident of the offering up of Isaac, "By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 16-18), promises repeated to Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 2-4), and to Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 13-15 ; xxxv. 10-12 ; see too Heb. vi. 13-20), and then view it in the fulfilment. Take in the whole history of Israel. The Exodus, the conquest of Canaan, the reigns of David and Solomon, the preservation of Israel as a separate nation through the successive Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires—their no less marvellous preservation through more than eighteen centuries that they have existed, "without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an image, without an epoch, and without teraphim" (Hos. iii. 4), and without a native land. Or view the spiritual fulfilment so unspeakably full and large. The birth of Jesus Christ, "the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. i. 1). His boundless kingdom reaching to "the uttermost parts of the earth" (Ps. ii. 8), and having "no end"; His name which is above every name, and at which every knee shall bow (Phil. ii. 9-11); the countless millions of Christians who are reckoned as the children of Abraham (Rom. iv. 16 ; Gal. iii. 7, 9, 29)—sum up all this, and much more which might be added, and say whether the fulfilment does not fully equal the promise. And if we then come back from the contemplation of the vast glory of the promises in their fulfilment, and look at him to whom the promises were made, what a wonderful view it gives us of the mind, and Providence, and unchangeableness of God. There was the simple son of Terah, dwelling unnoticed and unknown in Ur of the Chaldees, no greater than Haran or Nahor his brothers, or any of his Aramean kindred ; likely to live and die and be forgotten in the land of his birth, as far

as any human eye could see. But God destined for him a career of unmatched greatness, to be won in a distant land; and a name of surpassing dignity, to be honoured by men of every race, Jews, Christians, and Mahomedans; and a place second to none in the roll of saints and faithful servants of God, so that he was called "the friend of God" (2 Chron. xx. 7; Isa. xli. 8; Sam. ii. 23); and a posterity unique for fame and multitude; and so with unerring wisdom, and fixed purpose, He brought it all about, ordering, directing, controlling events, not only in Palestine, but in Egypt, Assyria, Persia, and the whole world, year after year, and century after century, to bring about His determinate counsel, till at length in the fulness of time that counsel took effect in the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the diffusion of the gospel through the whole world, "to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham" (Luke i. 72, 73); or in the words of the Blessed Virgin, to help "His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spake to our father Abraham and his seed for ever" (Luke i. 54, 55).

The chief historical events to be noticed in this section, are (1.) that the occupation of the land of Canaan by the Canaanites, or sons of Canaan, had already taken place. This occupation had been spoken of in Gen. xi. 15-19, but without any specification of the time when it took place. Now, upon Abram's entrance into the land of Canaan, and with a view to the promise that he should be the future possessor, in view also of the transactions about to take place between Abram and the sons of Heth (chap. xxiii.), and other incidents in Abram's life (chap. xxiv. 3, 39), it is mentioned that at the time of Abram's entrance into Canaan (about B.C. 1700),* the Canaanite was already in the land (Gen. xii. 6; xiii. 7).

(2.) We notice also that the kingdom of Egypt was in

* The date would be about 1700 B.C. or 1900 B.C., according as you reckon the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt as 200 or 400 years and fix the date of the Exodus at about B.C. 1300 or about B.C. 1500.

full power, and that the hereditary name of the sovereign was already Pharaoh. According to Egyptian chronology, the Egyptian monarchy was then 2500 years old; for Menes, the first king, is supposed to have reigned B.C. 4400. The title of Pharaoh too—in Egyptian Per-ao, “the great house” *—is contemporary with the third and fourth dynasties—Memphite. Their date is placed at from B.C. 3966 to B.C. 3633.

It seems probable also that the Hyksôs, or shepherd kings, were reigning in the time of Abraham. But this cannot be asserted as an established fact.

(3.) We have a picture of the secular life of those days. Trade and barter had begun, and the accumulation of wealth. The precious metals of gold and silver, whether coined or weighed (xxiii. 16), were already the mediums of exchange. But cattle was the chief source of wealth. “Abram was very rich in cattle, and silver, and gold” (xiii. 2). Lot too “had flocks and herds and tents” (xiii. 5). They did not live in cities or houses, but in tents (xii. 3; xiii. 5; xviii. 1, 9), and they moved frequently from place to place in search of fresh pastures for their flocks. We see evidences of the very early times in the thinness of the population. For though the Canaanites were already in the land, large tracts were still without an owner, and the herdmen of Abram and Lot could move their herds and cattle without interference from the people of the land. We see it too in the manners of the time which sanctioned such marriages as that of Abram with his half-sister.

But in the midst of his wandering nomad life, Abram did not neglect the worship of God. There was no temple built in those days, but wherever Abram sojourned he built an altar to the Lord (xii. 7, 8; xiii. 4, 18), and “called upon the name of the Lord.”

(4.) We notice the absolute truth and impartiality of Holy Scripture in recording the faults and weaknesses of good men; faults springing out of the state of the society in which they lived, but still faults. Scripture sets before us

* Brugsch, “Egypt under the Pharaohs,” p. 23.

only one absolutely sinless character, that of our Lord Jesus Christ. Abraham, Noah, Lot, Jacob, Moses, David, all had blemishes more or less deeply-dyed in their lives, although they were bright and shining lights in the ages in which they lived, and in many respects shame us who have such great advantages over them.

CHAP. IV.—MELCHIZEDEK THE PRIEST-KING.

This chapter is remarkable for two events,¹ the invasion of Palestine by Chedor-la-omer, King of Elam and allied kings ; and the appearance of Melchizedek, King of Salem. A few words must be devoted to each of them.

1. We are somewhat startled at first to hear of a King of Shinar, *i.e.*, Babylonia, appearing so far west, and a King of Elam, a country east of the Tigris, claiming superiority over the territory of Sodom and Gomorrah, and coming to enforce submission by arms. The strange names too, unknown to history, and inexplicable to philology, had an air of unreality, inviting to the sceptic, and puzzling to the believer. The cuneiform inscriptions have removed all doubt, and confirmed the historical accuracy of this episode. The power of the Elamite nation, their invasions of Palestine, the meaning of the name of their king, "the servant of Laomer," the names of Arioch, and Amraphel, all come to light, in the recently deciphered inscriptions, thus affording a striking confirmation of the historical truth of these early Biblical narratives, and showing that they are not only, as Renan was compelled to acknowledge, *la vérité même*, absolutely true, as far as regards the *colouring* of the life and manners of those early ages, but true also as matters of fact.

2. The other remarkable incident is the appearance of Melchizedek,* King of Salem, and Priest of the Most High

* See an interesting confirmation of the Scripture account of Melchizedek, King and Priest of Salem, drawn from the Tablets of Tel-el-Amarna, in Sayce's "Higher Criticism and Verdict of the Monuments," chap. iv.

God. We are struck at first sight with his Hebrew name, meaning king of righteousness, and are ready to ask, How could this be? But, according to the authority of Renan, it is "more than probable" that the inhabitants of the land Canaan and the Hebrews spoke essentially the same language, and if so, the Hebrew names Abimelech, Melchizedek, Adoni-zedek, and others are in strict accordance with historic truth. Again we are surprised at finding among the native tribes of Canaan the worship of "the Most High God" existing. But it is a pleasant evidence that in those early days, and under favourable circumstances, the knowledge of the Living God had not been wholly obliterated, and given place to idolatry (Exod. ii. 16).

From the repetition thrice over (vers. 18, 19, 20) of the exact phrase, "the Most High God," we may conclude that that was the title by which God was known to Melchizedek, whose priest he was; the further addition in ver. 19, "possessor (or rather maker) of heaven and earth," and the adoption of the same phrase by Abram himself in ver. 22, and its application to Jehovah, and the payment of the title to Melchizedek, all show that it was the living and true God whom Melchizedek served, and that we have here a distinct proof of the survival of the primitive faith of Adam, Noah, and Shem, in a branch other than that of Abram.

When we turn to the 110th Psalm, and read the words of David, "The LORD said unto my lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. . . . The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek;" and then go on to read the comment on these two passages in Heb. vii., we feel that we have here one of the most remarkable passages in the Old Testament. Suddenly, in the midst of what seemed to be a simple narrative of an ancient skirmish, and of the gallant conduct of an old nomad chief, we find ourselves face to face with the eternal Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Bread and Wine as the symbols of His Body and Blood offered up in sacrifice

to God, and with the abolition of the Levitical law to make way for the Gospel of Christ. How clearly does one such incident set God's stamp upon the Old Testament as a Book different in kind from the world's literature, and not to be understood by the same methods. And there are many other like incidents scattered up and down the books of the Old Testament. See, *e.g.*, Gal. iv. 22 ; 1 Cor. x. 2-4 ; Heb. ix. 8 ; xiii. 11-13, &c.

In vers. 5-7 there is also an interesting scrap of very ancient history. Some of the earliest races who settled in Canaan are here mentioned. The Rephaim, or sons of Ha-Rapheh (rendered the giant in 1 Chron. xx. 6), were a race of men of great stature, who seem to have survived to the time of David, and who left their name attached to the country they had inhabited. They are first mentioned here, and again at Gen. xv. 20, but the place of their abode, Ashteroth Karnaim, is very uncertain. It seems, however, to be identical with Ashteroth in Edrei, in the kingdom of Og, King of Bashan, whose land is called in Deut. iii. 13 the land of the Rephaim (giants, A.V.). It lay of course on the east of the Jordan. Og himself was almost the last of the race (Deut. iii. 2). There seems, however, to have been a branch of the Rephaim settled on the west of Jordan, because a valley lying between Jerusalem and Bethlehem was called *the valley of the Rephaim* (giants, A.V.) (Joshua xv. 8 ; xviii. 16 ; 2 Sam. v. 18, 22 ; xxiii. 18 ; Isa. xvii. 5). It appears, too, from 2 Sam. xxi. 15-22, that Goliath and other Gittites slain by David's mighty men, were of the "sons of Ha-Raphah" or Rephaim. The Anakim, or sons of Anak, were probably of the same stock.

The Zuzims are another ancient race of whom, and of Ham, their dwelling-place, nothing further is known. If they were the same as, or nearly connected with the Zamzummims (Deut. ii. 20), they had lived in the country of the Ammonites by whom they were destroyed, and who dwelt in their stead. Ham, in the Hebrews, is a different word from the Ham or Cham of 1 Chron. iv. 40.

The Emims were another ancient race who, as well as the Anakim, were accounted Rephaim, but were called Emims (terrible) by the Moabites, who destroyed them, and took possession of their country (Deut. ii. 10, 11), Shaveh-Kiriathiam—the plain of Kiriathiam—the well-known city of the Moabites.

The Horites were the ancient inhabitants of the neighbourhood of Mount Seir. Their name means dwellers in caves, Troglodytes. They are thought to have lived in the remarkable caves on Mount Seir, in the neighbourhood of Petra. Mention is made of Seir the Horite (Gen. xxxvi. 20, 21; see too vers. 29, 30). The Edomites, or children of Esau, attacked them and took possession of their country (Deut. ii. 12, 22) and destroyed them, though it seems from Gen. xxxvi. that a remnant was left subject to the Edomites. The great antiquity of this extract is seen by its being anterior to the occupation of Seir by the Edomites.

Two great moral lessons are taught us in this chapter.

1. By the example of Lot. Tempted by the richness and fertility of the plain of Jordan, he had settled in Sodom, notwithstanding the well-known wickedness of the people. The folly of his choice was made manifest when he lost everything he possessed, his liberty, and nearly his life also, leaving a lesson to men of every rank and condition of life, to put their spiritual interests before their worldly interests, and to value the integrity of their moral character more than the acquisition of wealth.

2. By the example of Abram, who, though fully entitled to the spoil which had been recovered by his own prowess, yet would take nothing that had belonged to the King of Sodom, for fear that by so doing he should in any way derogate from the glory of God, and be drawn into an obligation to one who did not fear or love God. It is remarkable that this noble self-abnegation was immediately followed by a renewal of the promise of the land of Canaan, and of a seed like the stars of heaven for multitude, and by that promise of such boundless wealth of blessing, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (chap. xv. 1, 5,

7, 18-24); a practical illustration of the saying in 1 Sam. ii. 30, "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

CHAPS. XV.-XX.

This group of chapters, in which the biography of Abram is continued up to the birth of Isaac, contains some interesting and important events, which we proceed to notice in order.

We may first note in passing the mention of Eliezer of Damascus. This is one of those incidental internal marks of a true narrative which meet us so often throughout the Bible. Josephus, who had access to the ancient historians, Berosus, Hecataeus, and Nicolas of Damascus, whose works are now lost, tells us that Damascus was built by Uz, the son of Aram. It was therefore in existence long before the time of Abram. Again, if it was built by a son of Aram, the language of the inhabitants would naturally be Aramean. Accordingly, Eliezer (God is a help) is a Semetic word. Again, we might be surprised to find a man of Damascus in Abram's household in Canaan. But it is certain that Abram coming from Charran had passed by Damascus, and the tradition recorded by Nicolas of Damascus was that "Abram, an immigrant from Chaldea, reigned for a while in Damascus." Josephus also affirms that a village in the country round Damascus was still called in his day the dwelling-place of Abram. It is quite possible that "Eliezer of Damascus" might have been "born in Abram's house" (ver. 3), while he was sojourning at Damascus, on his way to Canaan. But it is very doubtful whether "son of my house," means the same as "he that is born in my house," in Gen. xvii. 12, 13, and not merely "one of my household."

We note next how the great event of the **birth of Isaac**, who was to be in a special sense Abram's seed, is drawing

nearer and nearer. The promise of descendants had been already given (chap. xii. 2, 7; xiii. 15, 16). Now, when Abram's faith, tried by the long delay, needed strengthening, it is repeated with additional sanctions; viz., the curious ceremony of the covenant by both parties passing between the animals offered in sacrifice (Gen. xv. 9-17); the covenant of circumcision in chap. xvii.; the further revelation of time and circumstance in chap. xv. 13-16; the express assurance in chap. xvii. 15-21, that Sarai should be the mother of Abram's seed; and the change of Abram's name to Abraham, and of Sarai to Sarah* (chap. xvii. 5, 15).

In the enumeration of the nations whose land was to be given to Abraham's seed (Gen. xv. 18-21), we may notice an indication of the great antiquity of the document, from the fact that some of the nations were either nearly or wholly extinct at the time of the Exodus. The Kenizzites, or Kenezites, are only known from Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite (Joshua xiv. 14), and his brother Othniel (Joshua xv. 17), and do not appear to have had any territory in the time of Moses. The Kadmonites are mentioned nowhere else; the Rephaims were nearly annihilated by the Elamite invasion, though there was still a remnant of them remaining till the days of David. At the time of the Exodus, the enumeration of the nations of Canaan was "Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites" (Exod. xxxiv. 11).

Chap. xvi. is remarkable for the birth of Ishmael, the ancestor of the Bedouin Arabs, whose character down to the present day exactly corresponds with the prophetic description here given of Ishmael, "He shall be a wild man, his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him" (xvi. 12). The expression by which the untamable character of the Bedouin is expressed is a very vivid one, "a wild ass among men." The wild ass of the

* The ethnology of Abram—"high-father," and Abraham, "father of a multitude"—has been already given; that of Sarai is doubtful. Some interpret it "quarrelsome" (Gesenius, Ewald, &c.), others "imperious" (Fürst), others "God is chief" (Simonis). Sarah means "princess."

desert is remarkable for its beauty, strength, swiftness, and above all, its restless, unbridled, and untamable disposition. The whole chapter is a faithful representation of the manners and opinions of the time. The evils of polygamy stand out in clear relief in this and numerous other narratives of the lives of Old Testament worthies, Jacob, David, Solomon, and others, and it should make us deeply thankful that our lot is cast in the full light of the Gospel of Christ, in which the original law of marriage (Gen. ii. 24) is brought back to its primeval sanctity, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. xix. 4-6), and woman restored to her proper place as the partner of man.

The destruction of the cities of the plain is another great incident in the life-time of Abraham; an incident of undying interest, and reading a lesson as important to the present generation of men as it was to that in which it took place. The cause of this terrible catastrophe, by which the four cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, were utterly destroyed, and a country previously most fertile, as "the Garden of the Lord," was rendered absolutely barren and desolate to this day, was the gross wickedness and abominable vices of the whole population. From that remarkable and touching narrative in chap. xviii., which represents Abraham as pleading with God to spare Sodom, it appears that there were not ten righteous men in the whole city. The whole population was hopelessly sunk in iniquity. Their conduct as described in chap. xix. fully bears out the charge. The righteous Judge of the whole earth decreed therefore their utter destruction, that they might be an example to all that after should live ungodly (2 Peter ii. 6).

The exact manner of this terrible overthrow is not clear. The language in which it is described is merely, "The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." But it is probable that here as elsewhere, natural causes were used by the God of nature to bring about His purpose. From the accounts of travellers, Seetzen, Robinson, de Saulcy, and others, it appears that the

whole region contains strong evidences of volcanic action, and of its frequent accompaniment, earthquakes.* Sulphur and bitumen are also found in some quantity. It is easy to conceive a violent volcanic eruption pouring down a torrent of burning lava upon the devoted cities; and the existence of inflammable bitumen in large quantities, perhaps forming the material of their buildings, would add fierceness to the flames. Perhaps, too, a violent thunder-storm with terrific lightning accompanied the eruption, and assisted the incendiary fires. That fire was the agent of destruction, not water, all the accounts agree, and therefore the notion entertained by some that the destruction of the cities was caused by a sudden rise of the water of the Jordan, which then for the first time formed the Dead Sea, is as inconsistent with the historical testimony of sacred and profane writers, as it is with scientific probability.

Another remarkable feature in the locality is the existence of a mountain called Usdom, *i.e.*, Sodom, the main body of which is "a solid mass of rock-salt" (Rob. B. R., vol. ii. p. 108). This at once explains the incident of Lot's wife becoming "a pillar of salt." Neglecting the warning of the angel (ver. 17), "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee." She foolishly lingered, and looked back; perhaps thinking of her home and her property in flames, when a mass of the moving salt suddenly enveloped her, and forming itself into a column, such as is actually seen on the spot at the present day,† held her in its grasp. She had become a pillar of salt. The exact locality of the cities is difficult to determine. Mr. de Saulcy speaks positively of traces of a former city on the south-west end of the Dead Sea, near the mountain Usdom, and identifies the neighbouring Zunwurah with Zoar, whose ancient name was Bela (Gen. xiv. 2). But this is not accepted by Robinson or by Sir George Grove in the

* "Like the earthquake at Pompeii which preceded the eruption of Vesuvius" ("Sinai and Palestine," p. 283).

† "To this day splitting off in pillars which show a rude resemblance to the human form" ("Dict. of Bible," *Zoar*). Compare "Sinai and Palestine," pp. 287, 288.

“Dictionary of the Bible.” There are strong reasons for believing that Zoar, a Moabite city, was situated on the eastern side of the Dead Sea, and Zunwira is not the Arabic form of Zoar. Sir George Grove thinks the cities lay on the north of the Dead Sea, where they would be visible from the “mountain east of Bethel” (Gen. xii. 8 ; xiii. 3), from whence Lot “lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of the Jordan” (Gen. xiii. 10). Others think that the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, which differs in some respects from the other portion,* was dry land before the earthquake and volcanic eruptions which destroyed the cities took place, and that Sodom was situated on it. Segor, Zoar, would then be close to it on the east side of the sea. But no certainty can be arrived at without some additional light.

Adverting next to the moral and spiritual lessons taught in these chapters we select one out of several.

How immensely striking it is in the midst of these narratives of patriarchal life nearly 4000 years ago to light upon the great Christian doctrine of justification by faith. “He believed in the LORD, and He counted it to him for righteousness.” We turn to the evangelical teaching of the great Apostle to the Gentiles near 2000 years later, and we find him taking this identical text and proving from it that man’s righteousness before God does not come of the works of the law but of faith (Rom. iv.); proving from it that the Gospel was before the law, and that the promises are to the whole human race, and not to the Jews only (Gal. iii. 7-9), and could not be abrogated by the law. And so this single verse, which to a superficial eye seems to touch Abraham only, turns out to be a momentous lesson concerning every soul of men of all ages and of all races, and conveying to ourselves a truth upon which hinges our salvation and all

* Chiefly in the vast difference of depth; that of the northern part being 1300 feet, while that of the southern extremity, south of the great promontory projecting from the eastern shore, is only 13 feet (Stanley, “Sinai and Palestine,” p. 283). Stanley suggests that this may have been the Vale of Siddim.

our hopes for time and for eternity. A more striking evidence of the Divine character of the Scriptures can hardly be conceived.

CHAPS. XXI.—XXII.

The great event in chap. xxi. is the birth of Isaac, the child of promise, and the great lesson taught us, for the strengthening of our faith, and encouraging of our patience unto the end, is the faithfulness of God to His promise. God cannot lie. What He has spoken He will accomplish in due time. Hindrances and obstacles may arise, unexpected delays may intervene, difficulties looking like impossibilities may bar the way, but God's promise will not fail: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of God shall not pass away. Our faith should lay fast hold of this truth, as Abraham's did, and by it our whole conduct should be guided.

Note next the incident in chapter xxi. which occurred at the weaning of Isaac. Ishmael, who was now a lad of fourteen or fifteen years of age, instead of sharing his father's joy and thankfulness at the birth of Isaac, and recognising the hand of God, looked on and mocked the aged mother; the son born out of season, the father's pride, as shown in the great feast which he made on the occasion of the child's weaning, were all turned into ridicule by the son of the bondwoman. Very likely Ishmael, of whom two years before Abraham had said, "O that Ishmael might live before Thee!" (xvii. 18), had been less fondled by his father since Isaac's birth, and feelings of jealousy and disappointment rankled in his bosom. Anyhow Sarah saw him mocking, her anger was roused, and she insisted on the dismissal of Hagar and her son, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son. For the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac," and so Ishmael went forth into the desert in anticipation of his destiny to be "a wild man."

Now notice first how intensely natural all this is. The jealousies and contentions between the sons of different

mothers in the home blighted by polygamy; the contemptuous hatred of the inferior wife by the mistress of the family whose feminine feelings are ruffled by the existence of a rival in her husband's affections; the perplexity of the father who is torn different ways by conflicting duties and affections! No picture can be more true to nature than that which is here drawn with such simplicity and power, and which at the same time, I had almost said unintentionally, teaches us such important lessons on the economy of social and family life.

But what above all is to be noted is the far-reaching and unexpected lesson drawn from this history by the inspired teacher in his Epistle to the Galatians. St. Paul is dealing with the bigoted and blinded Jews, who in their servile attachment to the letter of the law, rejected the glorious liberty wherewith in the Gospel Christ makes us free. And he convicts them out of the law itself. "For," says he, "it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son; for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." And then with regard to Ishmael mocking, there comes the deep drawn exposition, "As he that was born after the flesh (*i.e.* Ishmael) persecuted him that was born after the spirit (*i.e.* Isaac), even so it is now." "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and therefore against the children of God. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him," and so it must always be the case that there is an antagonism between the carnal and the spiritual mind; that the carnal reason cannot understand or appreciate the deep things of God; that what God reveals, man, unless taught of God, rejects; that whom God loves the unregenerate man hates or despises; that the rejection and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus by the unbelieving Jews is the same spirit as that which from age to age persecuted those who believed in Jesus. And then comes the earnest exhortation to all the servants of Christ, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty where-

with Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage" (Gal. iv. 21; v. 1). Such is the teaching of this remarkable historical allegory.

It may be well to mention with regard to the age of Ishmael that the term "child" in Gen. xxi. 14, 15, 16, is rather misleading, and does not properly express the Hebrew word, *yeled*. In Gen. iv. 23; 1 Kings xii. 8, 10, &c., it is rightly rendered *a young man, young men*. In Gen. xxxvii. 30; xlii. 22, it is applied to Joseph, who was then seventeen years old, and so in many other places. In like manner the other word applied to Ishmael (*nī'ar*), and rendered *lad* in vers. 12, 17, 18, 19, is commonly applied to youths and young men. The apparent helplessness of Ishmael arose not from his being a *child*, but from the want of water, which often kills people in the wilderness.* There is a touch of historic accuracy in the statement that Abraham put the bottle of water on the shoulder of his Egyptian handmaid, for the Egyptians always carried heavy burdens on their shoulders.

The transaction between Abraham and Abimelech in the matter of the well, and the oath taken by each of them, and the seven ewe lambs given to Abimelech by Abraham as a witness that the well belonged to Abraham, is also a life-like picture of primitive wilderness life, where cattle were the chief source of wealth, and the possession of water the chief necessary, and consequently the right of access to particular wells one chief source of strife (Gen. xiii. 7, 10; xxvi. 20). A very similar transaction recurred between Isaac and Abimelech (xxvi. 26-33). As regards the name Beersheba it may be rendered either, *The well of the oath*, or *The well of seven*, with reference to the seven ewe lambs. St. Jerome speaks of seven wells.

* An interesting account of the danger in a waterless wilderness of missing the spring, in Lepsius's "Letters from Egypt, Ethiopia, and Peninsula of Sinai," pp. 279-286, has many features of striking resemblance to this narrative, especially in the possibility of being very near a spring without knowing it.

CHAPS. XXII.—XXIII.

Abraham's natural character is scarcely less remarkable than his religious. The prudence and skill with which he acquired, under God's blessing, great wealth and power, so as to be looked upon as "a great prince" in the land of his sojourn—the uprightness and magnanimity and independence of his dealings with kings and chieftains, the courage and capacity with which at a moment's notice he armed his 300 trained servants, and pursued and routed Chedor-la-omer and his allies, and rescued Lot and recovered all the spoil which the four kings had taken—all this marks him as a man of commanding intellect and great force of character.

The distinctive feature of Abraham's religious character, as set forth in his most interesting life, and the particular lesson which that life was to teach the servants of God in all ages, was **Faith**. "Faithful Abraham" (Gal. iii. 9) is the designation of him given by St. Paul. Therefore his faith was to be tried and proved in divers crucial ways. First of all he was called to leave his father's house, and his native land, and his kindred, to go forth into a land which God would show him (Gen. xii. 1), and "He went forth, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. xi. 8). He was promised the possession of the land of Canaan for his inheritance, and he was content to sojourn in it, year after year, as a stranger and pilgrim, dwelling in tents, not having so much land of his own as to set his foot on (Acts vii. 5), without a word of doubt or of impatience. He was promised a posterity as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sand upon the sea-shore, and though he continued childless till he was one hundred years old, he never doubted that the promise would be fulfilled. But now a sorer trial of his faith than any that had gone before was prepared for him. The child of promise had been born. He had passed safely through the happy days of early youth, and was probably just reaching the state of manhood. We may guess that he was not much under or over 20. Life was just opening up before him.

And as his father watched his growth "in wisdom and stature" (see Gen. xviii. 19), and called to mind continually the promises which Isaac was heir to—the rich inheritance of Canaan—descendants countless in number—and a blessing which seemed to expand beyond the widest grasp of human ambition and desire; and as to all this was added the fondness of a father's heart for the child of his old age; we can imagine how dear Isaac was to Abraham, and how entirely the old man's heart was wrapped up in the present and future prosperity of his only son.

One night when Abraham had retired to rest, and the deep stillness of night was all around him, he was roused by a voice calling him by name "Abraham," just as some 700 years after the same voice called Samuel. He recognised it as the voice of the Lord who had so often spoken to him, and answered, "Behold, here I am." The voice proceeded, "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." What! part with my beloved son, my chief treasure, the joy and support of my age! Ishmael is gone from me, and now must Isaac go to? And what will become of all the promises? How shall my seed inherit the land of promise? How shall I become a mighty nation? How shall all nations of the earth be blessed in me, if he in whom I was told my seed should be called, is cut off in his youth? And by my own hand! Am I, by one blow, to destroy all those hopes which have been the support and joy of my heart, through so many trying years? Why did I leave my native land to come to this distant Canaan? Why have I been a stranger and a pilgrim in the midst of strange people? Why have I been so long without any settled home, without an acre of land that I could call my own? if now by mine own act I am to blot out that future glory of my race, and have nothingness for my sole inheritance.

Some such thoughts as these must have passed through Abraham's mind, as he tossed upon his bed in perplexity, and sorrow, and dismay. But the sacred narrative only tells

us the result with that marvellous simplicity which characterises the Scripture. "Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place of which God had told him." With no less beautiful simplicity is the rest of the story told; the journey to the place of sacrifice; the innocent inquiry of Isaac, "Where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" the earnest cry of the angel of the Lord, "Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad;" the substitution of the ram caught by his horns in the thicket; the gracious recognition of Abraham's loving obedience in the renewed and intensified blessing; and the return to Beersheba, so different from the outward journey, all follow in due order, and make this one of the most remarkable chapters in the Bible. See Heb. xi. 17-19.

One or two points require further notice. The A.V. of ver. 1, "God did tempt Abraham," is very misleading and apt to convey an entirely false meaning. The Hebrew word means "to put any thing or person to the test," "to try," or "prove," as the R.V. renders the word here. The Greek, *πειράζω*, has exactly the same meaning. The Latin, *tento*, which probably led to the use of "to tempt," as the English rendering, means to "examine by the touch," in medical language "to examine with a probe," "to try or put to the test," and this is exactly the meaning of the word here. God did not tempt Abraham in the sense in which the tempter tempts men to commit sin, but he put his faith to a test or trial out of which he came triumphant. Just so St. Peter speaks of the manifold temptations of Christians, sent to them that the trial of their faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. i. 6; 7), where the Latin words are *tentationes* and *probatio*.

Here, too, we learn by the way a very important lesson of human life, and specially of Christian life, that it is not enough that virtues and graces exist as it were in embryo in the heart, but they must be brought into actual existence by

the contact of difficulties and opposition. Faith must be put to the proof by contact with things provocative of doubt and unbelief; patience must be put to the proof by having to suffer long; charity must meet with unkindness, enmity, and injury, and still maintain its loving aspect; courage must be tested by its actual contact with danger; and generally virtue must reveal itself by the trampling under foot of vice. For so the Lord Jesus learned obedience by the things which He suffered (Heb. v. 9). So are the manifold Christian virtues strengthened and perfected by use; so is God glorified in His faithful servants; so is the Church edified, and the world converted, by the spectacle of a fruitful faith bringing forth under adverse circumstances the fruits of truth and goodness. So are the suffering saints laying up for themselves a harvest of praise and honour and glory, at the great judgment day of Christ.

We may also observe that the command to offer his son as a burnt-offering to God would not appear so strange to Abraham as it would to us. In Abraham's time human sacrifice was probably already in vogue in Phœnicia and Syria, as we see it later in the worship of Moloch, in the offering of Jephtha's daughter, in the sacrifice of the King of Moab's eldest son (2 Kings iii. 27), in the allusion in Micah vi. 7. We need to be continually reminded that we must not overlook the difference in morals, manners, and opinions between the nineteenth century B.C. and the nineteenth century A.D., if we would form a right judgment of things contained in Holy Scripture.

The name "Moriah" occurs only once more in Scripture, viz., in 2 Chron. iii. 1, where we are told that Solomon built the temple of the Lord on "Mount Moriah." It seems probable that the typical sacrifice of Isaac was offered up on the very hill where afterwards the altar of the Lord stood, and on which Jesus Christ was crucified and rose again from the dead. Some writers, but with far less probability, identify it with "the plain of Moreh" (Gen. xii. 6), and think Mount Gerizim was the scene of Isaac's sacrifice. The distance from Beersheba is too great.

The chapter closes with a genealogical notice of Nahor, Abraham's brother, the object of which is to introduce Rebekah, Isaac's future wife.

Chap. xxiii. brings us to the death of Sarah, at the age of 129 years, thirty-seven years after the birth of Isaac ("Speaker's Commentary"), where we may note the continued longevity of the human race. Sarah died at Kirjath-arba, the city of Arba, otherwise Hebron, one of the oldest cities in the world, having been built seven years before Zoar in Egypt (Num. xiii. 22), *i.e.*, probably before B.C. 2000. It is doubtful whether Hebron or Kirjath-arba is the original name. In the time of the occupation of Canaan by the Israelites, it was possessed by the sons of Anak, and called Kirjath-arba, from "Arba the father of Anak" (Josh. xv. 13; xiv. 13-15). But there are some, though not decisive, reasons for thinking that Hebron was the earlier name. The burial of Sarah brings before us a singularly interesting scene in the negotiations between Abraham and the sons of Heth for a burial-ground. We have already noticed that Abraham during his long sojourn of some sixty years in Canaan, had not acquired so much land as to set his foot on. But now that Sarah was dead a place of burial which should be his own property became a necessity. Accordingly, in an assembly duly convened of that branch of the Hittites who had possession of Hebron, Abraham stood up, and, with much dignity and courtesy combined, stated his case to the children of the land. His request was that Ephron the Hittite, the owner of the field in which the cave of Machpelah was situated, should hand over to him the possession of the cave at a full valuation. With no less courtesy Ephron replied, and, after the usual oriental compliments, Ephron's field, with the cave, and all the timber in the field, was made over to Abraham for a possession for 400 shekels of silver, and the bargain was ratified by the consent of all the citizens, in the gate of the city assembled; and then Abraham buried his wife in the cave of Machpelah, where her body rests to this very day. There, too, Abraham himself was buried (Gen.

xxv. 9, 10); there too Isaac and Rebekah; there Jacob buried Leah; and there finally Jacob himself was laid in obedience to his dying charge (Gen. xlix. 29-32; l. 12, 13). This wonderful burial-place is held in the highest reverence by Mussulmen at the present day—the whole enclosure is considered holy ground; no Christian is allowed to enter it; but by a special Firman the Prince of Wales was allowed to do so accompanied by Dean Stanley, who has left a most interesting account of the visit in his "Sermons in the East." Surely there is not another such sepulchre in the world as that which contains the remains of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is interesting to observe further one or two other characteristic features in the foregoing narrative. First we see the profound respect which Abraham's character and mode of life had inspired among these Hittites. "Hear us, my Lord," they say, "thou art a mighty prince among us. In the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead." Then we see the institution of property in land already existing. The field in question with the cave and the trees are Ephron's, and he receives the price of them. But the consent of all the freemen of the city seems to have been necessary to make the sale valid, and the possession sure. Again we see the existence of a class of merchants or traders, men who travelled from place to place with their divers wares, their moving shops, carried probably by asses or camels, and whose trade had led to a further step in civilisation, the use of silver as the medium of exchange. But the language used (ver. 16) shows that the silver was not yet coined. The shekel was a weight, and the payment was made by weight. These merchants were mostly Canaanites, and this led to "Canaanite" being used to mean a merchant (Isa. xxiii. 2; Job xli. 6, &c.), somewhat as our English "milliner" is derived from "Milan," from whence the milliners of London came.

CHAPS. XXIV.—XXV. 10.—ISAAC'S MARRIAGE.

This section brings us to the close of Abraham's life. Its last important act is a signal display of the Providence of God, and of Abraham's pious sense of the high mission entrusted to him, of preserving in the world through successive ages the knowledge of the One True and Living God. The wisdom of God foresaw that the only effective means of doing this, was the separation from the rest of the world of one people to whom should be entrusted this mission; and that the only way of keeping such people separate, was by securing their marriages with women of a sound faith. Hence Abraham's care, as he felt his own end approaching, that Isaac, his heir according to promise, should not marry a Hittite, or any other of the daughters of the land, but one in whom heathen idolatries had not corrupted the heart, and stolen it away from God. Hence the beautiful scene, the description of which fills up the whole of this xxivth chapter: a scene full of pathos, full of the best and purest sentiments of human nature; full too of the mind and hand of God working all things after the counsel of His own will; interesting merely as a vivid picture of life and manners in the eighteenth century before Christ, unspeakably so when we recollect that religion was powerfully affected through eighteen centuries by what Abraham then did, and that we are benefited by it to this very day.

We see, then, Abraham's wise and pious care for his children and household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment (Gen. xviii. 19), in this, that Isaac should not take a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites. He therefore sent his most trusted servant, perhaps Eliezer of Damascus, if he was still alive, with a retinue of camels and attendants, and costly gifts, to his own native country of Mesopotamia, to Charran (chaps. xxix. 4; xxvii. 43), the city of his brother Nahor, where Bethuel, Nahor's son, was still living with a son and daughter, Laban

and Rebekah. He was to ask Rebekah in marriage for Isaac, but only on this condition, that Rebekah came with him to the land of Canaan. Isaac was on no account to return to Mesopotamia. How faithfully and skilfully his servant fulfilled his task, how providentially he met the damsel at the well, how Laban's covetous heart was influenced by the sight of the rich gifts, and how Rebekah, with her nurse Deborah, and her attendant damsels, riding on camels, followed Abraham's servant; with all the graphic touches of oriental pastoral life, the slow journey, the cavalcade of camels, the rendezvous at the well, the many attendants, the camels kneeling for watering, the free hospitality, the rich presents, the women veiling themselves, the trusty nurse, and so on; how they met Isaac near the well Lahai-Roi, where, doubtless, he had been feeding his flocks and herds, and how Isaac brought her to his mother's tent—the chief woman's tent of the settlement—no doubt at Beersheba, which was not far off; all this is best read in this truly beautiful chapter, with its piety and truthful simplicity.

But it has also grave moral lessons which we must not lose sight of in our admiration of the charms and skill of the narrative. And, first, we have Abraham's careful, far-seeing forethought set before us as a model for us to copy in all the affairs of life. Here was no indifference for the interests of religion after his death; no leaving it to chance, whether his son married a godly or an ungodly woman. He could be courteous, and give due honour to his Hittite neighbours, and deal with them like a high-bred gentleman in the affairs of this world; but he was not blind to their heathenish opinions and their ungodly ways, and would not on any account that his son should contract a marriage with them, and took steps accordingly. We see, too, how he treasured God's promises to him in his heart, and was influenced by them in all his conduct. In all this, Abraham is a model to rich and poor in this nineteenth century, and in our highly civilised England.

Then note the admirable fidelity and inflexible integrity of Abraham's servant. Note, too, the single-eyed fixity of

purpose which marks his whole conduct. Not a trace of vacillation, not a spark of self-indulgence (vers. 33, 56), or weak compliance with persuasions from without. We see throughout the upright mind, the steady devotion to duty of a good man. But we see something more than this. We see the source of this strength of purpose. The foundation was laid in prayer. When at the well he had prayed to the God of Abraham, "O Lord, send me good speed this day" (ver. 12), and in the happy circumstances which had brought Rebekah to his encounter, he had recognised the Hand of God moving in answer to his prayer, and had worshipped and given thanks (vers. 26, 29). And so now, when pressed to stay a few days after his long journey, his purpose was steadfast. "Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master" (ver. 56), and so "the servant took Rebekah, and went his way" (ver. 61).

And so, after the few months occupied by the journey to and fro, Abraham's purpose was accomplished, and he saw his son Isaac happily united to a virtuous and godly woman. "Keep us, we beseech Thee, under the protection of Thy good Providence" (Collect for Second Sunday after Trinity), is the prayer suggested by this signal exhibition of the providential disposition of events.

And now (chap. xxv. 1-10) we are brought to the close of a great life, perhaps as great a one as has ever been lived by any child of Adam. It was a life lived in uncivilised times, times on which the light of history has not shone, except that full light shed upon them by the Bible. Abraham's time was spent among flocks and herds. He lived a nomad life in tents, amidst constant wanderings in deserts, far from cities and the busy haunts of men; and yet he has left an impression upon the whole civilised world deeper than that of the Alexanders and Cæsars, and a name equal to that of the very chiefest of earth's worthies. The secret of his life was a steadfast faith in God, leading to a life of unwavering obedience, according to his light; a life which commanded alike the devoted love of his household, and

the deep respect of the heathen nations, amongst whom he lived ; and we may add, the frequent mention of his name with praise by Christ our Lord, when He sojourned among men.

The statement of Abraham's burial by Isaac and Ishmael, by the side of Sarah in the cave of Machpelah, at the good old age of 175 years, closes this eventful record.

CHAPS. XXV. 11-XXVI. 33.—HISTORY OF ISAAC.

The central figure of the history is now Isaac, but the central idea still is the preservation of a pure race, and through the purity of the race to preserve and keep alive the pure faith of one living and true God, the Creator of heaven and earth. Isaac does not seem to have been a man of as much strength of character as his father ; but still he was a godly man, and we are told that God blessed him. To him, too, God renewed the promises he had made to his father Abraham, the promise of the possession of Canaan ; the promise of a seed as numerous as the stars of heaven ; the promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed (xxvi. 3, 4). Promises, it need not be added, which have been abundantly fulfilled.

The events of Isaac's life are far less interesting than those of Abraham's. There is the usual strife about the wells with Abimelech, King of Gerar ; the usual wanderings in search of pasture, or under pressure of famine ; the usual distrust of the people of the land ; the usual cunning and dissimulation to avoid danger. But no great events befall in his life-time. The birth of his twin sons Esau and Jacob is an important incident in the family history, and the coming events cast their shadows before them in the circumstances of the birth (xxv. 24-26), and in the transactions of their youth, when Esau sold his birthright to his younger brother for a mess of red pottage (29-34). These both were recorded in their names, *Jacob*, the supplanter, and *Edom*, red. Esau means "hairy."

CHAPS. XXVI. 34-XXVIII. 9.

The central idea of the history of Abraham's family now comes fully to the front, and the narrative gives us a most instructive picture of the manner in which God's purposes are worked out in this evil world. It shows us how good men and bad men, good actions and bad actions, intentional and unintentional conduct, all work together in the most wonderful way to bring about "the determinate counsel of God;" and how the various agents in the drama of this life are unconsciously doing what the hand and counsel of God determined before to be done. And yet their wills were free.

This part of the story begins by the marriage of Esau to two Hittite wives, Judith and Bashemath, the daughters apparently of two Hittite chieftains, whose heathenish ways were a source of constant grief and sorrow to both Isaac and Rebekah (xxvi. 35; xxviii. 8). And here we notice at once Esau's character, which comes out in every action of his life. From his early youth he could not bear the quiet innocent life of a feeder of sheep and cattle, but chose the wild unrestrained life of the hunter, without home ties, and living in the field. Manly, generous, thoughtless, impulsive, probably brave, he had evidently many qualities which would make him attractive and liked by his friends; but he was absolutely without religious feelings, absolutely without any sense of his position as heir of Abraham's blessing, or any value of the spiritual blessings which belonged to him as such. We see this in the heedless, reckless way in which he sold his birthright for "a morsel of meat" (Heb. xii. 16); we see it in his marriage with "the daughters of Heth" (xxvii. 46). The flesh first, the spirit, if at all, second. Excitement, pleasure, sensual gratification uppermost—the things of God, and of Eternity, left to come in where they can, or left out altogether. Esau is a sad, but most instructive example of great gifts wasted, great opportunities irrecoverably lost (Heb. xii. 17); and qualities, good in themselves, rendered worse than useless to their possessor,

by not being accompanied by the higher qualities which should have tempered and dominated them. If things had depended upon Esau, the whole scheme for the preservation in the world of the knowledge of God by means of Abraham's descendants, would have perished and come to nought. The history of the Edomites is a fitting sequel to the life of their ancestor.

But to follow up the progress of events. The well-known scene of the blessing comes next. Isaac being old, probably sick, and nearly blind with age (xxvii. 1), thinks the time is come when it is prudent for him to ensure the giving of his blessing to his eldest and favourite son (xxv. 8), just as now, under like circumstances, a man would think it prudent to make his will; and so he bid Esau take his bow and arrow and go out into the field, and bring him some venison, that he might eat it and give him his blessing before he died. Rebekah heard it. She was probably aware that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob, and so thought that Jacob was entitled to the blessing, and as he was her favourite son she could not bear the idea of his being deprived of it. And so with a woman's ready wit, but with an unscrupulous guile, which we cannot but condemn in the fuller light of Christ's teaching (John i. 47), she planned the stratagem by which Isaac was deceived, and Jacob received his father's prophetic blessing, which could not be recalled. And now mark the chain of consequences. Isaac's weaker character had not provided for his son's marriage with a God-fearing woman, as Abraham had for his; and perhaps Rebekah, with a mother's fond love for a dutiful and favourite child, would hardly have had the resolution to send Jacob on a long and dangerous journey. It might have ended, therefore, in his finding a wife among the natives of the land, as his brother had done. But now the success of her scheme, for securing the blessing for Jacob, had brought a great and pressing danger to her door. Esau's bitter wrath and resentment at his brother's treachery had stirred up in his impulsive and unrestrained nature a violent hatred and thirst for revenge (xxvii. 41), which put Jacob's very life in imminent danger.

She must find some excuse for sending him away, and one readily suggested itself, which was likely to influence Isaac (xxvi. 35 ; xxviii. 8) and obtain his consent. Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth ; if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me ?" and the plea succeeded. "Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father, and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother." "So Isaac sent away Jacob, and he went to Padan-aram, unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother" (xxvii. 43, 46 ; xxviii. 1, 2, 5).

How wonderfully then hitherto has God's purpose been worked out. Esau's worldly imprudence in his marriage, his carelessness in selling his birthright, the feud between the brothers on account of their father's blessing, Rebekah's deceit on behalf of her favourite son, Esau's violent temperament, all these in their natural action and interaction have brought about an essential link in the chain of God's Providential design for the salvation of mankind, viz., the separation of the race of Israel from the idolatrous races of mankind, by Jacob's removal to Padan-aram. And yet Canaan, from whence he went as a fugitive, was to be his eventual inheritance (xxviii. 3, 4), according to the promises to his father and his grandfather, and the same Providential interference which took him from Canaan would bring him back again, as the sequel of the history will show us.

Here practically ends the history of Isaac, whose death and burial by his sons Esau and Jacob, at the age of 180 years, is recorded in xxxv. 27-29. And we may notice that there is a marked historical agreement between this long silence about Isaac, and what we gather as to his character from the foregoing narrative. Though a godly man he does not seem to have been a man of commanding ability or strength of character.

CHAPS. XXVIII. 10—XXXIII. 20.—THE HISTORY OF JACOB.

The sacred narrative is now concentrated on the eventful career of Jacob, hereafter to be called Israel, and to give his name to the great Israelite people, and to the elect Israel of God. We shall have to contemplate him in a double light. As God's elect servant, the heir of God's most gracious promises, the instrument and channel of conveying God's mercies to a ruined world, and the type of God's children, living as strangers and pilgrims in this present life. But we shall also have to mark his natural character, his faults and their temporal consequences, some of the incidents of his life, some of the graphic touches which mark the historical character of the narrative, and distinguish the true representation of men and manners in the sixteenth century before Christ, from an ideal picture of what we, in the nineteenth century after Christ, think men and manners ought to be. The section now under review embraces the time from Jacob's departure from Beer-sheba (xxviii. 10), where, it seems, Isaac's tent was pitched at that time (comp. xxvi. 23-25), till his return to the land of Canaan, when he pitched his tent in what was afterwards called Samaria—a period thought to be about 40 years ("Speaker's Commentary," note on ch. xxxi. 41), though it must be confessed that the text of Gen. xxxi. 38, 41 seems to make it only about 20 years.

In some respects the story of Jacob's journey is like that of Eliezer's, to seek a wife for his father Isaac; the meeting Rachel at the well; the courteous removal of the stone from the well's mouth, and the welcome given to him in Laban's house, are features similar to those recorded about Isaac. They belong to the simple pastoral life. But in many points there is a marked individuality in Jacob's case. Isaac's ambassador, the chief officer of his father's household, travelled with a retinue of men and camels, and carried costly gifts in his hands. Jacob went forth a lonely and destitute fugitive; "with my staff I passed over this Jordan," was his own description of his solitary pilgrimage. (Gen. xxxii. 10),

and his low estate. And how striking are the preliminaries of the journey. The poor wanderer on his way to Haran, coming as far as Bethel and passing the night there in the open air with a stone for his pillow! But what compensated for the bodily hardship, in the heavenly visions of that night! The stair of approach to the very presence of God, the attendance of the ministering angels ascending and descending between himself and the Lord God Almighty. The gracious recognition of him as the son of Isaac and Abraham, though he was an outcast from his father's house; the promise made on the eve of his quitting his native land, "the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The loving promise, so fast and sure, "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee nor forsake thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (xxviii. 11-15). With such heavenly comforts as these, such appearances of the loving care and inexhaustible grace of his heavenly father, all earthly sorrows, labours, trials, difficulties, must have melted away, and the weak dejected wanderer must have felt strong and joyful in the Lord, and in the power of His might. His vow (xxviii. 16-22) shows how deeply he was moved.

Well! and in the strength of this vision Jacob started on his wearisome journey. No details of it are given us, only that in due time "he came into the land of the people of the East," *i.e.*, of Mesopotamia, which lay east of Palestine. This phrase, which in later times designated Arabia, seems to mark the great antiquity of this narrative, when the kindred of the two branches of Terah's family, Nahor and Abraham, the Eastern and the Western, was still fresh in the minds of men. As regards the scene at the well (xxix. 2-10), it has been inferred that the well was Laban's property, and that the stone which covered the mouth of it could only be removed by one of his shepherds. Accordingly, as ver. 3 explains it, the custom was for the flocks of

the different flock owners to be gathered together round the well, and then for the stone to be rolled away till all the flocks were watered, and then to be replaced. But, as the narrative shows, the stone might not be rolled away till Laban's flock came, and had been first watered (vers. 8, 10). So Jacob, instead of leaving the stone to be rolled away by one of the shepherds, rolled it away himself for Rachel, and then watered her flock. The narrative goes on to relate the recognition of Jacob by Laban as his sister Rebekah's son, his nephew, but called in vers. 12 and 15 his brother, *i.e.*, his near kinsman, just as Lot is called Abraham's brother (Gen. xiv. 16). Jacob's engagement to serve Laban as his flock-master for seven years, on condition of receiving Rachel as his wife. Laban's treachery in substituting Leah for her sister, an act of deceit made easy by the custom of the bride being veiled from head to foot (comp. Gen. xxiv. 65), the subsequent gift of Rachel to be a second wife—of Bilhah and Zilpah to be his concubines—the successive birth of his children in the following order:—Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, the sons of Leah; Dan and Naphtali, the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Gad and Asher, the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Issachar and Zebulon, Leah's fifth and sixth sons, Dinah her daughter; and Joseph, Rachel's first-born child, born at the close of Jacob's second term of seven years' service. It is further related how Jacob after the birth of Joseph expressed the wish to return to his own home in Canaan, but agreed eventually to serve Laban for seven years longer, on condition that all the spotted and speckled goats, and all the brown sheep, should be his, and the rest of the sheep and goats should be Laban's; how Jacob by stratagem sought to improve his bargain, how his flocks increased exceedingly, and he became very wealthy in cattle, *i.e.*, sheep and goats, and in maid-servants, and men-servants, and camels and asses; how Laban and his sons became enemies of Jacob's prosperity, how Laban tried in vain to check and hinder it, and how at length he became estranged from both Jacob and his daughters; how Jacob determined upon flight with his wives and children and all his posses-

sions, and seized the opportunity of Laban's absence at his sheep-shearing to effect his purpose; how Laban pursued after him and overtook him on the seventh day in the hill country of Gilead, but being warned of God in a dream not to hurt Jacob, after a friendly parley and mutual remonstrances and explanations, made a covenant of peace with him over a heap of stones which was called in Hebrew **Gilead**, but in Chaldee, **Jegar-sahaduthaen**, *i.e.*, Heap of witness—the heap of stones which was witness to the covenant of peace made by Jacob and Laban toward each other (cf. Josh. xxiv. 27). All this is told at length in chaps. xxix.—xxxi. And then after a solemn sacrifice upon the mount, and a feast which Jacob gave to Laban and all his party, they parted early the next morning. Laban kissed his children and grandchildren and blessed them, and returned to Aram-Naharum, Aram of the two rivers, or Mesopotamia, his own place.

But Jacob's dangers were not yet over. The encounter with his brother Esau was still to come. He had parted with him in great anger for the wrong which he had done him. Twice had he tricked him, when he made him sell his birthright and when he robbed him of his father's blessing. He knew of his brother's purpose to take his revenge by killing him, as soon as his father was dead. What if he should now execute his purpose, and not content with taking his life should wreak his vengeance upon his wives and children also. What was to be done?

The history which follows, like that which proceeds, gives a graphic view of Jacob's double personality, of which we spoke before: as a servant of God, and as a man of a marked natural character, with the faults of that character intensified by the atmosphere of the age of the world in which he lived. We ourselves are hardly aware, perhaps, how large a portion of our own moral conduct is influenced by the force of circumstances. Christianity, with its high code of morals, is all around us. We have the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We have the ordinances of religion, Churches, Common Prayer, Sacraments, Sundays. Law

reigns all about us, and we depend upon its sway for our safety, our comfort, and our property. Public opinion fences us round, and supports the dictates of conscience. The example of those that are most respected in our society is a further help to us. And under these influences a Christian man to-day is what he is, and would be inexcusable were he otherwise. It was very different in the age and in the country in which Jacob's lot was cast. A solitary worshipper of God, surrounded by idolatry and superstition; living with no settled government, no protection of law and social institutions, he had to take care of himself and his belongings as best he might. Had his natural disposition been that of his brother Esau, his sword and armed followers would have been his resource. But his natural disposition was gentle and quiet. The arms with which he sought to defend himself against the unscrupulous world around him, were those of caution, craft, and cunning. He had a real faith and trust in God, he was a man of prayer, and reverence for God, and dependence upon Him (xxviii. 16-22; xxx. 2; xxxi. 42; xxxii. 9-12; xxxv. 24-30), but he thought to be doing his part in the drama of life by stratagem and artful contrivances. Thus he dealt subtilly with his brother Esau in the matter of the birthright and the blessing; he dealt subtilly with Laban in his contrivances for multiplying the portion of the flock which was to fall to his share (xxx. 37-42); and now in the supreme danger of meeting his brother Esau on his return to Canaan, he shows consummate skill and suppleness of disposition.

His first step when he had come as far as Mahanaim—in what was afterwards the tribe of Gad—was to send a humble message to his brother, who seems already to have taken possession of the land of Seir (xxxii. 3; xxxiii. 14, 16), to inform him of his return from Laban. But when the answer came that his brother was coming to meet him, at the head of 400 men, he was greatly afraid and distressed, and had no doubt that Esau was come to smite him and his whole family, so he made his dispositions accordingly. He first divided his whole party of men and cattle into two bands,

so that if one was smitten, the other might escape. He then betook himself to earnest prayer for God's protection, and pleaded God's promises to him. His next step was to select a rich lot of cattle of all kinds, as a present to Esau, with which to appease him and secure his favour—200 she-goats and 200 ewes, with 20 he-goats and 20 rams, 30 camels with their colts, 40 cows and ten bulls, and twenty she-asses with their foals. These were divided into several droves, which were to meet Esau in succession, and the drovers, when they met Esau, were each to say to him, "These be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present unto my lord Esau; and, behold, he also is behind us." Then followed the eventful night, and the vision at Penuel; and the next morning, having divided his wives and children into three bands, the handmaids and their children first, Leah and her children next, and the beloved Rachel and Joseph last, as being the safest place, he went on before them and saw Esau and his 400 men coming to meet him. What a moment of terrible suspense! His life, his family, his property all was at stake, all dependent upon his brother's mood. Was he come to meet him as a brother, or as a deadly foe? Had his gifts pacified his brother's anger (Prov. xxi. 14), or was the stifled revenge of twenty years about to burst with destruction upon his head? Still more important, had God heard his prayer? unworthy as he was of the least of God's mercies, would God indeed deliver him from his brother's hand? The answer came in a moment. Esau ran forward and fell on his brother's neck, and kissed him, and they both wept, sweet tears of reconciliation and love. We need not linger here upon the details of the rest of the story, told in the sacred page with such truthful simplicity. But let not the great lesson be lost, the power of prayer. Who can doubt that it was God who turned Esau's heart, and thus covered Jacob's head in that hour of peril. Jacob's earnest supplication had entered the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Esau's kiss of peace, and acceptance of his brother's gifts, was the answer.

The closing verses of chap. xxxiii. bring Jacob on his

journey from Succoth, east of Jordan, to Shalem* in the land of Canaan, to what was afterwards Samaria. Here he pitched his tent, and appears to have contemplated a long residence there, for he acquired by purchase, as a camping-place for his tents, a parcel of ground which he bought at the hand of Hamor the Hivite, the father of Shechem, for one hundred keshitas.† And here too he built an altar to "God, the God of Israel," with evident allusion to the name which he had received when he wrestled with the angel (xxxii. 28).

It is to this purchase that St. Stephen alludes in his speech in Acts vii. 15, 16, where by some accident Abraham's name is wrongly introduced as the purchaser. Here it was that the bones of Joseph were buried as we read in Josh. xxiv. 32, and it became the inheritance of the sons of Joseph (see John iv. 5). It is doubtless to this land that Jacob also alludes in his blessing of the sons of Joseph in Gen. xlviii. 22, though nothing is recorded of the battle with the Amorites. One can only guess that the Amorites seized the land which Jacob had paid for, after the slaughter of Hamar and Shechem, and that Jacob recovered it by force. Jacob's well mentioned in John iv. 6 was obviously dug by Jacob at this time.

However, our history has now brought Jacob back to the land of Canaan, from whence he fled either twenty or forty years before. The perils of the double journey have been overcome. The danger that the comforts of home in Mesopotamia might estrange him from Canaan have been frustrated by Laban's covetousness and unkindness. His brother Esau's resentment has been most wonderfully turned into kindness and affection. He himself, from being a lonely penniless

* There is some doubt whether "Shalem" here is the name of Shechem's city, or whether it ought to be taken as an adjective agreeing with Jacob, and meaning "in health" or "in peace." The Hebrew seems to favour "Shalem" as the A.V. takes it, following the LXX., Vulgate and Syriac.

† A coin, or weight, of unknown value, translated "silver" in Josh. xxiv. 32, where this purchase is referred to.

wanderer, not knowing where to look for bread to eat or raiment to put on (xxviii.), is become a great and wealthy man with wives and children, and men-servants and maid-servants, and herds and flocks, and asses and camels, and is settled in the land which God promised to Abraham and to his seed for a possession. But far above these earthly blessings were the tokens of God's favour which he had received. His father's prophetic blessing (xxvii. 28, 29), the glorious vision of God and His ministering angels, the rich promises of divine love and care (xxviii. 13-15), and the repeated appearances and comfortable words of God (xxxi. 3, 11-13; xxxii. 1, 2, 24-30). These were indeed acts of grace of unspeakable comfort and support to this poor pilgrim in an unkind and uncongenial world. They were to him, they are to us, they will be to all men to the end of the world, most blessed proofs of the love and faithfulness of Almighty God. Blessed be His Holy Name!

It is a matter of some surprise that Jacob did not hasten to his father Isaac immediately on his return to Canaan, especially as it seems at first sight from xxxii. 3 and xxxiii. 16 that Esau was already settled in Seir. But a closer observation offers a probable explanation. First it appears from Gen. xxxvi. 6, 7 that although Esau had acquired land in Seir and went there occasionally, yet he had not moved his family and household and possessions, but was still dwelling with or near his father in the neighbourhood of Hebron and Beer-sheba. Jacob, therefore, with his usual caution, would hesitate to run the risk of collision with his brother. There are indications, too, that Rebekah his mother was dead. We learn from Gen. xlix. 31 that she was buried in the cave of Machpelah, and if this had taken place after Jacob's return he would surely have been sent for, and in all probability the burial would have been mentioned as Isaac's is (xxxv. 29). But besides this we learn incidentally from Gen. xxxv. 8 that Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, was living with Jacob and died at Bethel. We may conclude pretty certainly from this that Rebekah was dead. If so Esau would probably be supreme with his

heathenish wives, and Jacob may well have preferred to remain at a distance. Of course, however, he may have paid visits to his father of which the history contains no notice. The history is also silent as to the circumstances under which Jacob eventually came to Hebron to settle there (xxxv. 27), and Esau removed with his whole family to Seir as his permanent abode (xxxvi. 6, 7).

CHAPS. XXXIV.—XXXVI.—JACOB IN CANAAN.

These chapters carry on the history of Jacob from the time of his return to Canaan to the commencement of the history of Joseph—a period of perhaps some ten years—since Joseph was seventeen years old when his history commences (xxxvii. 2), and he was born six years before Jacob left Mesopotamia to return to Canaan (xxx. 25 ; xxxi. 41). He settled first, as we have seen, at Shalem, in the country afterwards called Samaria. And here a new danger arose in the proposal of the Hivites, after the lamentable dishonour done to Dinah, Jacob's daughter, to make a treaty of peace and friendship with Jacob, by which intermarriages should take place between their sons and daughters, and they should possess the land in common, to dwell and trade in. Shechem, the son of Hamor, the prince of the Hivites, was to take Dinah for his wife, and to pay for her any dowry which her father and brothers chose to ask. Had this agreement taken place, Israel's future glory would have been nipped in the bud. The seed of Abraham would have been merged in the abominable races of Canaan, and God's gracious purpose for keeping a light of truth through the darkest ages of this dark world would have been utterly defeated. But it was frustrated by the treachery and ferocious cruelty of two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who, burning with wrath at the insult done to their own uterine sister, Dinah, went into the city, sword in hand, at a time when the men were disabled, slew Hamor and Shechem and all the males, took the women and children

captive, with all the spoil they could lay their hands upon, and brought Dinah out of Shechem's house. The result of this atrocious deed was that Jacob was obliged to retreat to Luz or Bethel, where he had had the vision of the angels on his outward journey, when he fled from his brother Esau (xxviii. 11-19). On his arrival there he built an altar to God, and called it the altar of God, the God of Bethel, in memory of his vision. Here God appeared to him again and renewed all His former promises, and confirmed the change of his name to Israel. Here Jacob erected a memorial pillar, and poured wine and oil upon it, and renamed the place Bethel, the House of God, the name which it retained in all subsequent times. While at Bethel, Deborah died (xxxv. 8). Jacob does not appear to have stayed very long at Bethel. It was too near to the city of Shechem to be safe. For, as he expressed it, the deed of Simeon and Levi had made him to stink among the Canaanites and Perizzites, and there was a danger lest they should gather themselves together against him, and destroy him and his house. He seems, therefore, to have determined to move southwards and join his father at Hebron. He would be further removed from the northern tribes where the slaughter of the Hivites had taken place, and would have another element of safety in increased numbers (xxxiv. 30), when he had joined his father and Esau, should any hostile movement of the Canaanites take place.

Accordingly, he continued to move south with the slow, leisurely movement of a nomad chief, journeying with all his flocks and herds. He had got almost as far as Ephrath, afterwards called Beth-lehem, or Bethlehem Ephratah (Mic. v. 2), or Bethlehem of Judæa (Matt. ii. 1-6), when Rachel died in childbirth, and Jacob's youngest son Benjamin was born. The tragic circumstances of Benjamin's birth, and his being Jacob's youngest child, fully explain that fondness for him which comes out so touchingly in the succeeding history. Rachel's sepulchre is mentioned (1 Sam. x. 2) as still well-known. Jacob's next halting-place is described as being beyond "the tower of Edar" or "of the flock."

The tower of Edar is only mentioned elsewhere in Mic. iv. 8, apparently in connection with Bethlehem, Mic. v. 1. Dean Payne Smith says that here Jacob was within two easy days' march from Hebron, where we find him, xxxv. 27 (Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol's Commentary). The death of Isaac at the age of 180 years, and his burial in the cave of Machpelah by his sons Esau and Jacob, concludes this portion of Jacob's biography.

In reviewing the events of this period we are chiefly struck by the immutability of God's promise, and by His never-failing Providence, bringing about His own purposes by the most varied instrumentalities. The unkindness and grasping character of Laban, the impulsive generous disposition of Esau, the ungoverned ferocity of Simeon and Levi in avenging the dishonour done to their sister, the timidity of Jacob, and the danger of his position in Samaria, all work their natural effects. And the result is that Jacob finds himself with his eleven sons seated in the home which he had left twenty or forty years before—the home of Abraham and Isaac, in the land promised to him by the God of his fathers—and more estranged than ever from the Canaanite races which surrounded him, and with whom it was so important that he should form no alliance.

Another lesson again impressed upon us by the simple narrative of the events, is the terrible evil of polygamy. The jealousies and rivalries of Leah and Rachel, the addition of inferior wives or concubines, utterly destroying the dignity and right position of womankind, and breeding dissensions among the children of the same father; the crime of Reuben, and the general debasing of family feeling; all show the demoralising influence of polygamy, and stamp the primeval law of marriage as declared in Gen. ii. 24, and reenacted by our Lord (Matt. x. 6-8), as alone suited to secure the happiness of man, and the mission of woman, to be an help meet for man. The Christian precept, "Keep thyself pure," comes home to us with double power in the light of such events.

CHAP. XXXVI.

This chapter, which is an interruption to the history of Jacob and his family, carries its own credentials as to the antiquity of the history of which it forms a part. For these Edomitish and Horite genealogies, which were full of interest and importance at the time when they were drawn up, when the persons named in them, or their successors and descendants, were occupying the land spoken of, would necessarily cease to have any value, and therefore would not have been originated, in later times. The Horite genealogies in vers. 20-30, and the curious reference to the mules found in the wilderness by Anah the son of Zibeon, are special indications of the great antiquity of this record.

With regard to the list of Edomitish kings, vers. 31-39, who are said to have "reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel," it is manifest that it must have been drawn up, or rather that this description of it was prefixed, *after* the time when there were kings in Israel. And accordingly we find that it is a duplicate of the lists in 1 Chron. i. It is well worthy of remark also, that supposing the first king named (in ver. 32), Bela the son of Beor, to have been contemporary, as his name suggests, with Bala-am the son of Beor (Num. xxii. 5), and supposing Hadar (ver. 39), called Hadad* (1 Chron. i. 50, 51), to be the same person as "Hadad the Edomite, of the king's seed in Edom" (1 Kings. xi. 14), or perhaps rather as his father (ver. 17), then there are about the same number of generations from Bela to Hadad, viz., eight, as from Phineas to Ahitub, Zadok's father, eight (1 Chron. vi. 4-8), and from Nahshon, "Prince of the children of Judah" (1 Chron. ii. 10) at the Exodus, to David, viz., six; thus marking by undesigned coincidences the thorough veracity of the narrative. These genealogies would probably have been drawn up in the time of David.

* *r*, in Heb. **ר**, and *d*, **ד**, are constantly mistaken for each other in Hebrew MSS.

CHAPS. XXXVII.—XLV.—JACOB AT HEBRON.

These chapters embrace that eventful period of Jacob's, or Israel's life, which intervened between his final settlement at Hebron after Isaac's death, and his descent into Egypt with all his family. It comprises the touching story of Joseph, so full both of nature and romance, told with such beautiful simplicity, and giving such graphic views of the manners of the time—whether of the nomad shepherds feeding their flock, or of the travelling merchants trading with their Eastern spices, or of the court of the greatest monarch of those times. It gives, as usual, a faithful record, not of what ought to have been, but of what was; not of what Christian men would have done, but what men in a rude, uncivilised age, without the precepts either of the law or of the Gospel, and with the evil surroundings of a dark and corrupt world, actually did. It gives us at the same time some bright examples of true godliness which, with all our religious advantages, we can hardly exceed; and when we wonder how such piety could co-exist with such impurity of manners, or how God's signal favour and blessing could be extended to men whose practice in some points was so much below God's moral law, we are led to the reflection how thankful we ought to be that our own sins and shortcomings, living as we are in the full light of the Gospel of Christ, do not shut us out from the love of our Heavenly Father; and that, after all, our own deviations from the "perfect law" exhibited for our example in the life of our Saviour Jesus Christ, considered relatively to our more perfect knowledge—our deviations in temper, in self-will, in charity, in purity of thought, in self-consecration to the will of our Heavenly Father—may be more blamable in the sight of God than those acts of the Patriarchs done in ignorance, without any law to guide them, or any teacher to reprove them.

We will notice first a few detached features of the history.

1. We mark the growth of Israel's family, gradually becoming a nation. When Jacob went down into Egypt,

they amounted in all to seventy* souls (xlvi. 27). That was the nucleus of what was afterwards to become the people of Israel. They were a people utterly unlike any other people that has ever existed in the world : unlike in their origin, unlike in their history, unlike in their mission in the world, unlike in their literature, unlike in their calamities, unlike in the wonderful tenacity of their national life. Other races have founded mighty empires, or have been famous for their conquests and prowess in war ; some have been supreme in the domain of art and the refinements of life ; others again in science and mathematics. But Israel's mission was to preserve in the world through fifteen centuries, amidst the darkness of a corrupt and corrupting polytheism all around them, the knowledge of the one true and living God, the Creator and Governor of the universe ; and to hand down, for the enlightenment and happiness of mankind of every race and every age, those Holy Scriptures by which God has revealed Himself to mankind as "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Exod. xxxiv. 6). It is a matter of intense interest to follow the steps by which such a people was gradually formed under the guiding Providence of God, who destined them for such a task.

2. We notice that dreams are one channel by which God from time to time was pleased to communicate to men the knowledge of future things. Joseph received in dreams intimations of his future greatness (xxxvii. 6, 9). And Jacob was encouraged to go down to Egypt by visions in the night (xlvi. 2-4). The dreams of Pharaoh's servants in prison (xl. 9-19), and of Pharaoh himself (xli. 1-9), had most important results, as centuries after the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar, and of Daniel were the vehicles of momentous prophecy. So in the New Testament (Matt. i. 20, ii. 12, 13, 19 ; Act xvi. 9, &c.), divine communications are made by dreams and visions in the night.

3. The virtuous conduct of Joseph, a young man between

* Or seventy-five, according to the LXX. and Acts vii. 14.

the age of seventeen and thirty (xxxvii. 2 ; xli. 46), stands out with conspicuous beauty, as an example to young men of all time. A slave, far from home, in a foreign land, with no friendly monitor at hand, he is thrown into circumstances of the strongest temptation by a bad woman, his master's wife. With a sense of duty, which no solicitation could shake, his answer was, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God." As the immediate consequence of his integrity, he was thrown into prison. "His feet they hurt in the stocks ; the iron entered into his soul" (Ps. cv. 18). But nothing moved him. Conscience was supreme. To do right and suffer for it was better than to do wrong at any price. Because he believed in God, and trusted in Him. And he was not disappointed, as the history which follows shows. It is a noble example, which stands out all the more gloriously amidst the corrupt morals of the time.

There is a curious story on a papyrus known to have been in the possession of Seti II. of the 19th dynasty, before he came to the throne, and now in the British Museum, called "The Tale of the Two Brothers," in which some of the features of the history of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, as we read it in Genesis, are so exactly reproduced as to leave scarcely any doubt that the writer of the tale was acquainted with it.

Joseph's conduct to his brethren, which has sometimes been adversely criticised, was also eminently wise and beautiful, and showed an entire absence of oriental vindictiveness for a gross and cruel outrage. His object throughout was to awaken repentance in the breasts of his brethren, and he used his power only to do them good. His complete forgiveness of the wrong done him was worthy of a Christian, and his affection for his father and brothers, and especially his uterine brother Benjamin, are evidences of a heart unspoilt by the pleasures of a court and the possession of unbounded power. The whole narrative is one of singular beauty and pathos.

4. The duration of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt

is a question of some difficulty. The statements on which the calculation depends are the following :—

In Gen. xv. 13, the announcement to Abraham was, when read according to the stopping in the Hebrew text : “Thy seed shall be a stranger (or strangers) in a land that is not theirs, and they shall serve them, and they shall afflict them 400 years,” where the 400 years manifestly describes the time to be occupied by all the events spoken of in the verse. In other words, 400 years were to elapse from the time when God was making the promise to Abraham, or possibly from the birth of Isaac, Abraham’s seed, till the close of the Egyptian bondage at the Exodus.

And this understanding of the passage is confirmed by St. Paul, who, in his Epistle to the Galatians (Gal. iii. 17), says that the law was given 430 years after the covenant made by God with Abraham. Where he evidently alludes to the LXX. version of Exod. xii. 40, which runs thus : “Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in the land of Egypt, *and in the land of Canaan*, was 430 years.”

Again, the genealogies which span the space from the twelve Patriarchs to those descendants of theirs who were flourishing at the Exodus is decisively in favour of the 400 (or 430) years covering the whole time from the covenant with Abraham (or the birth of Isaac) to the Exodus. From Levi to Aaron and Moses are *four* generations (Exod. vi. 16–25). From Judah to Nahshon, captain of the tribe of Judah at the Exodus, are *six* generations (1 Chron. ii. 3–10 ; Num. i. 7). From Joseph to Elishama, captain of the tribe of Ephraim at the Exodus, are *six* generations (1 Chron. vii. 14–26 ; Num. i. 10 ; xxvi. 35–36). From Joseph to Zelophehad, who died in the wilderness, are *seven* generations (Num. xxvii. 3 ; xxxvi. 1–13). From Judah to Bezaleel, the artificer of the Tabernacle, are *seven* generations (Exod. xxxi. 2 ; 1 Chron. ii. 3–9, 18–20). Taking the generations as *seven*, and allowing forty years to a generation, we get 280 (40 × 7) as the time from the Patriarchs to the Exodus. Add to this 16 + 60 + 74 = 150 (from the covenant to the birth of Isaac ;

from the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob ; from the birth of Jacob to average birth of Patriarchs), and you get $280 + 150 = 430$ as the whole time, from the giving of the covenant, to the Exodus. You get the same result by adding Jacob's age, 130 years, at the time of his coming to Egypt (Gen. xlvii. 9), to the 76 years ($16 + 60$) which intervened between the covenant and Jacob's birth. For if you deduct 206 ($16 + 60 + 130$) from 430, the remainder, 224 years, gives the time of the sojourn in Egypt.

One other measure of the time between the descent of Jacob into Egypt and the Exodus is to be found in the increase of the Israelites from the 70, or, if we add their wives, 140, who came down to Egypt with Jacob, to the about 2,400,000 who went out of Egypt.* Now it is stated as an historical fact † that the actual rate of increase in the back settlements of North America was for the population to double itself every fifteen years, for several successive periods. At this rate 140 persons would increase to 2,293,760 in 210 years. Now if we take into account the repeated statements of the extraordinary increase of the Israelites (Exod. i. 7, 12, 20), and the alarm caused by it to the Egyptians (Exod. i. 9, 10), and consider also that their numbers may have been augmented in the course of 200 years by proselytes like Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenezite, and Heber the Kenite (Judg. i. 16 ; iv. 11), and that many of the Patriarchs had concubines of foreign birth, like Manasseh (1 Chron. vii. 14), we shall see that, far from being incredible, the increase suits the shorter period of about 220 years far better than the longer one of 430 years. One hundred and fifty persons, which is the number according to the LXX., doubling themselves every twenty years, would increase to 157,286,400 in 400 years.

In further confirmation of the above view that the sojourn

* 600,000 men capable of marching (Exod. xii. 39), multiplied by four, gives a whole population of 2,400,000.

† Rees' "Cyclopædia," article *Population*. It is there stated also that Sir William Petty thought it possible for a population to double itself in ten years.

of the Israelites in Egypt was only something over 200 years, it may be stated that Josephus, giving the commonly received interpretation in his day, says: "They left Egypt 430 years after our forefather Abraham came into Canaan, but 215 years only after Jacob removed into Egypt." The LXX. version of Exod. xii. 40, with which the Samaritan version agrees, is "The sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in the land of Egypt, *and in the land of Canaan*, was 430 years (see Birks, on the "Exodus of Israel").

5. The name of the Pharaoh who was reigning when Joseph was sold to Potiphar is still a matter of controversy, the decision of which perhaps requires more light from Egyptian monuments than we as yet possess. But great progress has been made during the last quarter of a century in fixing the name and date of the Pharaoh of the Exodus, and that of the Pharaoh of the persecution. It may now be affirmed with some confidence that Menephtah was the weak king from whom the Israelites under Moses broke away, about B.C. 1300, and that his father, the great Rameses II., was the Pharaoh of the oppression. The old chronology, which places the Exodus in the reign of Thothmes II., of the 18th dynasty, and which was advocated so lately as by Canon Cook in the "Speaker's Commentary," is now quite exploded. Going back 220 years from B.C. 1300, would bring us to B.C. 1520 as about the time of Jacob's descent into Egypt; and if we can ascertain what dynasty, and what king, were then in power in Egypt, we shall be able to clear up the present uncertainty.

The evidence which points irresistibly to the reign of Menephtah as the time of the Exodus, is the following. Menephtah was a weak sovereign, and the closing years of his reign are passed over in absolute silence in Egyptian monuments. The building of the treasure cities of Pithom and Raamses (or Rameses),* points strongly to the reign of

* There is no difference in Hebrew in these two forms, except in the pointing. The remains of these treasure-cities have been recently discovered, with proof that they were built in the reign of Rameses II.

Rameses, Menephthah's predecessor. The long reign of Rameses (67 years) exactly suits the long absence of Moses in Midian. The fear expressed in Exod. i. 10, and given as the ground of the oppression, that the Israelites might join the enemies of Egypt, exactly tallies with the fear of an invasion of the Hittites, which is known to have prevailed in the reign of Seti I. and his successor Rameses II. The genealogies in Holy Scripture, nine in number, which cover the time between the Exodus and David, are incompatible with the date of about B.C. 1500 for the Exodus, but agree perfectly with that of about B.C. 1300.

The subjoined table places the comparative history of the Israelites, and of Egypt, side by side, for the period from Joseph's rise to power to the Exodus :—

Years.		Years.
From Joseph's rise to power to his death (110-30)	80	Last kings of 18th dynasty 127
From death of Joseph to commencement of oppression, say	30	Two first kings of 19th dynasty, say 20
From commencement of oppression to birth of Moses, say	30	Rameses II 67
From birth of Moses to Exodus (Acts vii. 2, 3, 30)	80	Menephthah, say 6
	220	220

where it will be seen that some of the figures are conjectural, on both sides, but the principal ones are certain.

According to the above table Joseph came to Egypt early in the 18th dynasty, and not very long after the expulsion of the Hyksos, or shepherd kings, which agrees very well with Gen. xlvi. 24 ; but it is not safe to affirm this till we have more certain knowledge.

It should be added that amidst all the diversity of opinion as to particular events in the history of the Israelites, in connection with Egypt, there is great unanimity amongst all Egyptologists as to the perfect harmony of the Bible narrative with all that we know from Egyptian papyri, and monuments, and inscriptions, and from ancient historians, of

Egyptian manners, customs, language, and history. In no one instance does the Bible narrative state anything not in accordance with Egyptian life as made known to us by contemporary documents. In very many instances the coincidences are very remarkable, and these coincidences are continually increasing as our knowledge of ancient Egypt increases.

CHAP. XLVI.—L.—ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

These chapters bring us to that momentous period in the history of Israel—a period covering over 200 years—during which the descendants of Jacob, or Israel, dwelt in the land of Egypt. At first an inconsiderable colony of about 140 or 150 people, but probably with their men and women servants amounting to several hundreds, they increased into a nation with extraordinary rapidity. If our chronology is right, the recent ejection of the shepherds from the government of Egypt had prepared the way for the admission of the Israelites to the fertile land of Goshen.* The land of Goshen, otherwise called the land of Rameses (Gen. xlvii. 11), was a very fertile district in Lower Egypt, lying towards the frontier of south-western Palestine; it was separate from Egypt proper, and so kept the Israelites from too close intercourse with the Egyptians, and was conveniently placed for their arrival from Hebron, and for their flight when the time of the Exodus should come. The whole account of the arrival of Jacob and his family, and his reception by Pharaoh, is most interesting. It displays Joseph's wisdom as a statesman in suggesting Goshen, and disposing Pharaoh to accept it on account of the Israelites being "shepherds" (Gen. xlv. 10; xlvii. 32-34; xlvii. 1-6), as well as in his provision for the years of famine, and in concentrating the land in the possession of Pharaoh. The great advantage of their dwelling all together in Goshen was (1)

* Sir G. Wilkinson expresses a strong opinion that the prejudice against shepherds which existed at the time of Jacob's arrival "plainly shows that the invasion of the shepherds had happened previous to that event" (Egypt, vol. ii. p. 16).

the convenience of so fertile a district for their flocks and herds ; (2) its proximity to the land of Canaan ; (3) the facilities which it offered for the Israelites to keep together as a separate people, instead of being lost in the general population of Egypt, a matter essential to their future destiny. A few points demand a separate notice.

1. Observe the genealogical spirit of the Israelite race, which introduces genealogical statistics at every important epoch. Here chap. xlv. gives us the exact condition of Jacob's family at the time of their entrance into Egypt. Compare, *e.g.*, Gen. xxv., xxxv. 22-26, xxxvi ; Exod. vi. 14-27 ; Num. i., and the whole collection of genealogies in 1 Chron. The historical value of such genealogies, especially for purposes of chronology, is very great.

2. Observe how, amidst all the historical details of the temporal fortunes of Israel, the primary object, the fulfilment of God's covenant with Abraham, to give the land of Canaan to his seed, is never lost sight of. In Gen. xlv. 2-4 we read, "God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night . . . and said, I am God, the God of thy father : fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will make of thee a great nation . . . and I will also surely bring thee up again." And in Gen. xlvii. 29-31 we read that, when Israel's time drew nigh that he must die, he called Joseph and said unto him, "Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt : but I will lie with my fathers ; and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him." And accordingly, in chap. l., we are told that when Jacob was dead, Joseph obtained Pharaoh's permission to go up to the land of Canaan to bury his father, and that he and all his brethren, and his father's household, and the elders of Pharaoh's house, and the elders of the land of Egypt, "a very great company" of chariots and horsemen, went up into the land of Canaan, and "buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field, for a possession of a burying-place of Ephron the Hittite." And in like manner Joseph himself, when about to die, took

an oath of the children of Israel, that when God brought them up from Egypt unto the land which he sware to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they would bring up his bones with them. And he was embalmed, and put in a coffin. But when the Israelites came out of Egypt, they brought Joseph's bones with them (Exod. xiii. 19); and buried them in Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 32), apparently in the very parcel of ground which Jacob had bought of the children of Hamor, the father of Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 19; Acts. vii. 16). We have in these narratives a striking illustration of God's faithfulness to His promise, and of that faith and patience of His people, which issues surely in inheriting the promises (Heb. vi. 12).

3. Chap. xlviii. explains how it came to pass that Ephraim and Manasseh, Jacob's grandchildren, were put upon a par with his children, and made heads of tribes. When Joseph took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim (ver. 1), to Israel that they might receive their grandfather's blessing before he died, Israel said to him: "Thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born to thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee . . . are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine" (ver. 5). It is added that when they came up to Israel to receive his blessing, he laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, the younger son, and his left hand upon the head of Manasseh, the elder son. On Joseph's remonstrating and saying, "Not so, my father, for this is the first-born: put thy right hand on his head." Israel refused to change, saying, "I know it, my son, I know it; but his younger brother shall be greater than he;" and he added, "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh," and he set Ephraim before Manasseh. The future history of Israel confirmed the truth of this prophetic blessing in both these respects. Ephraim became the leading tribe under Joshua and afterwards. It is asserted in 1 Chron. v. 1 that "the birthright was given to the sons of Joseph," which seems to allude to the "double portion" (see Deut. xxi. 17).

4. Gen. xlix. is a remarkable chapter. It contains Jacob's prophetic blessing of each of the twelve tribes of Israel expressed

in the language and rhythm of poetry. The prophecy begins at ver. 2, when we detect at once the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. Its prophetic character is defined in ver. 1. With regard to the expression "the last day," it belongs mostly to prophecies, and especially those relating to the times of the Messiah. See Acts ii. 17; 1 Pet. i. 5, 20 (*ἐν ταῖς ἑσχάταις ἡμέραις; ἐν καιρῷ ἑσχάτῳ; ἐπ' ἑσχάτου τῶν χρόνων*). Heb. i. 1 (*ἐπ' ἑσχάτου τῶν ἡμέρων τούτων*). Comp. Num. xxiv. 14; Isa. ii. 2; Ezek. xxxviii. 16, &c. The most noteworthy features in the prophecy are the reprobation of Reuben for his incest with Bilhah, his father's concubine (Gen. xxxv. 22), for which he lost the birthright (1 Chron. v. 1.). It is remarkable that no man of note, either judge or prophet or warrior, is named as of the tribe of Reuben. The conduct of the tribe in the great struggle with Jabin, King of Canaan, is blamed by Deborah (Judg. v. 15, 16). Then the fierce cruelty and treachery of Simeon and Levi in the slaughter of Hamor and the men of Shechem, and the destruction of their cattle (Gen. xxxiv. 25-29), is mentioned with just severity, and the future inferiority of the two tribes in respect of territory is assigned as the providential penalty for that cruelty. Simeon had no distinct territory, but had cities and villages assigned to him within the borders of the portion of the children of Judah. And as to Levi, his sentence was turned into a blessing in reward for the zeal shown by the sons of Levi on occasion of the idolatrous apostasy of the Israelites, as related in Exod. xxxii. 26-29. Therefore, though Jacob's word "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel," was carried out in the letter, and "all the tribe of Levi had no part nor inheritance with Israel" (Deut. xviii. 1, 2; Josh. xiv. 3, 4; xxi. 3-41), but were scattered through the other tribes of Israel, yet this was turned rather to their honour, when it was said of them (Josh. xiii. 33; Num. xviii. 21, &c.), "The Lord God of Israel is their inheritance." The principal passages concerning the separation of the Levites for the service of the Tabernacle are Num. iii. iv.; Deut. x. 8, 9.

With regard to Gen. xlix. 6, it should be translated as in the R.V., "In their self-will they houghed the oxen," instead

of the A.V., "they digged down a wall." Not less remarkable is the blessing of Judah (vers. 8-12). From the time of David to the time of the captivity, Judah was the foremost tribe, pre-eminent among his father's children. As it is expressed (1 Chron. v. 2), "Judah prevailed above his brothers, and of him came the chief rulers." David, Solomon, and all the kings down to Zedekiah, were of the tribe of Judah. Zerubabel was the "Prince of Judah" (Ezra i. 8). And though in the following ages Judah sank into comparative obscurity, and quite lost the lead during the two centuries of the Assyrian supremacy—who were a priestly family of the course of Jehoiarib, and consequently of the tribe of Levi—yet during the whole period Jerusalem in the tribe of Judah was the civil and religious centre of the whole nation. And the prediction, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise . . . thy father's children shall bow down before thee," received its full and glorious accomplishment when the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham, was born King of the Jews at Bethlehem of Judah. Of Him it was said by the angel before His birth: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke i. 32, 33). Compare the prophecy of Balaam (Num. xxiv. 17-19). With regard to the name "Shiloh," which undoubtedly means "the Messiah," there are two chief interpretations, (1) deriving it from שָׁלֵם or שָׁלָה, gives the sense of the "Peaceable one," and so analogous to Solomon, and to "the Prince of Peace"; (2) the other reading it שָׁלוּ, *i.e.*, "He whose right it is," identical with Ezek. xxi. 29, except that here the short form שָׁלוּ is used instead of the full אִישֵׁר לוֹ of Ezekiel (see note in "Speaker's Commentary"). Other interpretations need not be mentioned. Of the blessing of Joseph (ver. 22-26) it may suffice to say that while some of the allusions are obscure, and the sentences difficult, yet it points clearly to the greatness of the double tribe of Ephraim and

Manasseh, which was the peculiar glory of Joseph, their progenitor, and perhaps to Joshua, the great leader after Moses, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, and who led the people into the possession of the promised land. See Heb. iv. 8, where "Jesus" is of course only the Greek form of "Joshua."

In ver. 24, some MSS., instead of "from thence is the shepherd, &c.," of which it is very hard to make sense, read "by the name of the shepherd, the Stone (or Rock) of Israel, even by the God of thy Father," &c., מִשֵּׁם instead of מִשָּׁם, the same consonants, only differently pointed. The same preposition בְּ, "by," governs "the hands," "the name," and "the God of thy fathers." For the whole section compare the epitome in Stephen's speech in Acts vii. 6-36.

And here we part with the Book of Genesis, the first-born of History. It is a book which gives the earliest intelligence we possess concerning our own human race, and its doings in the world before the dawn of secular history shed its light upon our earth. And it reveals to us the splendour of the Godhead, creating heaven and earth by the word of His power, and governing the universe with unerring wisdom. It reveals to us the unseen God foreseeing, decreeing, ordering all things, by His never-failing Providence. It shows us the ministry of angels, all the powers of nature, and the actions of men, always at God's disposal, always bringing about His will. Above all it reveals in its majestic beauty the character of God, His righteousness, His mercy, and His love; His tender care for man, His untiring faithfulness to them that love Him, the inexhaustible resources of His power to bring about in due season what His mercy and love have decreed.

EXODUS

THIS second Book of the Pentateuch, called by its Greek name of ΕΞΟΔΟΣ, "the going out," has, as its name indicates, for its principal subject the going out from Egypt of the children of Israel under the guidance of Moses to take possession of the land of Canaan, promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It contains also some preliminary legislation, including the ten commandments, and an elaborate account of the fashion and execution of the Tabernacle and all the instruments connected with it.

The subject-matter of the book may perhaps conveniently be divided into seven sections. Chaps. i.-iv. contain the history of the oppression. Chaps. v.-xii. 30 is the history of the struggle with Pharaoh, between Moses' return from Midian and the actual Exodus. Chaps. xii. 31-xviii. is the history of the Exodus to the arrival of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. Chaps. xix.-xxiii. is the giving of the law from Mount Sinai. Chaps. xxiv.-xxxi. contain the instructions given to Moses in the mount during forty days. Chaps. xxxii.-xxxiv. is the account of the idolatry of Aaron and the people during Moses' absence in the mount, and its immediate consequences. Chaps. xxxv.-xl. describe the making and rearing of the Tabernacle, and the accompanying furniture.

CHAPS. I.-IV.—THE HISTORY OF THE OPPRESSION.

The opening verses of the first chapter sum up in brief what had been before given in detail (Gen. xlv. 8-27), the exact number of the sons of Israel, who came into Egypt,

viz., 70 souls including Israel himself, and his daughter Dinah, and Joseph and his two sons born in Egypt. The narrative goes on to record the rapid increase of the children of Israel, which it does in most emphatic terms (ver. 7). "They were fruitful and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, and the land was filled with them." And the statement is repeated in equally strong terms in vers. 12 and 20. It was important to dwell upon this, both to show God's providential care of His people in every stage of their history, and to indicate the cause of the oppression, viz., the fears of the Egyptians on account of their growing power, and also to account for the extraordinary numbers of the people at the Exodus.

There is no exact note of time to show when the oppression began. Chap. i. 6. seems, however, to imply a time of not less than thirty years after Joseph's death, and the abundant increase spoken of in ver. 7 could hardly have taken place in less than a hundred or a hundred and twenty years (80 years of Joseph's lifetime + 30 or 40 years). Supposing the numbers to have doubled every fifteen years, the $2 \times 70 = 140$ so as to include the wives, would have become 35,840 in 125 years, or a fighting force of 8 or 9000 men. In ver. 8, the expression, "a new king," has been thought to indicate a new dynasty, and so to favour the idea that "the new king" was Aahmes or Amosis I., the first king of the 18th dynasty, who ejected the shepherd kings. But there is nothing in the phrase, "a new king," to indicate anything more than a king who had lately succeeded to the throne. The adjective "new" is applied in Hebrew to a new threshing machine, a new cart, a new skin bottle, a new garment, a new wife, &c. The phrase too, "which knew not Joseph," merely means that the king who succeeded to the throne at this time, probably 70 or 80 years after Joseph's administration of the affairs of Egypt, had forgotten all about Joseph, and the gratitude due to him for the great benefits conferred upon the country by him. The pressing danger of a war with the powerful Hittites, and other confederate races, who lay not far from the land of Goshen, would naturally have much

more weight with him than the memory of great services rendered three-quarters of a century before.

That this danger existed in an acute form in the reign of Seti I. and his successor, Rameses II., is an historical fact. There are full accounts in Egyptian inscriptions of the wars of Seti I. and his successor, the great Rameses, with the Kheta or Hittites. In the fifth year of the reign of Rameses a war broke out between Egypt and the Hittites, which culminated in the great battle of Kadesh, on the Orontes, after which Pharaoh's doubtful victory was followed by a treaty of peace between Rameses and the King of the Hittites. This battle is most vividly represented in a painting on the walls of the Temple at Karnak, in which the Canaanites are conspicuous, and is the subject of a great epic poem which has been preserved entire. In the treaty of peace the King of the Hittites promises, among other things, for himself and his successors "never to invade the land of Egypt" (Brugsch, chap. xi.).

In the previous war of Seti, it is also especially to be remarked how great the danger to Egypt was, should the Israelites inhabiting the land of Goshen join the invaders from the north-east. "There were constant advances of the neighbouring peoples upon the Delta." They took "the bold resolve to press forward over the eastern frontier, to find, as it was expressed later, sustenance for their cattle on the possessions of Pharaoh." The Shasu, a wandering tribe, whose chief territory lay in the land of Edom, especially laid claim to those pastures as having belonged to the Hyksos (Brugsch, p. 243). And that the Hittites were a party to this invasion of Egyptian territory seems clear from Seti's following up his success against the Shasu, by advancing northward as far as Kadesh, and there obtaining an important victory over the army of the Kheta.

Here then we have abundant explanation of the Egyptian policy in oppressing the Israelites and endeavouring to break down their power, and we are led to the conclusion that the oppression began under Seti I., the father of

Rameses II., and was continued through the long reign of the son.

With regard to the particular form of oppression adopted by the Egyptians, the merciless exaction of excessive labour, enforced by the stick of the task-masters, which is so feelingly spoken of, again and again, in the early chapters of Exodus (i. 11, 14; ii. 11, 12, 23, 24; iii. 7, 16; v. 7, 8, 9; vi. 9), and the labour of the Israelites in making bricks, Sir Gardner Wilkinson (vol. ii. ch. v.) tells us that brick-making was a monopoly of the Egyptian Government; that in addition to native Egyptians, they employed numerous foreign captives, who worked as slaves, in all parts of Egypt; and that almost all the buildings in Egypt, except the larger temples, were built of crude bricks, baked in the sun. He states also that it was customary for task-masters to stimulate the workers with the stick. A woodcut at vol. ii. p. 99 confirms these statements. Foreign captives are making bricks in all their different stages, digging, mixing, making with a wooden mould, and carrying on their shoulders. Task-masters with their sticks are watching and urging them. The scene is at Thebes in Upper Egypt.

Another remarkable confirmation of the Scripture narrative has arisen from the recent excavations at Tel-el-Mashkûta, or Succoth. From inscriptions found on the spot it appears that these are the ruins of the treasure-city of Pithom (Exod. i. 11), and that the city was built by Rameses II., "setting to rest finally the question as to the date of the Exodus, and the Pharaoh of the oppression" ("Fresh Light from Ancient Monuments," Prof. Sayce, pp. 60, 61). It is also curious that in the walls, eight to ten feet thick, of the treasure chambers thus laid bare, some of the bricks are made without straw (Exod. v. 16-19).

There is no direct clue as to the time that elapsed between the commencement of the oppression and the birth of Moses. But considering the works executed in building the treasure-cities, the repeated stages mentioned of the increased vigour of their service (i. 11-14, 15, 22), and the repeated mention of the increase of the people (i. 12, 20), it

can hardly have been less than thirty years. He was probably born in the reign of Seti I., and fled to Midian in about the 27th year of Rameses II., being then forty years old (Act vii. 23), and remained there forty years, till the death of Rameses (Act vii. 30).

The beautiful story of Moses' exposure among the flags by the river's brink, of his finding by the Egyptian princess, of his being nursed by his own mother, of his adoption by Pharaoh's daughter, and consequent training in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, to become mighty in word and deeds (Acts vii. 22), needs no comment. Its beauty speaks for itself, and the Providential Hand of God is conspicuous at every turn.

In the subsequent incident of his slaying the Egyptian (Exod. ii. 11, 12), who was smiting an Hebrew, "one of his brethren," the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches us to see what we might have overlooked without his comment, Moses' deliberate choice of "the reproach of Christ" rather than "the treasures of Egypt;" and his noble resolve to cast his lot with the afflicted "people of God," rather than "enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." This example cannot be too carefully weighed (Heb. xi. 24-26). And in the rejection of Moses as their deliverer, by the Hebrew who was doing his neighbour wrong, St. Stephen teaches us to see a type of the rejection of Christ by a stiff-necked people (Acts vii. 23-29), always ready to resist the Holy Ghost.

The flight of Moses from Egypt (ii. 15), and his sojourn in Midian, present one or two circumstances worthy of consideration.

1. It is pleasant to see another indication that the knowledge of the true and living God had not yet wholly given way to idolatry, in the existence in Midian of a priest—cohen, which is the same title as was borne by Melchizedek (Gen. xiv. 18), and afterwards by Aaron and his successors, though not exclusively. It is possible that Moses was led to choose Midian as the place of his retreat, by the knowledge that God was still more or less perfectly worshipped there. (Comp. Exod. xviii. 10-12.) Hence also his marriage with Reuel's

daughter, Zipporah. With regard to the name of Moses' father-in-law, there is some difficulty. At Exod. ii. 18 and Num. x. 29, he is called רְעוּיָאֵל (variously transliterated in the A.V. Reuel, and Raguel). But in Exod. iii. 1 we read, "Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian," where at first sight the name of Jethro appears to be given to the same person as was previously called Reuel. But this is by no means necessarily or even probably so. A period of at least thirty years, perhaps nearer forty, must have elapsed between Exod. ii. 18 and iii. 1, during which Reuel may have died and been succeeded in the hereditary priesthood of Midian by his son Jethro; and Moses may very probably have continued to feed the flock of Jethro as he had done that of Reuel his father. And with regard to the expression "his father-in-law," repeated in Exod. iv. 18; xviii. 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, &c., and applied to Jethro and also to Hobab, Judg. iv. 11, the difficulty is removed when we remember that the Hebrew word so translated is not confined to a father-in-law, but equally means a son-in-law, as in Gen. xix. 12; 1 Sam. xxii. 14, &c.; and, still more generally, one related by marriage, as 2 Kings viii. 27. So in Arabic, the same word means any one *nearly related by marriage*. If then we understand the word חֹתֵן (*chothen*) in Exod. iii. 1, and elsewhere, when applied to Jethro, to mean *brother-in-law*, all difficulty disappears. With regard to "Hobab, the son of Reguel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law" (Num. x. 29), he may well have been another son of Reuel, and brother of Jethro; and so equally with Jethro the *chothen* of Moses, as he is called also in Judg. iv. 11.

In the incident of Moses assisting the daughters of Reuel to water their flocks at the well, and helping them against the shepherds, who, according to their custom, would have compelled them to wait till they had first watered their own flocks, and in Reuel's hospitality to the stranger, and in the marriage which followed, we have a repetition of the same features of simple pastoral life which we saw in the case of Isaac and Jacob.

2. The A.V. of Exod. ii. 23, "in process of time," hardly gives the force of the original, "in those many days," which seems to be a feeling expression of the long continued agony of the oppression, and at the same time a distinct allusion to the length of the reign of Rameses II., their strong oppressor, and so a very important chronological mark.*

3. Vers. 23-25 contains a very beautiful lesson of God's faithfulness to His promise, and of the comfortable truth that He hears and answers prayer. The time for the fulfilment of the covenant was approaching—the deliverance was at hand—but it must be preceded by prayer. And so affliction did its perfect work. The hard bondage brought the children of Israel to their knees in earnest supplication; their cry entered into the ears of the Lord of Hosts; He looked with pity upon His suffering people; He remembered His covenant with their fathers; and so the work of deliverance was put in train at once by the mission of Moses to be their deliverer.

Chapter iii. contains the remarkable details of the appointment of Moses to his mission of unrivalled difficulty and glory. He was engaged in the humble task of feeding Jethro's flock in the neighbourhood of Mount Horeb, when his attention was arrested by the extraordinary sight of a bush (thought to be a species of acacia which is common in that region), burning brightly but not consumed. On turning aside and going nearer, "to see this great sight," he heard a voice calling him by name, and forbidding him to approach nearer, and bidding him put off his sandals from his feet, because the place where he was standing was holy ground. Everything portended the sublime solemnity of the occasion; and we can imagine with what reverential awe Moses listened to the words which followed, while he hid his face in his mantle, because "he was afraid to look upon God." Every word of the Divine communication was big with comfort and with hope. He who spake to him was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—words full of

* The call to Moses to return to Egypt now that Rameses is dead, reminds us strongly of Matt. ii. 20.

all the love, and all the faithfulness, and all the power which had marked the covenant relations of God to those faithful servants of His. He knew all the affliction of their children in Egypt, and had heard their bitter cry. And now the hour of their deliverance was at hand. And then the message fell upon the astonished ears of Moses, "I will send thee unto Pharaoh, and thou shalt bring forth my people out of Egypt" (ver. 10).

This chapter is also remarkable for the first revelation (repeated in chap. vi.) of the sacred name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the name by which He was to be known to all subsequent generations. This name in the Hebrew is יהוה—called the *tetragrammaton*—the four letters. But in adding the vowel points to this name, the Jews did not add the vowels which were intended to vocalise those four consonants, but the vowels which vocalise the consonants אֲדֹנָי, "the Lord," and therefore in reading the Scriptures they always read the sacred name as **Adonai**—rendered in the LXX. κύριος, in the Vulgate Dominus, in the A.V. "the **Lord**," except at Exod. vi. 3, where it is rendered **Adonai** in the Vulgate, and **Jehovah** in the A.V. The meaning of the sacred name is explained in Exod. iii. 14, where, in answer to the question, "When they shall say to me, What is His Name? what shall I say unto them? God said unto Moses **I am that I am** : Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, **I am** hath sent me unto you." Here we learn that the name which we commonly call **Jehovah** is derived from the verb הָיָה, "to be," and signifies the self-existence, and also the immutability of God, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). There seems to be an allusion to this verse in John viii. 58, and in Rev. i. 8. This absolute unchangeableness of God, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. i. 17), and whose own record of Himself is "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. iii. 6), is a wonderful truth full of comfort and support to man, placed as he is in a world full of change, and in the midst of people constantly fluctuating in their opinions and in their practice. To understand it,

and hold it fast, is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

It is worth noticing from Ex. iii. 19 that the name by which the people were known was still "the Hebrews," as in Gen. xliii. 32; Exod. i. 15, 16, 19; ii. 6, 9, 11. We find the name first applied to Abraham in Gen. xiv. 13. And Joseph is called a Hebrew (Gen. xxxix. 14, 17; xli. 12), and said that he was stolen from "the land of the Hebrews" (Gen. xl. 15). In all which passages the name seems to mean "one from the other side the river Euphrates," from the common phrase *עַבְרַי הַנְּהָר*, "on the other side of the river." But Gen. x. 21, and xi. 14-17, suggests its being a patronymic from Heber. The name "Hebrew" is more usually applied to the race by foreigners, or by Israelites when speaking to foreigners, or contrasting themselves with foreigners. But the Hebrews call themselves "children of Israel" or Israelites.

In ver. 22 it should be noted that the word in the A.V., "borrowed," conveys a very false notion of the Hebrew word. The English word "to borrow" means to obtain the present use of somebody else's property on conditions of restoring it. The Hebrew word *שָׁאַל* means simply "to ask," or "demand," without any such condition being attached. See xi. 1-3; xii. 35, 36. In xii. 36, again, the A.V. "lent" conveys a meaning which is not in the original. The R.V., "let them have," is far more exact. The Hebrew word is the exact correlative of the word to "ask," in ver. 22, being another conjunction of the same verb; it represents the action of the person who complies with the demands.

Chap. iv. gives the completion of the appointment of Moses to his great mission. It displays his unwillingness to accept the office to which God called him; tells of the miraculous powers bestowed upon him to give him confidence; his continued unwillingness notwithstanding, pleading his want of eloquence, and urging the appointment of some one else in his place (vers. 10-13); the addition of Aaron as his coadjutor and mouthpiece, and then finally Moses' acceptance of the office which has made his name illustrious in all

succeeding ages; his friendly parting with Jethro his brother-in-law, and his final departure with his wife and children for Egypt. The text, iv. 20, mentions Moses' "children" or "sons" in the plural number, though the birth of the eldest only has been mentioned in Exod. ii. 22. But in the Vulgate version of that passage there is this addition: "And she bare him another son, whom he called Eliezer; saying, for the God of my fathers, who is my helper, hath delivered me from the hand of Pharaoh," a passage which occurs in the Hebrew of Exod. xviii. 4. It appears from Exod. xviii. 5 that Eliezer was born prior to Moses' departure from Midian, and it was doubtless with respect to the youngest child Eliezer that the mysterious incident related in Exod. iv. 24-26 took place. His circumcision had been neglected, perhaps from Zipporah's reluctance to have it performed, and so when they reached their camping-place for the night the angel of the Lord (as the LXX. rightly explains it) in some way, not clearly defined, threatened Moses' life, giving him to understand that it was on account of the neglect to circumcise his son. Zipporah, apparently frightened, hastily circumcised him, and then the angel let Moses go. Zipporah by her petulant words and action showed how unwillingly she had consented to her child's circumcision. It was probably now that she returned for a while to her own country, either from her temper being ruffled, or because her son was not fit to travel, and Moses could not wait (Exod. xviii. 2). But the whole narrative is so concise that much is left to conjecture.

The chapter closes with a touching description of the reception of Moses and Aaron by the elders of Israel, and the devout thankfulness with which they learnt that the time of their deliverance was at hand. Aaron was the spokesman in accordance with ver. 16.

It is interesting to notice how similar in some respects the mission of Moses was to that afterwards given to the Apostles by our Lord Himself. Thus in Exod. iii. 14, 20; iv. 11, 23, and elsewhere, there are distinct assertions of God's power in order to enable Moses and Aaron to enter

upon their work with confidence ; and so in Matt. xxviii. 18, Jesus prefaces His commission to the Apostles with the assurance, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." In Exod. iv. 12, 15 we have the promise twice repeated, "I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say ;" in Matt. xxviii. 20 the Lord says, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." When God sent Moses on his mission He prefacéd it with the gift of power to work miracles (Exod. iv. 1-9). When the Lord sent forth the seventy He gave them "power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy," and "to heal the sick" (Luke x. 9, 19) ; when He sent forth the twelve He said to them, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils" (Matt. x. 8). Both missions, that of Moses to bring Israel out of Egypt, that of the Apostles to make disciples of all nations, were successful, because the Lord worked with them, confirming His word by the mouth of His servants with signs following (Mark xvi. 20).

CHAPS. V.-XII. 30.—THE STRUGGLE WITH PHARAOH.

These chapters contain the history of that struggle of Moses and Aaron with Pharaoh, after the return of Moses from Midian, which ended in the Exodus. It is a curious and instructive instance, on a small scale, of the conflict which is ever going on, on a large scale, between the ministers of God's work on the one hand, and the agents of Satan on the other. Thus, *e.g.*, we read in Acts xiii. how Elymas the sorcerer withstood Barnabas and Saul, and sought to turn away Sergius Paulus from the faith, and St. Paul compares the heretical teachers of his day, who, he says, "resist the truth," to Jannes and Jambres,* the

* These names of the magicians are preserved by St. Paul from some source which has been lost. Curiously enough, Pliny (Hist. Natur., xxx. 1) names Jannes as co-founder with Moses of the school of magic in Cyprus.

magicians "who withstood Moses;" and adds that their folly shall be manifest to all men, as was that of the Egyptian magicians.

The contest began by the request made to Pharaoh by Moses and Aaron for permission to the children of Israel to go three days' journey into the wilderness to hold a feast unto the Lord; because, as Moses said (chap. viii. 26), "the sacrifices which they would have to offer unto the Lord, would be an abomination to the Egyptians, who would stone them, if they saw them." The immediate effect of this request was to increase greatly the rigour of the oppression. Instead of giving the permission asked, Pharaoh accused Moses and Aaron of letting, *i.e.*, hindering, the people from their work, and sternly bid them "Get you to your burdens." The labour of the people was immensely increased by withdrawing the supplies of straw hitherto made to them, and yet requiring the same tale of bricks as before (vers. 6-19). And the foremen were subjected to the indignity of being beaten by Pharaoh's task-masters, because the workmen under them did not do that which was impossible. Truly they were in a bad case, and we cannot be surprised that they began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, whose interference had so greatly aggravated their sufferings (vers. 20-23).

It is a distinct touch of nature, and also a mark of the severity of the oppression, that when Moses announced these glad tidings to the people, they were in a state of such anguish and despondency that they hearkened not to him; and Moses himself was so disheartened by the reception of his message by the children of Israel, that he shrunk back from his renewed mission to Pharaoh (vi. 12).

The chapter closes, as we have seen before at important junctures in the history, with a genealogy of the persons about to play the chief part in the ensuing transactions. For although the genealogy opens with the pedigrees of Reuben and Simeon, Jacob's two eldest sons, as does that in Gen. xlv. 8 ff., yet it is the pedigree of Levi, Jacob's third son (Gen. xxxv. 23), with which we have to do, because it is

that of Moses and Aaron, who are the chief actors in the ensuing history.

The four generations after Jacob, spoken of in Gen. xv. 16, are here most distinctly enumerated—Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses ; and the truth of them is purposely corroborated by mentioning the ages of Levi, Kohath, and Amram. The ages of Moses and Aaron at the time of entering upon their mission to Pharaoh, viz., eighty and eighty-three, are also given at chap. vii. 7, showing that it was quite possible for four such generations to span the time of the sojourning of the Israelites in Egypt, at least if that time is taken at about 220 years—a time with which all the other genealogies agree, as we have already seen (Gen. xxxvii.–xlv.). The statement in some commentaries, which adopt 430 years as the time of the actual sojourn in Egypt (Speaker's Commentary, Bishop Ellicot's Commentary), that Joshua's genealogy comprises "at least eleven generations," is quite erroneous. Joshua's genealogy is as follows :—(1) Joseph, (2) Ephraim, (3) Shuthelah, (4) Eran, (5) Ammihud, (6) Elishama, (7) Non or Nun, (8) Joshua (Num xxvi. 35, 36 ; I Chron. vii. 20–27) ; where it must be noted that *Laadan* is no name at all, but merely *Eran*, with the prefix ל, "of," as in Num. xxvi. 36 (לְעֵרָן and לְעֵרָן), and that Joshua's grandfather Elishama was captain of the tribe of Ephraim at the Exodus (Num. ii. 18), so that Joshua is really one or two generations later than the Exodus.

Notice also the continued longevity of man. Levi dies at the age of 137 years, Kohath 133 years, Amram 137 years ; and Aaron and Moses are 83 and 80 years old respectively, when they enter upon the great work of their lives.

The following chapters, down to xii. 30, contain the curious history of the struggle between Moses and Pharaoh, or of the ten plagues of Egypt. The contest began by Moses and Aaron going in to Pharaoh to ask leave for the children of Israel to go into the wilderness to sacrifice to the Lord their God ; and, as the proof of their divine mission, Aaron, at Moses' bidding, cast down his rod, and it became a serpent. But the Egyptian magicians did the same by their

enchantments, and so Pharaoh was hardened and refused to let Israel go. Then followed the ten plagues, (1) the waters of the Nile were turned into blood and the fish died; (2) then came the plague of frogs which filled all the houses of the Egyptians; (3) the dust of the land became an intolerable plague of lice, or, as some render it, mosquitos; (4) swarms of flies filled the house of Pharaoh, and of the Egyptians, and all the land, except only the land of Goshen, where the Israelites lived; (5) a grievous murrain on the cattle, horses and asses and camels, and oxen and sheep, except those of the Israelites; (6) boils and blains breaking out on man and beast, including the magicians, and all the Egyptians; (7) a grievous hail, with terrific thunder and lightning, which is described as being very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation; (8) locusts filled the land and the houses of the Egyptians, and devoured every herb of the field, and every fruit which had escaped the hail; (9) Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there fell a thick darkness over all the land of Egypt: for three days they could not see one another, only the houses of the Israelites had light; (10) the last plague which closed the struggle was the death of the first-born, which is thus described (Exod. xii. 29): "It came to pass that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle. And Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead."

Thus ended this remarkable struggle of the Midianite shepherd, the timid man, slow of speech, and of uncircumcised lips, with the mightiest monarch upon earth, backed by his counsellors, his magicians, and his armed hosts; leaving a lesson to all ages and to all classes of men in every age, whether kings or people, that the power of God is irresistible, and that He orders all things after the counsel of His own will; and that none can stay His hand, or say

“What doest Thou !” Leaving a lesson, too, to be repeated again and again as the world rolls on in its course, that “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise ; and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty . . . that no flesh should glory in His presence.”

The frequently recurring phrase, “the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart” (iv. 21 ; ix. 12 ; x. 1, 20, 27 ; xi. 10 ; xiv. 4, 8, 17), requires careful consideration. Perhaps it will be a help towards a right understanding if we first place by their side the phrases which speak of Pharaoh’s heart being hard, or hardened, or of Pharaoh hardening his own heart. They are as follows : vii. 13,* 14, 22 ; viii. 15, 19, 32 ; ix. 7, 34, 35. Here the first thing that strikes one is that, with the exception of iv. 21, which describes, not what had happened, but what was going to happen, in all the earlier passages the phrases are “Pharaoh hardened his heart,” or “his heart was hardened ;” and that it is not till this phrase has been used repeatedly, that we light upon the other, “the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart.” And this naturally suggests the idea that this hardening of Pharaoh’s heart by God was the judicial consequence of Pharaoh’s resisting again and again, in “his hardness and impenitent heart,” the clear message addressed to him by God. And hence we draw the fearful lesson, which our daily experience confirms, that every act of sin hardens the heart and blunts the conscience, and makes repentance more difficult. And as this is a law in God’s government of the universe, it cannot be improper to ascribe to God Himself every fulfilment of this law in the case of an individual.

Viewing the history, including the Exodus, as a whole, what a striking epitome it is of the course of God’s Church in this world. The ungodly resisting and striving against the will and purpose of God ; spiritual wickedness, represented by the magicians, conspiring with earthly power, as represented by Pharaoh, to destroy the kingdom of God,

* Mistranslated in the A.V., but correctly in the R.V., “Pharaoh’s heart was hardened.” Marg. Heb. “was strong.”

and persecute the people of God : the servants of God, represented by Moses and Aaron, standing up boldly and declaring the will of God at the risk of their lives ; and at last, in spite of their personal weakness, triumphing over the whole power of their adversaries. Or, looking at it in another light, we see a no less striking allegorical picture of the deliverance of the faithful "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

The following passages in the New Testament throw light upon the section we have been considering : Rom. ix. 15-24 ; 1 Cor. x. 1-4 ; 2 Tim. iii. 8, 9 ; Acts vii. 17-36 ; xiii. 17 ; Heb. xi. 23-27. See too Ps. cv. 24-38 ; cvi. 21, 22.

Chap. xii. 1-28 contains the institution of the Passover immediately before the slaying of the first-born. It is obvious that these directions must have been given some little time before that fatal night, to give the Israelites time to prepare the lamb whose blood was to be sprinkled upon their doorposts, and to make the other necessary preparations. It would require some time also for Moses to gather together the elders, and for the elders to communicate with the people. The language of chap. xii. 3, 4 shows that this was the case. For the message to Moses and Aaron was given in the month Abib, and before the tenth day of the month. Whereas the lamb was to be killed on the 14th of Abib (ver. 6). We may therefore conclude that the instructions were given to Moses some time in the first week of the month Abib ; and hence we see at once that the phrase in the A.V. of ver. 12, "I will pass through the land of Egypt *this* night," does not mean the night of the day *on* which the Lord was speaking, but the night *of* which He was speaking as about to come—better rendered therefore in the R.V., "*that* night," and actually so rendered in the A.V. of ver. 8, "in that night," where the Hebrew words are the same as in ver. 12.

Hence also it follows that the contents of chap. xii. 1-28 precede in point of time the events of chap. xi. The main narrative, which ended at xi. 8, is interrupted, as is so common in Hebrew narratives, to introduce the collateral

matter of xii. 1-28, which was necessary to make the story intelligible ; and then xii. 29 takes up the main narrative again, as appears clearly by the *midnight* of xi. 4, and that of xii. 29. See remarks on Gen. ii. 4 ff., and xii. 1.

CHAPS. XII. 31-XVIII.—THE EXODUS OF ISRAEL.

The glorious Exodus has begun. The bitter wail in every Egyptian house, from the palace to the prison, is ringing through the land. Pharaoh has risen at midnight in terror and agony of spirit. He has sent in haste to summon to his aid that Moses and Aaron whom he had driven ignominiously from his presence perhaps but a few hours before. The Israelites have eaten their first Passover in haste. The Lord has covered with the shield of His protection every home which was sprinkled with the blood of the Paschal Lamb. Pharaoh and all the Egyptians urge and hasten their departure. They load them with gifts to quicken and assist their movements. In their haste, the Israelites take their unleavened dough with their kneading-troughs bound up with their clothes upon their shoulders. And now the whole land of Goshen is in movement. The women and children have come forth from their houses, equipped, as best they may be, for their emigration ; a mixed multitude, consisting partly perhaps of herdsmen and shepherds, accompany them ; the flocks and herds are being driven in haste through the rich pastures ; the manhood of the nation, to the number of 600,000, are formed into bands, doubtless according to their tribes ; their "armies," xii. 51, as in Num. ii. 3, 9, 10, in "hosts," as the same word is rendered, Num. ii. 4, 8, &c., marching together for the protection of the whole company ; native Egyptians are looking on in wonder and amazement at what is going on, but not a finger is lifted up against them, or in the expressive language of chap. xi. 7, not a dog moved his tongue against either man or beast. Egypt is, as it were, paralysed, while those who had been their slaves for upwards of a hundred years go

forth unhindered, turning their backs for ever upon the brick-kilns, and the slave-master's sticks, and the treasure cities of Pithom and Rameses, so often watered with their tears, and marching on to victory and freedom. Wonderful and glorious monument of the power and faithfulness of God! wonderful and glorious presage of the redemption and triumph of God's Church!

They first reach Succoth (xii. 37), according to Brugsch's map, some eight or ten miles due east of Rameses, and identified by him with the modern Thukot; and here they baked cakes of the unleavened dough which they had brought out of Egypt, thus keeping the feast of unleavened bread, which was an essential part of the Passover (ver. 39). It does not appear how long they halted at Succoth. But their next move, doubtless without unnecessary delay, was to "Etham, in the edge of the wilderness" (xiii. 20), where they encamped. The expression in xiv. 2, "that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth," seems to indicate that it was at this point that they changed the direction of their march, and instead of going the shortest route by the way of the Philistines (xiii. 17), turned due south, and encamped between Migdol and the sea, before Pi-hahiroth, over against Baal-zephon (xiv. 2). But the geography is so uncertain, owing to changes in the sea and the neighbouring lakes, and the situation of the places named being unknown, that it is not safe to speak positively. All that can be affirmed with safety is that at some point of their journey, instead of marching eastwards to Philistia, they turned southward, and came near to the north-western shore of the Red Sea. Their situation was now one of great peril: the sea was before them, and the wilderness which they had left (xiii. 20) was now closed to them, as some render the words in xiv. 3.

Pharaoh heard of the direction they had taken, and thought that at last his opportunity was come. So he ordered his war chariot in haste, called out his army, 600 chosen chariots, and pursued after them. He found them encamped by the sea beside Pi-hahiroth. The terror of the Israelites when they saw in the distance Pharaoh's army

approaching, broke out into murmurs and reproaches against Moses for having brought them into such straits. Why had he not left them to die in Egypt? "Fear not; stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show you to-day. The Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever," was the answer of Moses. Night was now approaching, and the pillar of cloud which had hitherto gone before the Israelites to lead them the way (xiii. 21, 22), now removed and stood behind them, between them and the host of Egypt--casting a bright light upon the Israelites, so as to facilitate all their movements and preparations, but showing as a cloud of impenetrable darkness to the whole camp of the Egyptians. Meanwhile Moses had stretched out his rod over the sea, and a strong wind had arisen which drove back the waters at the head of the sea to the north and divided them, so as to leave a broad passage of dry land between the waters on one side and those on the other. The Israelites, having been fully prepared, at once go forward on the way made ready for them; and we may well suppose that the angel of the Lord sped their way with more than human help, and hastened their passage to the other side. The width of the sea where they crossed may probably not have been above a mile.

Whether the pillar of cloud removed, and thus revealed the flight of the Israelites, or whether the sound of the movement of so great a multitude reached the ears of the Egyptians, it was still night when the Egyptians became aware of their departure, which must have seemed to them an impossibility, with the sea in front of them. They at once pursued them, and seeing the passage of dry land by which the Israelites were still making their escape, they boldly went after them into the midst of the sea. But here arose a scene of indescribable confusion. Somewhere about the middle of the passage the chariot wheels stuck in the muddy bottom. The plunging of the horses only increased the evil. Some appearance from the pillar of cloud sent a sudden panic through the whole Egyptian host. They felt that God was fighting for Israel against them. They were

eager to turn back, and regain the western shore. But how could they? There was no room to manœuvre in the narrow passage, where perhaps at most three chariots could stand abreast. Indecision must have arisen—some seeing the difficulty of returning would urge pressing forward—others seeing the difficulty of advancing would insist upon turning back. Fear had banished discipline and paralysed decisive action.

And now an unsuspected danger was at hand. The last rank of the Israelites had reached the eastern shore, and the morning light was just breaking upon the strange scene, when Moses, at God's bidding, again stretched out his hand over the sea: the waters returned in their strength, perhaps with the flowing tide; the Egyptians in vain struggled against the flood; one by one the chariots sank in the deep; the horses and the heavy armed warriors, the flower of the Egyptian cavalry, were overwhelmed; not one escaped.

Pharaoh himself, the cowardly Menephthah, whose care for his personal safety on another occasion is recorded on the monuments, does not seem to have fallen on this occasion. He probably waited with his infantry on the western shore, expecting the return of his chariots. When he saw the terrible catastrophe he seems to have sneaked back to his own country, and to have passed the rest of his life in obscurity. For we hear nothing about him in the monuments, in the closing years of his reign.

The magnificent song of Moses (Rev. xv. 3) which occupies chap. xv. 1-18, is a fitting and worthy celebration of this, perhaps the greatest event in the whole history of Israel. Subsequent allusions to it by the Prophets and Psalmists of Israel show what an indelible impression it had left upon the mind and sentiment of the people. See Ps. lxxiv. 13; lxxvi. 19, 20; lxxviii. 12, 13; cxiv. 1-8; cxxxvi. 13-15; Isa. xliii. 16, 17; li. 9, 10; Jer. xvi. 14; Nahum i. 4, &c.

The Israelites were now fairly delivered from Egyptian bondage. The sea stood between them and their oppressors. They left Pharaoh and his army and his people cowed

and dismayed. They were a free and independent people on their way to take possession of their promised inheritance in Canaan. But their trials were not over yet, and they needed yet much more training to tame their rebellious spirit, and teach them patience, submission, and trust in God. Their first trial was at the waters of Marah. After three days' journeying in the wilderness of Shur, during which they had found no water, they lit upon an abundant supply at Marah. We can imagine the eagerness with which the weary, thirsty people flocked to slake their thirst. What was their disappointment when they found that the water was brackish, and they could not drink it. A great murmur arose against Moses who had brought them to such straits. "Wherefore hast thou brought us out of Egypt to kill us and our cattle with thirst?" or some such complaint burst forth from 10,000 lips. Past mercies, past deliverances, gracious promises, glorious hopes, all in one moment forgotten, under the pressure of the present grievance. What a picture of human ingratitude and unbelief! What a lesson to us not to despond under every trial, but, while we feel our own weakness and helplessness in ourselves, to trust, without doubting, the power and faithfulness of God.

In this case the remedy was soon found. The voice of prayer from Moses brought a quick answer from God. "The Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters the waters were made sweet." How far the effect was natural and how far supernatural, is difficult to decide. Judging from the analogy of other miracles recorded in the Bible, it seems probable that the natural qualities of the plant in question were heightened so as to sweeten the whole waters. Many travellers identify Marah with the modern Howarah, where the water is still brackish. But the whole topography is still somewhat uncertain.

There is something rather singular in the way in which the latter part of ver. 25 is introduced. It looks like the language of some contemporary poem, after the analogy of Num. xxi. 14-18. The healing of the waters of Marah is

represented as a type or image of that health and prosperity which God promised to Israel if he would be obedient to the voice of the Lord his God. Compare Deut. vi. 16-18.

The encampment at Elim, with its twelve wells of refreshing water, and its seventy-two palm trees, affording shade to man and beast, and looking beautiful and luxuriant in the midst of the waste dreary wilderness, is an apt image of those times of rest and peace and joy which God often vouchsafes to His people as a refreshment after seasons of trial and difficulty. Even so after that the bitter persecutions which arose upon the death of Stephen, and for a time harassed the churches, had ceased on the wonderful conversion of St. Paul, we read, "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of God the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied" (Acts ix. 31).

Chap. xvi. is remarkable for two events—the flight of quails, and the giving of manna. It was now the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from Egypt, and we can well imagine that any supply of provisions which they had brought out of Egypt, eked out, as doubtless it had been, by such food as they could procure in the wilderness, or from the milk of their flocks or the occasional slaughter of lambs, or kids, or calves, had been quite exhausted. They had recently escaped the danger of perishing by thirst, and now hunger stared them in the face. Perhaps the wilderness of Sin, where they now were, was more stony and afforded less pasture to the flocks, which consequently gave less milk; anyhow the supplies of food failed them. They remembered the fleshpots of Egypt, and the plenty with which they filled their bellies there, and they forgot the forced labour and the task-master's lash. They forgot, too, the pillar of cloud which went before them, and the passage through the Red Sea, and the wonderful overthrow of Pharaoh's host; they forgot the waters of Marah sweetened for their use in answer to Moses' prayer; and so they broke out again into murmuring against Moses and Aaron. Why had not they left them to die a natural death in Egypt? Had they brought

them out into the barren wilderness in their thousands and tens of thousands that they might all die of hunger? Not a thought of God; not a particle of faith and trust; not one prayer for help; not one humble confession of weakness and want; nothing but hard unbelief; no sight but of outward visible things and second causes; and utter oblivion of the Lord of heaven and earth! But He was there in the plenitude of His power and mercy, and he heard their murmurings, and lo! His forgotten presence flashed out in an instant from the pillar of cloud. As they looked towards it, the glory of the Lord revealed itself to their astonished vision. Was He so near to them to punish or to save them? A few hours would show. The sun had passed the meridian, and was declining towards the west, when lo! the sky over the camp was darkened by a cloud of quails returning in their annual flight from Africa to Asia, where they had come in the autumn. Exhausted by their flight across the Red Sea they fell in thousands in the camp, or were easily knocked down, and captured by the hand. Israel's evening meal was abundantly supplied.* But the Divine power and mercy to His ungrateful people was not exhausted. The next morning when the dew went up there remained upon the ground vast quantities of a little round substance which they were bid gather up for their daily supply, and which continued through the forty years of their sojourn in the wilderness (Exod. xvi. 35; Josh. v. 12). Its name of manna, or rather, as it is called in Hebrew, *Man*, is said to have been derived from the exclamation of the people when they first saw it, "What is it?" (Exod. xvi. 15, R.V.; Heb. *Man hu*), to which question Moses answered, "It is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." Comp. John vi. 30-58; Matt. vi. 11; 2 Cor. viii. 15, for the deep spiritual lessons contained in this section.

* For an account of a still larger flight of quails about the same time of the following year, see Num. xii. 31-35. For an interesting account of the vast numbers in which quails migrate, see Dict. of the Bible, article *Quails*. Pliny (Nat. Hist. x. 23) speaks of the flight of quails, when exhausted by a long flight, as being close to the ground, and their numbers so great as to sink ships when they light upon their sails.

Nor must we forget to notice carefully the remarkable sanction given to the Sabbath by the cessation of the manna on the seventh day. The commandment to keep holy the sabbath day had not yet been given, but the independence of the sabbath of the legislation from Mount Sinai was marked in this, that on the sixth day they found they had gathered two omers for each man instead of one, and that whereas at other times, if they attempted to keep what they had gathered till the next day, it bred worms and stank, the extra omer gathered on the sixth day was fit for food on the seventh day. Moreover, on the seventh day no manna was found on the ground: showing clearly that the original blessing on the seventh day (Gen. ii. 3), of which traces are seen in Gen. viii. 10, 12, was still in force, and that the fourth commandment did not institute, but only revised and gave new sanction to the day of rest—"Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day."

The scene of the giving of manna was the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Sinai. Their next halt was at Rephidim, and here again recurred the peculiar trial of wilderness life—the scarcity of water. "Give us water that we may drink"—was the angry cry of the people. "Wherefore hast thou brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children, and our cattle with thirst?" was their rebellious, ungrateful, unbelieving cry. But God's longsuffering was not yet exhausted. At His bidding Moses took the rod with which he had turned the waters of the Nile into blood, and, followed by the elders of Israel, went to a certain rock in Horeb, and smote it with his rod. Immediately there burst out a plentiful supply of water (Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16, 23-28; cv. 40, 41).

A similar occurrence to that at Rephidim, with its sad consequence to Moses and Aaron, in their being excluded from entering into Canaan, is related in Num. xx. The allusion in 1 Cor. x. 4 seems to be to Exod. xvii. from its close connection with the "spiritual meat," *i.e.*, the manna in ver. 3. We should carefully note the constant spiritual lessons which flow from the historical narrative, and give it

a divine power and undying influence to be found in no other history in the world.

The residence of Israel in Rephidim was memorable also for the victory over the Amalekites. The Amalekites, a powerful tribe descended from Amalek, the grandson of Esau (Gen. xxxvi. 12, 16), and dwelling in the peninsula of Sinai, came to attack the Israelites. Whether they thought that the large number of cattle would interfere with their own rights of pasture, or whether they were actuated by the hereditary hatred of Esau and Jacob, does not appear. But it was an unpardonable act of unprovoked hostility to a kindred people, of whose deliverance from Egypt, by God's special mercy, they must have been informed, and in attacking whom they were defying God Himself. How great their sin was in the sight of God is evident from the terrible announcement ordered to be written in a book for a perpetual memorial: "I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." There were some peculiar features of atrocity, too, in the attack of the Amalekites, such as falling upon the stragglers, and smiting the feeblest of them when they were faint and weary, which heightened their guilt, and drew down the repetition of the inexorable sentence, "Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" (Deut. xxv. 17-19). And so again in Balaam's grand prophecy we read, "Amalek was the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever" (Num. xxiv. 20). These terrible denunciations of a guilty nation found their accomplishment in the destruction of the Amalekites by King Saul, in the latter part of his reign, as related in 1 Sam. xv. It is in this encounter with Amalek that we first hear of Joshua, or, as his name then was, Hoshea the son of Nun. He must have been a very young man indeed at this time; for, as we learn from Num. i. 10; ii. 18, Elishama, his grandfather (1 Chron. vii. 26, 27), was captain of the host of Ephraim in the second year after they came out from Egypt. See too Exod. xxxiii. 11, where the word **נַעַר** denotes quite a young man.

Young, however, as he was, the future conqueror of Canaan

showed already those qualifications which induced Moses to intrust him with the command of the men who went out to fight against Amalek, and "discomfited them with the edge of the sword," while Moses, on the top of the hill which overlooked the field of battle, held up the rod of God in his hand. The battle seems to have been a very hard fought one, since it did not end till "the going down of the sun." Its protracted duration is also seen in this, that while the success of the Israelites depended entirely on Moses' rod being held out, he became so exhausted that Aaron and Hur, who were with him, were obliged to raise a stone seat for him to sit upon, and to stay his hands, one on one side and the other on the other, until sunset, when the victory of Israel was secured. The incident is a striking exemplification of the truth of the need of the co-operation of human exertion with Divine aid to effect great results. God does not usually work for man unless man works for himself, and man's utmost exertions are vain and useless unless God makes them effectual by His mighty power. In spiritual matters this is well expressed by St. Paul (Phil. ii. 12), "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." The holding up of Moses' hands typifies the prayer of faith, which draws down God's blessing upon His people's efforts.

Joshua was one of the spies sent by Moses to search the land of Canaan, as we read in Num. xiii. His name was then Oshea (ver. 8), but was changed on that occasion to Jehoshua (of which the Greek form is Jesus, Acts vii. 45; Heb. iv. 3) (ver. 16). He and Caleb the son of Jephunneh were the only two faithful spies, and the only two who eventually entered into the land of Canaan (Num. xiv. 6 ff., 24, 38).

The next incident in this section is a very interesting and natural one, bearing its truth strongly marked in every feature of it. We saw in chap. iv. that when Moses left Midian to return to Egypt he took with him his wife Zipporah, and his two sons Gershom and Eliezer. On the

way occurred the strange incident relative to the circumcision of their youngest child, recorded in chap. iv. 24-26. It seems probable that on that occasion Moses sent her back to her family in Midian; either because she showed herself intractable and likely to hinder him in his great work, or because the child was not fit to travel, or for some other unknown cause. The phrase, "after her dismissal," which is the literal rendering of ver. 2, rather suggests that it had been a parting in displeasure. And the scene on the meeting of Moses and Jethro, and the subsequent feast, has somewhat the air of a family and national reconciliation. The Midianites dwelt in the immediate neighbourhood of Mount Horeb, and so were close at hand.

It has been doubted by some, especially by Jewish commentators, whether this visit of Jethro to Moses took place before the giving of the law, as its place here seems to indicate, or after it, as the mention at ver. 16 of the "statutes and laws" of God suggests. But there is no sufficient reason for supposing this chapter out of its place on account of the mention of the statutes and laws of God, because the identical phrase is used of Abraham in Gen. xxvi. 5, that he kept God's commandments and statutes and laws. The unwritten laws of righteousness, truth, and justice engraven in the minds and consciences of God's faithful servants are doubtless meant.

The establishment of judges to judge all ordinary cases, with a right of appeal to Moses, by the advice of Jethro, is a very interesting fact in this most truthful history. Jethro, as ruler of Midian, doubtless spoke from his own experience. Jethro's acknowledgment of Jehovah as "above all gods," and his offering burnt-offerings and sacrifices to Him, is another most interesting event in the religious history of mankind.

CHAPS. XIX.—XXIII.—THE GIVING OF THE LAW.

We now approach that great event in the history, not of Israel only, but of the whole world besides—the giving of the law of the ten commandments from Mount Sinai. For

is it not a wonderful and most impressive fact that that compendium of man's duty to God and man which was given more than 3000 years ago in the remote region of the Sinaitic range, is at this very day the rule of life for all Christian people under heaven. Sunday after Sunday we in England, when we assemble and meet together for the worship of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, listen reverently on our knees to each of these ten commandments, and as we hear them, one by one, we pray "Incline our hearts to keep this law." And when we have heard them all, we add the earnest supplication, "Write all these Thy laws in our hearts, we beseech Thee." And how thorough and comprehensive these commandments are we learn as well from other passages in the New Testament, as especially from that beautiful one in Rom. xiii. 8-10, "He that loveth his neighbour (R.V.) hath fulfilled the law." "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." And to the like effect is the exposition of the ten commandments in the Church Catechism. These commandments, then, concern every individual of the human race, and the circumstances of their first enumeration are invested with a corresponding interest and importance.

And truly those circumstances were of marvellous grandeur and solemnity. Conceive the desert of Sinai, peopled for the time with the multitude of the redeemed from Egyptian bondage waiting in awful expectation of what was about to happen. Before them rises the mountain peak of Ras-Susafeh, in its rugged majesty, as a step, yet an impossible one, between earth and heaven. Then a three days' solemn preparation is imposed upon the whole multitude. "Sanctify the people to-day, and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes." They must put away all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, that they may be ready to meet their God. But even so they cannot see God and live. They may not so

much as touch the mountain where the presence of God is localised. Barriers are set up to keep them off, and even their cattle might not touch the mountain (Heb. xii. 20). The awful holiness of God is the great lesson to be taught, followed up as it was by all the ordinances of sacrifice and priesthood, and the Holy of Holies, until the one great atoning sacrifice of the eternal Son of God forever put away sin, and perfect reconciliation between God and man was effected by the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

But to return to the narrative. The third day was ushered in by sights and sounds of unspeakable awe and terror. Vivid flashes of lightning played around the summit of the mountain. The thunder roared, crash after crash. A mysterious cloud stood upon the mount, and then came terrific sounds as of a trumpet, waxing louder and louder, till even Moses cried out in fear (Exod. xix. 19; Heb. xii. 12). Meanwhile the whole mountain seemed to be on fire, it rocked and quaked, and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a furnace (comp. Gen. xix. 22). God had descended upon the top of the mount; then it was that "the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel" (Ps. lxxviii. 8). And then to that hushed and awed multitude came forth the voice from the thick cloud, which proclaimed to Israel and to the world the law of the ten commandments, and then ceased. But the prostration of spirit of the people was more than they could longer bear. They turned to Moses, who had come down to them from the mount (Exod. xix. 25), and said, "Speak thou to us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die." So the people removed and stood far off, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

Here then closed the first and most solemn part of this momentous drama, of which a somewhat fuller account is given in Deut. v., which should be compared with this. But before proceeding further, two points call for attention. In the narrative we have just been considering, no person-

ality, no agency, has been mentioned but that of God Himself, in the giving of the law, and all the accompaniments of it. But in Ps. lxxviii. 17 we read, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them as in the holy place of Sinai." And so in Acts vii. 53, St. Stephen tells the Jews that they had "received the law by the disposition of angels," and that it was "an angel who spake to Moses in the mount Sinai" (v. 38). St. Paul, too, tells the Galatians (iii. 19) that the law was "ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator." And so again, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ii. 2) speaks of the law as "the word spoken by angels." We are led, therefore, to consider that though in the narrative before us God only is mentioned as the true agent, yet here, as elsewhere, He spoke and acted through the medium of His holy angels, those "ministers of His that do His pleasure" (Ps. ciii. 21). And so we have this additional feature of sublimity in the scene at Sinai, that when God would deliver His holy law to mankind, He summoned the host of heaven to assist in the great ceremony, just as centuries later the multitude of the heavenly host sang "Glory to God in the highest," at the birth of Jesus, who came to fulfil the law for man, and to reconcile heaven and earth in one perfect obedience to the law of righteousness and love.

It may be added that the general rule in Scripture is that when a message from God is given through man, it is prefaced by "Thus saith the Lord;" but when it is given through an angel, it is simply, "God said" so and so.

The remaining chapters of this section contain the statutes and ordinances given from Sinai, not, like the ten commandments, to the whole people, but as an instruction to Moses what laws he was to set before them. These laws, for the most part, would come into operation at once, and would be needful to guide the judges, appointed in chap. xviii. 24-26, in their judgments. A very few, such as those relating to the cities of refuge, xxi. 13; to fields and vineyards, and the offering of first-fruits, and the three feasts, and the Sabbatical year (xxii. 5, 29; xxiii. 11, 14, 16, 19), would not come into

operation till they were in possession of Canaan, an event to which chap. xxiii. 20-33 distinctly looks forward. These laws bear strongly marked traces of the very imperfect state of the society for which they were made, in the existence of slavery, in the rough usage of slaves, in the bribing of judges, and so on. They aimed at mitigating the evils and hardships of such a state, and introducing equity and fairness into those relations of man with man which could not be abolished at once, but which in due time Christianity would set straight. Chap. xxi. 24, 25 is referred to in Matt. v. 38; xxi. 17 in Matt. xv. 4; and xxii. 1 in Luke xix. 8: xxii. 28 is referred to by St. Paul, Acts xxiii. 5. The principle of distinction between murder and homicide or manslaughter; of compensation for bodily hurt; of the liability for accidents, caused by a man's carelessness (xxi. 29, 33); of the distinction between killing a burglar by night or by daylight (xxii. 2, 3), besides the general principles of equity which pervade the whole code, are recognised in our own laws at the present time.

CHAPS. XXIV.-XXXI.—IN THE MOUNT.

The principal subject of the ensuing section is the construction of the Tabernacle, and the various furniture thereof; the institution of the Aaronic Priesthood for the service of the Tabernacle, and their typical garments, and the sacrifices which they were to offer, followed by the appointment of Bezaleel and Aholiab to execute the works, and by a solemn injunction to keep holy the Sabbath throughout their generations. The section closes with the gift to Moses, as had been promised (xxiv. 12), of the two tables of stone "written with the finger of God."

But before entering upon the description of the Tabernacle, Moses has a wonderful story to tell of what passed on the holy mount. When the communication to Moses of the judgments contained in chapters xxi.-xxiii. was completed, he was sent down from the mount to the camp, and there told the people all the words of the Lord, which had been

spoken to him ; and he wrote them, probably on tablets of stone, as was the custom in Egypt. Early next morning, after a solemn sacrifice of burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, on an altar which he had built under the hill, Moses took of the blood of the victims, and sprinkled it on the altar. He then read aloud "the book of the covenant," *i.e.*, "all the words of the Lord," which had been spoken to him out of "the thick darkness, where God was" (xx. 21), and which, as we have seen, he had written down the night before (xxiv. 4) ; and when the people, upon hearing it, had said, "all that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient" (xxiv. 7)—thus accepting their part of the covenant—he sprinkled the blood upon the people, saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you" (ver. 8). Thus solemnly was the covenant between God and Israel dedicated and ratified by blood—typical of the new covenant in the Blood of Jesus Christ, of which the Lord Himself, at the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, when He gave them the cup, said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke xxii. 20, R.V.).

From the above transaction it appears that the name of "the Book of the Covenant" is very properly given to that part of the Mosaic law which is contained in Exod. xx.—xxiii. ; comp. Deut. v. 2—ix. 11 ; and see the striking comment on the two covenants or testaments in Heb. ix., where the account in Exod. xxiv. is quoted with some alterations and additions.

What follows is still more wonderful. The covenant was to be celebrated, as was usual, at a sacrificial feast, at which the concord of the covenanting parties was exhibited and cemented. Accordingly, at the bidding of God (xxiv. 1), Moses called Aaron, and his two sons Nadab and Abihu, with seventy of the elders of Israel (comp. Num. xi. 16), to "go up unto the Lord," not near—that was permitted to Moses only (v. 2), but so as to "worship afar off." Accordingly they went up, probably to some spot indicated on the hill side, whence they saw the glory surrounding the

throne of the God of Israel, and where they ate and drank at the sacrificial feast in the very presence of their covenant God (ver. 11). When the feast was over they seem all to have returned to the plain below (vers. 12-14). But Moses was called up again into the mount, where he remained forty days and forty nights. Aaron and Hur were to act for him during his absence (ver. 14).

With regard to the expression in vers. 10 and 11, "They saw the God of Israel," it seems impossible to understand it in the most literal sense for the following reasons. (1.) God is declared in Scripture to be "invisible" (Col. i. 15; 1 Tim. i. 17; Heb. xi. 27). (2.) It is said of God that "no man hath seen Him, or can see Him" (1 Tim. vi. 16), and "no man hath seen God at any time" (John. i. 18; 1 John iv. 12). (3.) In Moses' own account of the giving of the "covenant," he lays great stress upon the fact that though they heard a voice they saw "no similitude," "no manner of similitude" (Deut. iv. 12, 16), and grounds upon it the command not to make the similitude of any figure whatsoever for the purpose of worship. (4.) When Moses asked for a special token of divine favour, he said, "Show me Thy glory." And the answer was, "I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee," but "thou canst not see My face" (Exod. xxxiii. 18-23). (5.) The Septuagint version of Exod. xxiv. 10 translates the Hebrew "they saw the God of Israel" by "they saw the place where the God of Israel stood." And they translate ver. 11 quite differently from the Hebrew text.

The following chapters xxv.-xxxi. are entirely taken up with the instructions given to Moses during the first forty days that he was up in the mount, in the midst of the cloud. These instructions relate to the Tabernacle which was to be built, and all its furniture; the altar of burnt-offerings, and the various vessels connected with it; the altar of incense (chap. xxx.), and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense; the separation of Aaron and his sons for the priest's office; the priestly garments for them, and the sacrificial rites to be observed at their consecration; and finally, the appointment of Bezaleel and Aholiab to execute

all these works, with the promise of special skill and wisdom to be given to them by God for the purpose. The works are summed up in chap. xxxi. 7-11.

The Tabernacle, or tent of meeting, occupied a very large and important place in the Mosaic economy, as might be concluded from the space given to the description of it in the foregoing chapters, and of the actual execution of the works in chaps. xxxv.-xl. It was in truth a most remarkable institution, and one of very large and comprehensive significance. To view it under its different aspects. (1.) It was the nucleus of the whole worship of the Lord God of Israel, as that worship was to be carried on from the time of Moses till the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the Temple was built on the exact model of the Tabernacle. At that Tabernacle, placed in the midst of the whole congregation, the anointed priests of God daily officiated in His holy service. There the atoning sacrifices were offered continually; there the sweet incense ascended up continually for a memorial before Him. There was the mercy-seat—there was the ark of the covenant, and the law, containing God's holy will and commandments. There was the constant emblem of God's presence in the midst of His people, directing and guiding, watching over and caring for them, but also noting and punishing their sins. The Unity, the Holiness, the Providence of God, were ever set before the minds of Israel as they saw the Tabernacle, and the pillar of cloud, and Moses coming in and out from communing with God.

(2.) But view it also in its manifold typical aspects. When we remember how both St. Paul and St. Peter (2 Cor. v. 1, 4; 2 Pet. i. 13, 14) speak of our human body as our tabernacle, and how we are told that "the Word was made flesh and tabernacled (*ἐσκήνωσεν*) among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John i. 14), we see how the Tabernacle, the abode of God's presence, frequently illuminated by His glory (Exod. xl. 34, 35, &c.), was a type of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and His dwelling in the flesh in the midst of His people.

And when we read (Rev. xxi. 3-5), "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God," we see no less clearly how the Tabernacle in the wilderness was an image of that glorious and blessed time when sin and sorrow shall for ever have passed away, and the redeemed shall bask in the sunshine of the unveiled presence of God in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever. But the writer to the Hebrews (Heb. ix.) shows us other important lessons to be drawn from the construction of the Tabernacle. In that Tabernacle there were two parts. In the first the priests daily went in to accomplish the service of God. But into the second, the Holy of Holies, the high priest alone went once a year with the blood of the sacrifice, thus showing that as long as the outer Tabernacle was still standing, access to the very presence of God in His inner sanctuary was not open to sinful man. The sacrifices there offered, though they continually testified to human guilt, and the need of atonement, could not take that guilt away. But when He came into the world as the true High Priest (of whom Aaron and his successors were only types), and shed that precious Blood which does take away sin and justify guilty man, and with it entered into the Holy of Holies above to make eternal intercession for us, then a perfect and free access to God was opened for man; and that which was dimly foreshadowed by the Tabernacle made with hands reared in the wilderness, was gloriously fulfilled in the Tabernacle not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (see Matt. xxvii. 51).

(3.) We may just notice one other feature in the history of the Tabernacle, though it is not brought out fully till chap. xxxv., viz., the free-will offerings of the whole congregation, in supplying all the various materials for the construction of the Tabernacle and its furniture, and its service. The willing hearty spirit in which both men and women, princes and people, each contributed whatever they had to the work—bracelets, earrings, gold, silver, brass,

purple, scarlet, rams' skins, badger skins, onyx stones, spices, and what not—is a beautiful example of those sacrifices of doing good, and communicating for the benefit of the whole Church with which God is well pleased (Heb. xiii. 16). It is likely that shame and sorrow for their recent sin in the matter of the golden calf may have stimulated their zeal on this occasion ; but, anyhow, it is a bright pattern for Christians to follow of contributing freely of their substance for the common wants of the Church.

The precious things contributed were doubtless in a great measure those gifts which were lavished upon them by the Egyptians to hasten their departure out of Egypt (xii. 35, 36). Other articles, such as the seal, or badger skins (whichever the Hebrew word means), and the rams' skins, and the acacia wood, and the goat's hair, and possibly the spices (Gen. xxvii. 25, 28), may have been acquired in the wilderness.

CHAPS. XXXII.—XXXIV.—THE GOLDEN CALF.

The episode which follows is most curious and instructive, and like other parts of the Mosaic narrative, has visibly stamped upon it truth, and the report of an eye-witness. When Moses was called up into the mount, attended by Joshua, and left Aaron and the elders in the plain below, bidding them tarry there till he came again, the people probably expected that he would return in two or three days at longest. But when week followed week, and still Moses did not appear, their patience failed them, they thought that he had perhaps perished in the flames of Sinai, or had left them to themselves, in despair at the difficulties of the situation. As usual they forgot all God's past mercies, and had no faith in His promises ; they were probably weary of the wilderness, and longed to get away to the land of their inheritance, and so they called to Aaron, who in Moses' absence was their leader, to come to their rescue. They wanted to be off. But they had been used

to the guidance of the pillar of cloud, and did not like to move without some supernatural guidance. Their remembrance of Egyptian idolatry, to which they had been so long accustomed, suggested the idea of a golden calf. And so Aaron, either in weakness and fear of the people's violence, as he pleaded to Moses (xxxii. 22), or from a spirit of opposition and jealousy of his younger brother's superiority, of which he gave evidence on at least one other occasion (see Num. xii. 1-11), complied with their request. He collected all the golden earrings of the men and women in the camp, melted them in the fire, and made a molten calf. He then built an altar before it, and proclaimed "a feast to the Lord" for the morrow. Accordingly, on the morrow they rose up early, and offered sacrifices to the idol, and worshipped it, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up from the land of Egypt" (xxxii. 8). They then held a great feast, followed by dancing and singing. It was on his way down from the mount, accompanied by Joshua, with the two "tables of testimony" in his hand, written on both sides, that Moses heard the strange sounds issuing from the camp below (vers. 15-18). On coming in sight of the camp the lamentable scene displayed itself: the golden calf in a conspicuous place, and the people stripped of their usual apparel,* dancing and shouting around it. Moses dashed the tables of stone upon the ground, and proceeded to destroy the golden calf. Having torn off the golden casing from the wooden core † upon which it was laid, he caused it to be burnt; the gold he broke up and ground it to powder, and sprinkled it in the stream that flowed from Sinai (Deut. ix. 21), and made the children of Israel drink of it (comp. 2 Kings xviii. 4), thus throwing the utmost possible contempt upon the idol which they had

* The meaning of the Hebrew is somewhat doubtful, but this seems to be the most simple explanation. Comp. 2 Sam. vi. 14-16, 20.

† Great difficulty has been felt by commentators as to the *burning* of the golden calf. But surely it was not solid gold, but must have been a wooden body overlaid with gold.

been worshipping (comp. Isa. xlv. 10-17). It seems that there was some show of resistance among the most stubborn of the people, probably those who were ringleaders in this shameful idolatry, and that this resistance was shown in their refusal to resume their usual attire, and determined continuance in that state of "nakedness" in which the idolatrous rites were being celebrated. With equal zeal and courage, Moses went to the gate of the camp where these infuriated revellers were, and called to his aid all who were on the Lord's side. The tribe of Levi sprang forward, and at Moses' bidding attacked and slew the rebellious idolaters without respect to friend or kin. Three thousand fell before them. It was a lamentable event, but it was an act of severe justice which saved many more than it destroyed. The idolatry was checked, the people were saved.

On the morrow the beauty of Moses' character and his true love for the people showed itself in a remarkable manner. Having assembled the people and laid before them the enormity of their sin, he told them that he would "go up" to the Lord, and endeavour to obtain the forgiveness of it. He did so, and so earnestly did he plead that he asked, if forgiveness could not be granted to the people, that his own name should be blotted out of God's book (comp. Rom. ix. 3). He could not bear the idea of being happy himself while the people, for whom he had done and suffered so much, were rejected and excluded from God's love. His intercession was so far successful, that he received permission to lead the people on to the land of Canaan; but with this reservation, God would not go before them as He had in times past, lest their stiff-neckedness should provoke His anger to consume them. But He would send an angel to go before them.

Moses brought back these evil tidings to the people. Fickle and changeable like children, they now fell to weeping and lamentation, and stripped off all their ornaments as in a time of deep mourning. As a further token of God's displeasure, Moses removed the tent to which he gave the

name of "the tent of meeting," * from the camp and pitched it far off outside the camp. Here from time to time God communed with Moses "face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." When the people saw Moses going out to the tent from the camp they stood up respectfully at their tent doors as he went by, and watched him till he entered the "tent of meeting;" and when they saw the pillar of cloud standing over the tent door denoting the presence of God they fell down and worshipped.

How long this state of things lasted we are not told. But we see plainly that it wrought the effect intended. The people seem to have been thoroughly subdued and weaned from their idolatry for the time, and their allegiance to Moses to have been re-established more firmly than ever. Moses himself was encouraged to renew his intercession for the people more earnestly than before, and obtained the gracious assurance that God would, in answer to his prayer, go up before the people, and bring them to their inheritance. "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (xxxiii. 14). The inference which Moses drew from this is very remarkable. "So shall we be separated, I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth" (comp. Num. xxiii. 9). The further result was the calling of Moses up to the mount the second time for a period of forty days and forty nights, to receive a renewal of the broken covenants: a renewal which was preceded by that most beautiful and seasonable revelation of the character of God, when as His glory passed by the cleft of the rock where Moses was hid, the voice proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering

* Heb. "ohel." This is of course quite different from the "Tabernacle," Heb. "mishcham," which was not yet reared, and was a much more cumbrous structure than this simple tent here spoken of. It is not quite clear why it is called "*the* tent," as it has not been mentioned previously. Many think, following the LXX., τὴν σκηνὴν αὐτοῦ, that it was Moses' own tent, which became for a time the tent of meeting with God, perhaps as being the chief tent in the camp. See "Speaker's Commentary."

and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty" (xxxiv. 6, 7). After the repetition of a few laws the section closes with an account of a singular and significant incident. While God talked with Moses, the skin of his face shone, as St. Stephen's did afterwards (Acts vi. 15), but he knew it not. When, however, he came down from the mount with the two tables of stone in his hands, and Aaron and the elders came to meet him at the entrance of the camp, they perceived that the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. He called them, however, unto him, and then summoned an assembly of the people to deliver to them the commandments which he had received on Sinai. But while he spoke to them he put a veil upon his face, and thenceforth only took it off when he went into the tent of meeting to commune with God.

St. Paul adverts to this incident as an illustration of the difference between the ministration of the law and that of the Gospel, of the letter and of the spirit. The veil on Moses' face was typical of the mystery and obscurity of the types and shadows of the law, and of the blindness which is still on the mind of Israel when Moses is read. But the ministers of the Gospel use great plainness of speech; and Christians, by beholding the glory of Christ without a veil (with open, *i.e.*, unveiled face), are changed into the image and likeness of Christ (2 Cor. iii. 7-18).

CHAPS. XXXV.—XL.—THE TABERNACLE.

We now come to the closing chapters of this striking book. We have already commented upon the hearty liberality with which the people, as related in chap. xxxv., contributed the very best of their treasures as an offering to the Lord for the construction of the Tabernacle (p. 117). And we are in a position now, from what we have seen in the subsequent chapters, to judge still more conclusively how much the

present subdued and docile spirit of the people, and their zeal for the service of the Lord, was the fruit of the wise mixture of severity and mercy with which their grievous sin in the matter of the golden calf had been met. They could not now do enough to prove their zeal. Day after day their gifts came pouring in till the workmen were obliged to say to Moses, "The people bring much more than enough for the work which the Lord commanded to make ;" and Moses had to proclaim throughout the camp, " Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary" (xxxvi. 3-7). We are strongly reminded of the overflowing liberality of the first congregation of Christians who "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need" (Acts ii. 45 ; iv. 34-37).

The way in which Bezaleel the grandson of Hur, and Aholiab of the tribe of Dan, were qualified by the Spirit of God for all the work they had to do, as goldsmiths, and silversmiths, and stone cutters, and engravers, and embroiderers, and weavers, and skilled workmen in all manner of cunning work, is a striking lesson to teach us that skill in all those arts by which nations are enriched, and society is embellished and raised in the scale of civilisation, is the gift of God. And the way in which both the materials for the work, and the workmen capable of using them, were found in the most unlikely place, even in the Sinaitic desert, and among a fugitive race just escaped from bondage, illustrates the great truth which breaks out continually in the history of mankind throughout the ages, that God raises up fitting instruments for every work which He purposes to be done.

The chief features to be observed in the Tabernacle and its accompaniments, are—

1. The ark, the most sacred of all the furniture of the Tabernacle, called by the Psalmist, "the ark of God's strength" (Ps. cxxxii. 8), was the symbol of God's presence. It was a chest made of acacia wood, and overlaid with pure gold. It was called "the ark of the covenant," because in it were placed the tables of the law (Exod. xxv. 16.; Deut.

xxx. 26 ; Heb. ix. 4). On it rested the mercy-seat, on which stood the cherubim, over-shadowing it with their outstretched wings (Heb. ix. 5), whence God is spoken of as "dwelling between the cherubim." See Exod. xxv. 18-22 ; Num. vii. 89 ; 1 Sam. iv. 4 ; Ps. lxxx. 1 ; xcix. 1. It stood within the veil, in the Holy of Holies.

2. The two altars. (a) The brazen altar, or altar of burnt-offering, which stood outside in the court of the Tabernacle. (b) The golden altar, or altar of incense, which stood inside the Tabernacle, in front of the veil, separating it from the Holy of Holies (Exod. xl. 5, 26 ; Luke i. 9, 11).

3. The table of shew-bread, which stood also in the Tabernacle, without the veil, northward ; and the golden candlestick with its seven burners,* over against the table, southwards (Exod. xl. 22-24 ; Rev. i. 13, 14).

4. The laver for the priests to wash in before entering the Tabernacle, or offering sacrifices on the altar. It stood in the court, between the altar of burnt-offering and the entrance into the tent of meeting (Exod. xl. 30-32 ; xxx. 18-21).

5. The priestly garments, with the breastplate, and the ephod, and the Urim and Thummim for the high priest (Exod. xxxix. 2-31 ; xxviii. 30 ; Lev. viii. 8).

With regard to the symbolical teaching of the Tabernacle, we may add to what was said on chaps. xxiv.-xxx. (p. 116), now that we have seen the relative *position* of the different articles of the Tabernacle furniture, what striking lessons their position conveys. Outside the Tabernacle stood the altar of burnt sacrifice, teaching us that sinful man cannot draw near to God until he has been purged from his sin by the blood of an atoning and accepting sacrifice. Then the laver, where the priest had to wash before entering the Tabernacle, teaches us that those that are cleansed from guilt by sacrifice, must also have their hearts purified by

* The only representation of this golden candlestick is that sculptured on the Arch of Titus, at Rome, where it appears as part of the spoil taken by Titus from Jerusalem (see an engraving in the Dict. of the Bible, article *Candlesticks*).

God's Holy Spirit, before they can come into God's presence. The golden altar of incense within the Tabernacle typifies the blessed employment of prayer and praise which is the privilege of God's saints. The table of shew-bread, and the golden candlestick, within the Tabernacle, exhibit the spiritual food, and the spiritual light, that are found in the Church of God. The priestly garments and anointing oil teach us with what preparation of heart, with what sanctity and purity of life and character, with what reverence and self consecration, we must worship God; while the high priest, entering once a year into the Holy of Holies, sets before us in lively colours the Blessed Person of our great High Priest, entered for ever within the veil with His own most precious Blood, and ever interceding for His Church, clothed in the spotless robe of His own perfect righteousness, crowned with the glory of His own supreme merits, and exalted as the Christ of God, above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

The section closes with the information that all was completed, and the Tabernacle reared in the first month of the second year, since their departure from Egypt (Num. i. 1). And when all was finished the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle within, so that even Moses himself could not enter into the tent of meeting.

The last thing recorded in this book is the very interesting fact, so significant of that loving Providence which orders all the concerns of the children of God, that the future movements of the Israelites were regulated absolutely by the cloud which abode upon the tent of meeting. As long as the cloud was not taken up they journeyed not, but abode still where they were. But when the cloud was taken up, then they went onward according to the order prescribed in the Book of Numbers, ii. iv. We learn from Num. x. 11 that the Israelites took their first journey from the wilderness of Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month of the second year after they came out of the land of Egypt, *i.e.*, one month and twenty days after the rearing of the Tabernacle.

On reviewing briefly the ground trodden in our consideration of the first two books of Holy Scripture, two aspects chiefly strike us.

1. The wonderful richness and variety and interest and beauty, combined with simplicity, which pervade the whole narrative. Then as we penetrate the meaning of what we read, the most instructive lessons of religion, of morals, of history, of practical life, open out before us. The idea of God is presented to us with great sublimity, yet in a manner that brings home closely to us the near relation in which we stand to God in the daily actions of life. The different shades of character of the great actors in the scenes brought before us have a vivid distinctness which make us feel as if we had known the several individuals of whom we read. The transparent impartiality with which the faults as well as the virtues of the Scripture heroes are laid bare, inspires us with wonderful confidence in the truth of the narrator. But above all the unity and continuity of the purpose of God, advancing steadily through the ages, by the successive agency of the most diverse instruments, and by the operation of the most various natural causes, and looking forward to what we now know in the light of accomplishment, the coming of Jesus Christ into the world to be the Saviour of the world—this leaves upon every thoughtful mind such a conviction of the Divine origin of the Book which records these things, as nothing can weaken or efface.

2. As regards the authenticity of the Books. We notice a great number of incidents which, humanly speaking, could have occurred to nobody if they had not actually happened. Persons are named, and nations are spoken of, and arts, as, *e.g.*, that of writing, are presupposed to exist, and the intercourse of nations remote from one another is related, and conditions of the world are supposed, which a hundred years ago seemed to be impossible or highly improbable. As cuneiform inscriptions have been deciphered, and Egyptian hieroglyphics have unrolled their treasures, these have been shown to be most strictly accurate and true. Again the scene of the largest portion of these two Books has been laid

partly in Egypt, partly in the wilderness of the Sinaitic peninsula. The knowledge of Egyptian customs, institutions, manners, politics, natural history, public works, government, contemporary history, as we now know them by the fresh light of Egyptian monuments, added to the old testimony of Greek historians, which breaks out in the whole narrative, is such as could only have been acquired by residence in Egypt. While the portion of the narrative which deals with the wilderness is so true "in colour" to life in the desert, so accurate in its description of localities, so graphic in its views of the dangers and hardships of wilderness life, as these have been severally set forth by the most accurate modern travellers, that we are compelled to believe that the writer of these pages was an eye-witness and an actor in those events, which he describes with such photographic accuracy and such persuasive power. A devout and candid mind, when fully informed on the subject, cannot help rejecting the idea of forgery and fiction in connection with these Books as repugnant alike to human reason and Divine authority. And with these words we close our remarks on Genesis and Exodus.

LEVITICUS.

I. TITLE, CONTENTS, PERIOD.—This third portion of the *Book of the Law* or *Pentateuch*, a book composed in one continuous narrative in five sections, was headed by the Jews *vay-yikra*, its first word, meaning *and he called*, but indicating nothing whatever of the contents, as though the Jews would not venture to introduce a new word into their sacred writings, even for a title. For this heading the Greek Septuagint translators, not so scrupulous, substituted one of their own, which should designate the subject matter, namely *Λευιτικόν*, *what relates to Levi*. The Latin Vulgate translators, following the Greek title, but taking a still further liberty, made the heading **Liber Leviticus**, by which what was a mere section of one continuous text was constituted a separate book. Proceeding in the same direction still further, the English version expands the title to, **The Fifth Book of Moses called Leviticus**. Some ancient versions, and one of the Talmuds, call it *The Law of the Priests*, a title which describes the contents about as well as *Leviticus*, both of them, however, being really inadequate. Besides ceremonial instructions for functionaries, there are solemn precepts bearing on the lives and principles of the people at large, with ample warnings that the nation is intended to occupy the promised land as a God-fearing one only. The period covered by the book is a single month, namely from the erection of the tabernacle at Sinai to the numbering of the people there, *i.e.*, from the first day of the first month to the first day of the second month, in the second year from the departure from Egypt. In not a few passages Canaan

is referred to as the land which it is the nation's object to reach (xxiii. 10; xxv. 2, &c.), and thrice by name (xiv. 34; xviii. 3; xxv. 38); while in three Sinai is expressly stated to be the locality where the laws then reciting were given to Moses by God (vii. 38; xxv. 1; xxvii. 34).

II. MOSES RECEIVES DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS FROM GOD (*Lev.* i. 1, 2).—"And the Lord called unto Moses and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them." In these opening words, the Book of Leviticus proclaims itself a record of an express communication from God to Moses for the people of Israel. The form of words, sometimes slightly varied, is afterwards repeated every time a fresh subject is introduced, and may be found at the head of the following chapters: xi., xii., xvii.-xxv., xxvii.; while another shorter one, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying," is seen everywhere. The book concludes as it opens, its very last words being, "These are the commandments which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai." Planted in the very midst, or at the close, of many an instruction, adding emphasis to it, is the expression, "I am the Lord," declaring who is the ultimate author of the entire body of injunctions.

III. GENERAL VIEW OF THE SACRIFICES (*Lev.* i. 3-vii.).—The ritual of the Tabernacle was all based on the altar services, with which, therefore, the book opens; and five offerings are specified, the Burnt, the Meat, the Peace, the Sin, the Trespass; upon which collectively, before proceeding to each in detail, we remark as follows—(1.) In all cases but one the offering was an animal, the exception being the meat-offering, which consisted of the fruits of the ground. "Meat" in English did not at one time denote flesh-food exclusively, as at present. (2.) The animals offered in sacrifice were bullocks, sheep, goats, all young or full-grown, doves, pigeons; the gradations having reference to the offerer's

means. In quadrupeds, male animals were the rule, but not without exception. (3.) The animal was not slain upon the altar itself, but on the ground ; and, as a rule, at the north side of the altar. The mode of slaughter practised by the Jews of the present time is considered by them as the one employed in the ancient sacrifices. The bullock is never first stunned, as with us. That and all other animals are brought mechanically to the ground, or laid upon a stage ; a very sharp knife is expeditiously drawn, once only, across the throat, and death is almost instantaneous with the least possible pain. The blood is caught in a bowl. In the sacrificial rite, the victim was not further dealt with until the blood had been entirely removed. (4.) The victim was led to the altar, and there presented to the priest, by the offerer himself, who on delivering it laid his hand upon its head, the meaning of which action we are not told. It is nowhere said that he made confession of sin along with that gesture ; but this is often assumed from the case of the scape-goat, to be mentioned in its place. If we hesitate as to this, the action at any rate signified the offerer presenting the sacrifice and himself to God. The offerings in which the hand was thus laid were the burnt, the peace, and the sin. (5.) The victim is always represented as slain and flayed by the offerer ; but as ordinary persons would be quite incompetent for such operations, we must assume that the offerer was merely responsible for the duty, which might be discharged for him by a professional person accustomed to it, all being done with skill, expedition, and cleanliness. In the case of a public sacrifice, a priest or Levite would be responsible for the slaughter, employing (as we may presume) an expert deputy if needful. In the case of a private offering, the priest's functions (after examining and passing the victim) began in bringing it into contact with the altar.

IV. THE BURNT-OFFERING (OLAH) (*Lev. i.*).—The special design of this sacrifice is not defined further than by an intimation that the offerer obtained through it “an atonement,” or a reconciliation (*i. 4* ; *xvi. 24*). The priest's office

was to sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar ; and when the offerer had flayed and divided up the carcass, to place the pieces upon wood burning on the altar, and thus burn "all on the altar, to be a burnt-sacrifice (*olah*), an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord" (vers. 5-9). The burnt-offering, much more ancient than the Law itself, which did not invent it, but only regulated it, dated from the most primitive period, and sacrifices were offered under the same name (*olah*) not only in the line of Abraham but outside it. Noah's offering after the flood (Gen. viii. 20), and Abraham's on Mount Moriah (Gen. xxii. 2-8, 13) were of this description ; as were those of Job and his friends (Job i. 5 ; xlii. 8), those intended by Moses on leaving Egypt (Exod. x. 25), and that offered by Jethro previous to the Law (Exod. xviii. 12). In a multitude of instances the burnt-offering occurs all through the books of the Old Testament, and it is from an examination of these alone that we can determine the leading idea and intention of it. All the examples (some more clearly than others) suggest that the burnt-offering expressed generally an acknowledgment of God, faith in Him, homage and submission to Him, a means of approaching and worshipping Him. Consistently with such a view the burnt-offering was prominent in all state religious functions, and bore such a representative character, that it was never, for even a day, omitted in the intention of the Law of Moses, after that Law was promulgated. The morning lamb and the evening lamb (Exod. xxix. 42) were burnt-offerings, and it would seem to have been principally in consequence of them, that the altar of "burnt-offering" was so called ; for the brazen altar received *all* offerings, not the burnt-offering alone. Nor is the fact to be lost sight of, that the burnt-offering stands at the very head of the list, which the first chapters of Leviticus treat of.

V. THE MEAT-OFFERING (MINCHAH) (*Lev.* ii. ; vi. 14-23 ; vii. 9, 10).—The word *minchah* means gift, which does not much help us to define the purpose and intention of

this offering, and these must be sought for in the various passages where it occurs.

The material was either flour, or new corn parched and bruised, and in either case accompanied with oil, frankincense, and salt. The flour might be baked in cakes on a pan, but without leaven. On receiving the flour from the offerer, the priest took a handful of it, which as representing the whole quantity was called "the memorial" of it, and this he burnt upon the altar, "to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord" (ii. 2). The remainder belonged to the priests, to be eaten by them, not at home, but in the court of the Tabernacle; for having been, by virtue of the "memorial," itself upon the altar, it was "a thing most holy." If cakes were brought, a piece of one of them was used for the memorial, and all the rest was dealt with as the flour. The unground corn was brought not in the grain, but in the ear, which was to be fresh (R.V.). The grains when separated were parched with fire and bruised (R.V.), the memorial and the bulk being then dealt with as before. As the ears were to be the first-fruits of the crop, this form of the meat-offering was possible in no other than one brief portion of the year.

The first mention of a *minchah* offered to the Lord is Cain's "fruit of the ground," which was rejected (Gen. iv. 3, 4). Abel's offering from his flock is also called *minchah*, not *olah*. It followed Cain's and was accepted. An altar and a sacrifice are reasonably presumed, but they are not named, so that the first mentioned *olah* was Noah's. The second known *minchah*, in Ex. xxix. 41, was after the giving of the Law. Should it occasion surprise that an offering repulsed when presented by Cain was expressly commanded in the Mosaic system, the difficulty will clear up, probably, as we proceed. In the passage last referred to, the meat-offering is of the class of public ones, those namely forming part of the constant and official service of the Tabernacle, not brought by a private offerer. It was to be offered along with the morning and evening burnt-offering; and consequently as there was to be a daily or continual burnt-

offering (Num. iv. 16), so there was to be a daily or continual meat-offering (Neh. x. 33). The rejected *minchah* of the son of Adam is now indeed in a place of honour, associated permanently with the lamb which was the express type of the Lamb of God.

Other passages in which the meat-offering is associated with the burnt-offering are : Exod. xl. 29 ; Lev. ix. 17 ; x. 12, 13 ; xiv. 20, 31 ; Judg. xiii. 19, 23 ; 1 Chron. xxi. 23 ; 1 Kings viii. 64 ; xviii. 29, 36 ; 2 Kings iii. 20 ; xvi. 13, 15 ; Ezek. xlv. 17 ; Ezra vii. 7 ; Neh. x. 33 ; xiii. 5, 9.

From this survey we gather that the meat-offering is ever a concomitant of other offerings, which are all animal ones, and that it is almost invariably the concomitant of the burnt-offering, next to which it stands, and no doubt for that very reason stands, in the list of the offerings. This high rank indicates its great importance, an importance entirely due to its association with the burnt-offering. Nor, if we may conclude from that frequent expression, "and their meat-offerings," which so frequently follows the mention of burnt-offerings, were these last ever complete without them.

Cain's error is now not difficult to see. His *minchah* was rejected because presented as an independent offering, sufficient in itself. The Mosaic *minchah* is seen occupying its right place, which is one entirely subordinate to, and dependent for its validity upon, an offering which had given up the blood of life ; for "without shedding of blood there is no remission."

It should here be noted that a drink-offering (*něsěk*), though absent from the early chapters of Leviticus now before us, occurs in xxiii. 13, 18, 37, and in many other parts of the Old Testament. The term first appears in Gen. xxxv. 14, where Jacob, having erected a pillar, "poured a drink-offering thereon." The next mention (Exod. xxix. 40, 41) connects it with the altar ritual, and it is enjoined as a rule that the daily lamb of a burnt-offering, both morning and evening, is to be accompanied with a meat-offering (as already noticed), and with "the fourth part of a hin of wine

for a drink-offering." As the hin was equal to our gallon the drink-offering was in this case one quart. In several passages besides, we find that "the continual burnt-offering" was accompanied by a drink-offering (Num. xxviii. 10, 15, 24, 31; xxix. 11, 16, 19, 34), while in other burnt-offerings a drink-offering continually appears as annexed to the meat-offering, the quantity composing it varying from one-fourth of a hin to one-third and one-half, never therefore exceeding half a gallon. The manner of its offering is nowhere stated; but from the prohibition (Exod. xxx. 9) of a drink-offering being poured upon the incense altar within the Tabernacle, it is inferred that it *was* poured upon the outer altar, as also the reason of the thing would suggest; and it is supposed, after the analogy of the meat-offering, that when a small quantity of the wine had been poured as a memorial upon the altar, the bulk was assigned to the priests for their consumption along with the meat-offering in the court of the Tabernacle. It should be added that idolaters offered drink-offerings to false gods (Deut. xxxii. 38; Isa. lvii. 6; lxv. 11; Jer. vii. 18; xix. 13; xxxii. 19; xliv. 17, 18, 19, 25; Ezek. xx. 28).

VI. THE PEACE-OFFERING (SHELEM) (*Lev.* iii.).—The victim was from the herd or from the flock, a male or a female, and the manner of offering it was as follows. The fat upon the inwards, the kidneys, the caul upon the liver, having been removed by the offerer from the body of the animal, were burnt by the priest upon the altar, as an "offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord." This "fat" was altogether distinct from that which is embedded in streaks in different parts of the animal's body, and not prohibited to the Israelites as food. These parts being set aside, all the remainder of the victim was divided as follows. The bulk went to the offerer, while the priest received the breast or brisket and the right shoulder, which were taken possession of with two ceremonious movements, the shoulder being heaved, or lifted upwards, the breast waved from side to side, causing these portions to be named the "heave shoulder," and the "wave breast" (Ex. xxix. 38; Lev. vii. 15,

16, 31, 32, 34). Thus apportioned the victim was to be eaten the same day, or on the second day at farthest, and any remainder burnt ; for eaten on the third day "it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it ; it shall be an abomination" (vii. 15-18), language which implies that a feeding on this offering, if within the prescribed period, was a religious act inseparable from the sacrifice itself.

The wave breast and the heave shoulder were eaten in a clean place by the priests, their sons and their daughters (x. 14, 15). The offerer's portion was presumably disposed of (for nothing is said) in a similar manner ; and if so, the peace-offering seems to have given an opportunity for social re-unions among families and kinsfolk, on a somewhat large scale, the poor probably included, and other invited guests. Occasions calling for a peace-offering were, "a thanksgiving," "a vow," or if one desired to make "a voluntary offering" without any definite reason (Lev. vii. 12, 13, 15, 16 ; xix. 5 ; xxii. 21 ; Prov. vii. 14). In the case of "a vow," the offering would come at its termination, as in that of a Nazarite (Num. vi. 14-18).

A characteristic of the peace-offering was its being entirely optional, not exacted, or in any way penal. It was obligatory, indeed, at the termination of a vow ; but then the vow itself was optional. Another aspect of the peace-offering will come into view, as we proceed to a series of historical examples.

It is first mentioned (Exod. xx. 24) immediately after the delivery of the Law, when it was ordered that burnt-offerings and peace-offerings must be sacrificed on an altar of earth. The peace-offering, therefore, like the burnt-offering, appears to have been known before the regulations of Leviticus concerning it were given. Its first recorded celebration was when Moses at Sinai, before the consecration of the priests, caused burnt-offerings and peace-offerings to be sacrificed (Exod. xxiv. 5). The next instance was in that awful act of apostacy, the worship of the golden calf, when the people, having "offered burnt-offerings and brought peace-offerings

. . . sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play"—a perverted worship and perverted festivity. Peace-offerings were among the first offered by Aaron after his consecration (Lev. ix. 18, 22). After Jordan was crossed, burnt-offerings and peace-offerings were to be offered on an altar to be erected, "and thou shalt eat there and rejoice before the Lord thy God" (Deut. xxvii. 7). Here, on a most worthy occasion, was the first recorded sanctioned festivity connected with this offering. Among later instances we may notice 1 Sam. xi. 15 ; 2 Sam. vi. 17, 18 ; 1 Chron. xvi. 1, 2 ; 1 Kings iii. 15 ; viii. 63, 64 ; 2 Chron. xxix. 35. The peace-offering is seldom mentioned except in close association with a burnt-offering ; but it is occasionally, which shows its independence. Why the combination should have occurred on great festive occasions seems plain. The burnt-offering, which took the lead of all offerings, had in itself no means of festivity, being wholly devoted to the altar, and but for its association with the peace-offering could have provided none. Thus the sacred solemnity of a whole burnt-offering could have its joyous side ; and in like manner the Gospel, which reveals the true Lamb of burnt-offering, can bid the Christian "rejoice in the Lord always ;" "Christ our Pass-over is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast."

From three passages, and especially from the third, it might be supposed that there was a distinct sacrifice bearing the name of *sacrifice of thanksgiving*, or *thank-offering*. Thus in Ps. cvii. 22, "Let them sacrifice the sacrifice of thanksgiving" (*tôdah*) ; Ps. cxvi. 7, "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving ;" 2 Chron. xxxiii. 16, Manasseh offered peace-offerings and thank-offerings. In each of these passages the peace-offering alone is meant, but offered for thanksgiving, according to Lev. vii. 11-15, where the peace-offerings so offered are actually called *peace-offerings for thanksgiving* and *sacrifice of thanksgiving*, the word for thanksgiving being *tôdah*. In the third of the above texts the Hebrew is literally "sacrifices of peace and thanksgiving," which is only another way of expressing *peace-offerings for thanksgiving*.

So far as we have yet gone, the order in which the offerings are enumerated in Lev. i.-vii., viz., burnt, meat, peace, strikingly correspond with the order in which they are mentioned, in those historical instances in which the same three offerings alone are mentioned. The burnt-offering, which heads the list in Leviticus, is always named first in the historical examples. The meat-offering, the second in the Leviticus list, ever stands second to the burnt-offering in the examples.

VII. THE SIN-OFFERING (CHATTAH) (*Lev. iv.*). The particular occasion on which this offering was required is thus defined at the outset (*iv. 2*): "If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done;" in other words, if one should fall into transgression, yet not wilfully. Four classes of persons are specified: (1.) If the priest that is anointed (*i.e.*, the high priest) do sin according to the sin of the people (*ver. 3*). (2.) If the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly. (3.) When a ruler hath sinned and done somewhat through ignorance (*ver. 22*). (4.) If any one of the common people sin through ignorance (*ver. 27*). "Through ignorance" may be considered to mean unwittingly, inadvertently. The offerings required to be made were a bullock for the first and second cases, a kid for the third, a lamb for the fourth. The same parts of the animal were burnt on the altar as in the case of the peace-offering, namely, the fat that is upon the inwards (*i.e.*, the suet), the two kidneys, and the caul (*iv. 8-10*). The blood of the victim and the bulk of the carcass were disposed of in two ways, according to the class to which the offerer belonged, and these different ways require attention. (1.) In the first two cases, namely, of the high priest and of the whole congregation. The high priest taking a portion of the blood into the Tabernacle, sprinkled it with his finger seven times before the vail, and put some on the horns of the golden altar of incense. All the rest was poured out at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offering (*iv. 5-7, 16-18*).

Except in these two cases, the blood of the sin-offering was never taken by the high priest into the Tabernacle. As to the carcass, the whole of it, except what was burnt on the altar as already mentioned, was carried without the camp to a clean place, where the ashes of the altar (always wood ashes) were deposited, and there burnt on wood (iv. 11, 12, 21). In these two cases only, not in all cases, was the sin-offering burnt without the camp, and it is expressly commanded (vi. 30) that no sin-offering whereof any of the blood is taken into the Tabernacle to make atonement for the holy place is to be eaten; "it shall be burnt in the fire." The holiest parts of the Tabernacle were considered in these two cases to have incurred pollution, and to need cleansing.

(2.) In the last two cases, those of a ruler and one of the people, the ordinary priest put some of the blood with his finger upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, pouring the rest at its foot. In the direction of Lev. iv., nothing is said as to the disposal of the carcass, but in vi. 20 the officiating priest was to eat it in a (R.V.) holy place in the court of the Tabernacle. So also in x. 17-19, where the priests are chidden by Moses for not having carried out this regulation, but having burnt the sin-offering. They were reminded that inasmuch as the blood had not been carried into the Tabernacle, the flesh ought to have been eaten. So again, Num. xviii. 9, 10, where "the most holy place" must mean a holy place in the court as before. The eating of the sin-offering occurs again in Ezek. xliv. 29; xlv. 20. Atonement for the offerer made by the priest in the sin-offering is mentioned in three cases out of the four (iv. 20, 26, 31), the omitted one being that of the high priest when officiating for himself as the offerer. Whenever the sin-offering was offered with the burnt-offering, it took the precedence, notwithstanding that the burnt-offering occupies the first place in the Leviticus list. Such was markedly the case on the annual day of Atonement (further on); and it suggests that the acceptableness of the worshipper and his service, as indicated by the burnt-offering, presupposed his reconciliation and forgiveness. In the ritual of the law, a

sin-offering was required from a mother after giving birth (Lev. xii. 8); in the cleansing of a leper (xiv. 19, 22); at the feast of Pentecost (xxiii. 19); from a Nazarite on the completion of his vow (Num. vi. 13-21); at the consecration of Levites (viii. 8, 12); at new moons and the feast of unleavened bread (Num. xxviii. 15, 22); at the feast of trumpets, and on each day of the feast of tabernacles (xxix. 5, 11, 16, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38). Passing from ritual to historical instances, we notice the sin-offerings in Exod. xxix. 13, 14; 2 Chron. xxix. 21-24; Ezra. viii. 35; Neh. x. 33. The frequent appearance of the sin-offering in the ritual is very observable; the occasions for it seem perpetual, and the Israelites were in need of it at every turn. It appears to have been for ever preaching the text, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Ps. xix. 12). But not less noticeable is the comparative paucity of historical instances of this offering.

VIII. TRESPASS-OFFERING (ASHAM) (*Lev. v.-vii. 1-7*).—If one incurred guilt in any of the following ways, namely, by failing to give all the testimony he was adjured or sworn in court to give (Lev. v. 1); or (vers. 2, 3), by contracting an uncleanness which became hidden from him (*viz.*, through a culpable neglect and forgetfulness, so that he had omitted the simple purification which the law had provided), and subsequently came to know it (*i.e.*, to remember it with a troubled mind); or by making rash and unlawful oaths (ver. 4), which similarly became "hidden" or forgotten and were recalled to mind; then, should he confess that he has sinned, and should he "bring a trespass-offering for his sin," namely a female lamb or a female kid "for a sin-offering," the priests "made an atonement for him concerning his sin" (ver. 6). A poor man might bring "for his trespass" two turtle-doves or two young pigeons, "one for a sin-offering and the other for a burnt-offering," to be offered in this order, both together completing one trespass-offering. If unable to afford the birds, he might bring "the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin-offering," but

not accompanied, as in the meat-offering, with oil and frankincense, "for it is a sin-offering" (vers. 7-12). The intermingling of the terms *sin* and *trespass*, *sin-offering* and *trespass-offering*, in this branch of the subject may be accounted for by the circumstance that the trespasses in view were, ilke the sins of the sin-offering, chiefly due to ignorance or inadvertence. That intermingling which creates some difficulty, and has suggested doubt as to whether the passage properly refers to a trespass-offering, or not rather to a fresh and special class of sin-offering, leads us to observe that the trespass-offering and the sin-offering, though fundamentally alike in their main purpose, which was to provide atonement for wrong actions, differed in points of form, though not entirely. Thus a sin-offering might consist of a bullock, or a male kid, or a female kid, or a female lamb. A trespass-offering might consist of a ram, or a female kid, or a female lamb, or two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, or the tenth of an ephah of flour. When, therefore, it is expressed as above, "a trespass-offering for a sin-offering," it cannot mean that the trespass-offering became in itself a sin-offering, but it must mean that in these particular cases, where a sin-offering might have been expected, a trespass-offering was a substitute for one, and performed the office of one. The altar ritual of the trespass-offering closely follows that of the second and third cases of the sin-offering, namely, where the blood was not taken into the Tabernacle, nor the flesh burnt without the camp. The blood of the trespass-offering was sprinkled round about the altar, the interior fat, &c., burnt on the altar of burnt-offering, the flesh eaten by the priests in a holy place. "As the sin-offering, so is the trespass-offering; there is one law for them; the priest that maketh atonement therewith shall have it" (Lev. vii. 1-7). Resuming now the cases of trespass-offerings where we left off, we shall find fewer difficulties. If the trespass, through ignorance, has been "in the holy things of the Lord," and reparation is made with a fifth part (*i.e.*, 20 per cent.) additional, a ram was brought for a trespass-offering and the offence was atoned for. The

mention of reparation and a fine indicates that the trespass here was some unintended fraud on the Tabernacle revenue, in tithes perhaps. If the trespass consisted of wronging a neighbour wittingly and intentionally, as in violating a trust, robbing with violence or deceit, concealing with falsehood and perjury lost property that had been found ; even then a trespass-offering would be received and atonement made, but on one condition, that the trespasser brought full restoration and a fifth part extra as a fine (vi. 1-7). Here we have passed from trespasses of ignorance to trespasses of intention. In the cleansing of a leper (Lev. xiv.) there was a trespass-offering of a lamb, besides a sin- and a burnt-offering, not only taking precedence of both these, but occupying by far the most prominent position. Some of the blood was placed by the priest's finger on two or three places of the leper's body (vers. 14, 25). The flesh belonged to the priest, "for as the sin-offering is the priest's, so is the trespass-offering" (ver. 13), another intimation of the close relation of the two. The fact of the flesh of the trespass-offering being the priest's portion is here expressed in a manner unusual except in the case of a portion of the peace-offering. It was waved as "a wave offering before the Lord" (vers. 12, 24, 25). A man who allured away a bondmaid betrothed to a husband, they (marg. and R.V.) were punished ; and if the man brought the trespass-offering of a ram, the priest made atonement for him and he was forgiven (Lev. xix. 20-22). His offering availed not apart from punishment. If one sinned by a fraudulent trespass against another, and confessed it, with full reparation, and a fifth part in addition, to the injured person, or to his kinsman, or if there were no kinsman, to the Lord in the person of the priest, the trespass-offering of a ram was accepted for him and his sin atoned for (Num. v. 6-8). Leaving now the ritual directions and coming to historical instances, we note that the trespass-offering, as it stands last in the list, so it is the last of the five to be mentioned. Its earliest occurrence is in Lev. v. 6, after the promulgation of the law and the rearing of the Tabernacle : "And he shall bring his trespass-offering

unto the Lord." No trespass-offering was offered in the consecration of Aaron and his sons, and none by Aaron on entering upon his ministry, although on both those occasions all the other offerings were. The earliest actual trespass-offering recorded was not a Mosaic one at all, for it consisted of the five golden emerods which the Philistines, by the advice of their own priests, sent back with the ark (1 Sam. vi. 3, 4, 8, 17). Nor is there any instance of a trespass-offering after this. In Ezekiel's Temple, the ritual was to include the sin-offering and the trespass-offering (Ezek. xl. 39; xlii. 13; xliv. 29). We may notice here that in the Messianic passage of Isa. liii. 10, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," the Hebrew for "offering" is *asham*, trespass offering.

The two allied sacrifices, the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, can be clearly distinguished in their rituals, and the offences treated under each can be to some extent. The sin-offering was chief in rank and dignity. It was for the high priest, for the nation; it was for the holy of holies, the mercy-seat and the golden altar; it was for the great day of atonement; it was for those countless lapses and shortcomings measured by a perfect law by man forgotten or never truly realised. The trespass-offering dealt with the poor leper, and with those obvious offences which the word trespass best expresses, of which the damages could be assessed, and for which the wrong-doer could bring a fine along with his sacrifice. With a little mental effort, therefore, we can broadly distinguish the two and fix them by a few typical instances. But at times they run into each other and mix perplexingly, completely baffling every attempt to construct a classifying formula which shall accurately include the members of each category. The ancient experts who had to administer the ritual laws were no doubt equal to their duty, but for the profitable reading of Holy Scripture now, absolute exactitude would not appear to be necessary.

The various applications of these two solemn offerings, as detailed in chapter after chapter, reveal a very close teaching of the heart and searching of the conscience made by

the law of Moses ; and this at all events is perfectly clear, that the Israelites were not encouraged to suppose that an offence of moral turpitude or scandalous shortcomings in life could be condoned by a ceremonial performance. That they would attempt so to delude themselves is certain ; for it has ever been in the nature of man to do so. But the prophetic writings abundantly show the efforts made by the inspired masters of Israel to call such antinomianism, which is the plague of every age and every religious system, to severe account. Men who hated to be reformed, but never missed an offering, were rebuked in such language as the following :—

“I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices, or thy burnt-offerings, to have been continually before Me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds ; for every beast of the forest is Mine, and so are the cattle on a thousand hills. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. . . . But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldest take My covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest My words behind thee?” (Ps. l.)

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts ; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. . . . Wash you, make you clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes ; cease to do evil, learn to do well” (Isa. i.).

IX. THE PRIESTS CONSECRATED (*Lev. viii.*).—At the door of the Tabernacle, close to the altar and the laver, in sight of the nation assembled far and near, Aaron and his sons were made priests, by rites which Moses himself performed according to instructions divinely communicated to him in detail. The father and his four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazer, Ithamar, having been first washed or bathed, were robed as follows in what were to be the vestments of their

office. The case of Aaron is very markedly distinguished from that of his sons, though he here bears in common with them the title of priest only. Upon him were successively placed an inner long white garment girded close to the body, and named a **coat** ; then a shorter blue one reaching to the knees, the **robe of the ephod** ; next the **ephod** itself, richly variegated and shorter, girded to the body. Upon the chest was placed the **breastplate of judgment**, consisting of two square pieces of woven work, one behind the other, the outer one studded with twelve precious stones inscribed with the names of the tribes of Israel, and united at its lower edge with the lower edge of the inner piece, by which was formed a fold, or rest, or pocket. Another distinguishing feature of Aaron's official equipment was the **urim and thummim**, by which the divine will was indicated, and which appear to have rested on the inner fold just described. The nature of these seems to have completely baffled the ingenuity of expositors to explain with any approach to certainty ; but the opinion has found much favour that the articles in question were instruments for drawing lots. The words themselves, which are Hebrew, mean **lights** and **perfections**. Finally, upon Aaron's head was placed a covering, here called a **mitre**, resembling, it is thought, an Oriental turban. On its forefront it bore a **holy crown**, which was a golden plate inscribed with the words, **Holiness to the Lord**. At one stage of this ceremonial Moses poured upon Aaron's head the holy anointing oil. Sacrifices followed, a sin-offering, a burnt-offering, and a ram of consecration, with the blood of all of which Aaron was sprinkled. Thus washed, anointed, sprinkled, with water, oil, and sacrificial blood, Aaron was regarded as consecrated to the office of approaching God in the name and in the behalf of the people of Israel. The four sons, more simply robed, had but the long white **coat** for the body, and for the head a **bonnet** or (R.V.) **head-tire**. The sacrifices and the blood-sprinkling were repeated for them as in the case of their father. They were also anointed, but not with the same marked distinction. That they were to

be anointed at their consecration along with their father is stated in Exod. xxviii. 41 ; xl. 15 ; Lev. vii. 35, 36 ; and it was done at that later stage of the ceremony when the ram of consecration had been offered, Aaron himself participating in the same rite, when the blood of that offering along with the anointing oil was sprinkled upon both father and sons, and upon the robes of them all (Lev. viii. 30). Thus in Lev. x. 7, two of the sons, and in Num. iii. 3, all four are mentioned as having been anointed. It may be noted that Aaron, with all the marks and attributes of the priestly order, is nowhere called "high priest." The title is rarely found in the Old Testament, and only in the following places : Lev. xxi. 10 ; Num. xxxv. 25 (cf. Lev. iv. 3, 5, 16) ; Josh. xx. 6 ; 2 Kings xii. 9, 10 ; xxii. 4 ; 2 Chron. xxiv. 11 ; Neh. iii. 1 ; Zech. iii. 1, 8 ; vi. 11. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, but nowhere else, our Lord is often called High Priest (as in ii. 17), "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." The various articles of the priestly attire are nowhere in Scripture recognised as having individually any hidden meaning ; but taken altogether they obviously denote the holy nature of the sacred functions and the personal holiness with which priests must engage in them. The sacrifices and the blood-sprinkling in the rites of consecration no less pointedly signify that worship rendered to God, so far from being a favour or compliment or propitiation offered to Him, as the heathen of all ages and everywhere have imagined, is accepted by God out of His infinite condescension alone, and only after the worshipper, having acknowledged the iniquity of his very holiest acts, has been purified from it. "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness" (Ps. cxxxii. 9, 16) ; "And he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness" (Mal. iii. 3).

X. THE PRIESTS ENTER ON THEIR MINISTRY (*Lev.* ix.).—Various sacrifices were in the first place offered by them for themselves and the people, as directed by Moses ; by which was plainly intimated that the priests, arrayed as

they might be in holy garments, were but sinful in themselves, having no good thing of their own to bestow, and being incapable of becoming channels of divine grace to their brethren until themselves accepted by God and their iniquity atoned for. Aaron then standing upon the altar raised his hand towards the people and blessed them. Descending thence he and Moses went together into the Tabernacle, that being Aaron's first introduction into the holy place ; and on coming out again they both blessed the people, whereupon the glory of the Lord appeared to the whole multitude. Then there issued a fire from God which consumed all the burnt-offering upon the altar ; seeing which the people raised a shout and prostrated themselves on their faces to the ground, clearly recognising that God had accepted this whole service and ratified the appointment of Aaron. By a similar token of fire from heaven God (at a later day) accepted Manoah, Elijah, David, Solomon. It had become perfectly evident to the nation that they were being divinely instructed in the proper worship of that God who had given His law in Ten Commandments from Sinai and had brought them out of Egypt, their Father, Friend, and Sanctifier.

XI. THE DEATH OF NADAB AND ABIHU (*Lev. x.*).—With what object and motives we are not informed, these elder sons of Aaron, after their own device, took each of them a censer, and putting into it fire, upon which they cast incense, “offered strange fire before the Lord which He commanded them not.” Thereupon issued fire from the Lord, devouring them, and they died before the Lord. The same fire from God which accepted the authorised services, as already described, rejected the unauthorised ones along with those who offered them. This was a lesson to the priesthood that the ritual prescribed to them in such minute detail was not theirs to do what they liked with, but God's, to be carried out in every particular. The world was full of human inventions as to the way of approaching God. It pleased Him to reveal the (one and only) way in which He would be approached by

His covenant people Israel, and the part of His priests was to be docile and obedient learners. From the fact stated in Lev. xvi. 1, 2, that it was upon their death Aaron received instructions as to how the holy place was to be entered, it is to be inferred that it was the intention of the two wilful priests to pass within the vail ; but if so, they had not even entered the Tabernacle when they died "before the Lord," as their corpses were carried out of the camp "from before the sanctuary" (ver. 4).

XII. ANIMAL FOODS (*Lev. xi.*).—Rules are here laid down as to what animals might be used as food, and what not. Those that were allowed are classified generally as animals which both part the hoof and chew the cud. Chewing the cud is when an herbivorous animal, after swallowing its food almost in the state in which it was cropped, has the power of bringing it up again into its mouth for rechewing at its leisure, to secure a more perfect digestion. Such animals are readily recognised by the peculiar motion of their jaws when they are no longer grazing, and they have stomachs especially adapted to the process. In modern science they are *ruminants*. The ox, deer, sheep, goat kinds are ruminants, and as all these have parted or double hoofs, they were allowed as food. The camel, which is a ruminant, but does not part the hoof except in a very imperfect manner, was disallowed. The coney and the hare are forbidden on the ground of their not parting the hoof, though they chewed the cud. In strictness they do not chew the cud, not being ruminants ; but it was then the current belief, from their having that peculiar movement of the mouth. They were, therefore, classified as such, and as appearances might have caused mistakes, they were mentioned by appearances, in order to be forbidden. Swine, neither chewing the cud nor parting the hoof, were forbidden. The flesh of this animal, wholesome in northern climates, is the reverse in very warm ones. Among fish none might be eaten except those having both fins and scales, a rule which would exclude the eel ; but no instances are cited. For birds no general rule is laid

down, but a long list is given, all of them, as far as they can be identified, carnivorous, as the eagle, ossifrage, osprey, vulture, kite, raven, owl, night-hawk, cuckoo, hawk, little owl, cormorant, great owl, swan, pelican, gier-eagle, stork, heron, lapwing. Whether the birds now thus named are meant by the Hebrew words is, in several instances, very uncertain. Flying insects possessing long legs for leaping might be eaten, such as the cricket, grasshopper, locust, the last two of which are specified. What the creature called "beetle" was is not known. The insects that are here allowed are still eaten in the East.

XIII. PLAGUE OF LEPROSY (*Lev.* xiii.-xiv.).—How far this disorder was identical with the one now so named is uncertain. It began on the skin, and upon the appearance of a suspicious symptom, whether "a rising, a scab, or a bright spot," the patient was taken to the priest, who pronounced if it was leprosy or only "a scab." The leper was to have his clothes rent, his head bare, and a covering on his upper lip. He was to cry, Unclean, unclean, and dwell alone without the camp (xiii. 45, 46). In case of recovery the following rites admitted him to society (xiv. 4). Along with cedar-wood, scarlet (probably scarlet wool), and hyssop, two clean living birds were brought, and one of them killed in an earthen vessel over fresh water, which thus received its blood. Into this water were dipped the above materials, made up perhaps into an instrument for sprinkling, and also the living bird, which was then allowed to fly away. Lastly, the water was sprinkled seven times over the person to be cleansed. Among the rites, which spread over some days, a trespass-offering was particularly prominent, and there were besides a sin-, a burnt-, and a meat-offering. The leprosy which infected garments and walls could have borne that name only from an analogy to the human disease, and may have been occasioned, some have thought, by a kind of hidden fungus. What significance of a spiritual nature attached to this disease is nowhere expressly stated; but

with one voice interpreters have ever regarded it as the outward symbol of sin.

XIV. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (*Lev. xvi.*).—The tenth day of the seventh month was the only one in the year, when the holy of holies might be entered in the course of divine service. The directions on this subject were given “after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the Lord and died ;” and they were intended for the guidance of Aaron, lest he should die like his sons. The robes worn by Aaron on that day appear to have been those of an ordinary priest (ver. 4). For himself he provided a young bullock for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering, and the people brought him on their own behalf two young goats for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering. Which of the two goats was to die he determined by lot. Having offered his sin-offering for himself and his house, he filled a censer with burning embers from the altar, and with this in one hand, and incense in the other, he entered within the vail, filling the holy of holies with a cloud, and thus hiding the divine glory, so that he died not. Leaving the censer there, he went back to the brazen altar to fetch the victim’s blood, which apparently he could not have carried along with the censer the first time, and taking this into the holy of holies sprinkled it upon and before the mercy-seat. He returned once more to the outer altar, where the people’s sin-offering, the goat allotted for death, was offered, and with the blood of this he passed for the third time within the vail, and sprinkled as before. This done he went “out unto the altar that is before the Lord” (ver. 18), which must mean the golden altar of incense, upon which he put and sprinkled the blood of both sin-offerings, in two actions, one of which made an atonement for the altar itself, while the other cleansed and hallowed it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. An atonement had now been made for the holy place and for the Tabernacle, “because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins” (vers. 16, 20). By this time he

had already perhaps brought out the censer from the holy of holies. Taking the goat allotted for life, and laying his hands upon him, Aaron confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and sent him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat bore upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited, and there he was let go for a scape-goat, or in the Hebrew, for *Azazel* (and so R.V.). The meaning of this word is not settled, but the uncertainty is immaterial, as the main point is perfectly clear, that the sins of the nation were removed from God's sight for ever. Re-entering the Tabernacle, Aaron exchanged his "linen garments," the plain ones in which he had been officiating, for "his garments" (vers. 23, 24), *i.e.*, the robes in which he was consecrated (cf. Lev. xxi. 10), his rich and beautiful ones, betokening exultation and joy; and coming forth in these (ver. 24), he made another atonement for himself and the people by burnt-offerings for both.

This annual day of atonement was to be one of humiliation, "for on that day shall the priest make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. And this shall be an everlasting statute to you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (vers. 30, 33, 34).

On this whole narrative we observe—(I.) The exact number of times that Aaron passed the veil is a matter of calculation and interpretation. Twice we are sure of, for he carried in the blood for the priesthood and for the people separately. His taking in the censer separately is most probable, and that would make thrice. His fetching it out may have made, as some think, a fourth time. But even four times would not be inconsistent with the "once every year" of Heb. x. 7, for any number of entries in one connected ritual on a single

day would be completely covered by that expression. (2.) The grand purpose of Aaron's entry into the holy of holies on this day was to carry in, and there sprinkle **blood**, wherewith to make atonement. The censer and the incense were quite subordinate to that main object, enabling it to be effected by the priest with personal safety—"that he die not." (3.) The service of this day is expressly recognised in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as pointing to Christ. "The priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God; but into the second went the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present. . . . But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. . . . For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world. But now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

XV. BLOOD PROHIBITED AS FOOD (*Lev. xvii. 10-16*).—The prohibition is solemnly reiterated throughout this passage, and the reason given is, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." If a beast of the chase, or a bird, was captured in the field, the blood was to be poured out and covered with dust.

XVI. THE CUSTOMS OF EGYPT AND CANAAN FORBIDDEN. (Read *Lev.* xviii.)—With the single exception of the devoting of children to Molech in Canaan, here briefly touched on, the customs refer to various abuses of the sexual relations, customs which Israel was to regard as loathsome and infamous. By reason of them Canaan was considered so polluted as to be about to vomit forth its inhabitants, as it would the Israelites also at a subsequent period, if ever they became similarly contaminated. Israel's fatal temptation, however, lay less in this direction than in that of idolatry.

XVII. AGAINST OFFERING CHILDREN TO MOLECH. (Read *Lev.* xx. 2-5.)—Of this Canaanitish custom no details are recorded in the Bible; the barbarous accompaniments sometimes given in illustration from classic authors refer to other lands and periods. The passage before us shows male and female children devoted to Molech by their own parents, and the following of such an example in Israel was to be made a capital crime. Elsewhere (*Lev.* xviii. 21; 2 Kings xxiii. 10; *Jer.* xxxii. 35) children passed through the fire to Molech, but in what ritual form we are not told. The words themselves do not necessarily imply that life was taken; but some parallel texts, where the god is some other than Molech, do assert that extremity, *e.g.*, *Ps.* cvi. 37, 38; *Jer.* vii. 31; xix. 5; *Ezek.* xvi. 20, 21; xxiii. 37.

XVIII. THE PROMISED LAND FOR A GODLY PEOPLE (*Lev.* xx. 6-27).—Dealers with wizards and people with familiar spirits will be cut off. "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am the Lord your God, and ye shall keep My statutes, and do them; for I am the Lord which sanctify you" (vers. 7, 8). The cursing of father or mother is punishable with death (ver. 9); so likewise are adultery and various kinds of abominable incests, after a black list of which there is again an appeal to hearts, in terms that indicate the awful wickedness of the heathenism from which Israel was, if possible, to be kept separate: "Ye shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and do

them ; that the land whither I bring you to dwell therein spue you not out. And ye shall not walk in the manner of the nations which I cast out before you. . . . I am the Lord your God which have separated you from other people. And ye shall be holy unto Me : for I the Lord am holy and have severed you from other people that ye should be Mine” (vers. 22–26).

XIX. FEASTS OF THE LORD (*Lev. xxiii.*).—Under this head are here enumerated seven days of solemn observance not limited to what we commonly mean by festive days. All of them were “proclaimed” (ver. 4), perhaps by a blowing of trumpets to be mentioned further on. None are singled out in Leviticus as being “great” in comparison with others. (1.) **The Weekly Sabbath** (vers. 1–3). “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, and holy convocation ; ye shall do no work therein ; it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.” Here is an institution of rest amid the toils of life ; but it is also a holy rest. “Holy convocation” points to a public holy recognition ; “sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings,” to a private and domestic one. “Holy convocation,” an expression nowhere distinctly explained, must imply some kind of religious service, perhaps a public attendance at the offerings of the day. (2 and 3.) **Passover and Unleavened Bread**. These were strictly two distinct feasts. “The Lord’s Passover,” observed on the fourteenth day of the first month at even (*Exod. xii*) need not be enlarged upon here. It was reckoned one of the holy convocation days. The feast of unleavened bread, beginning on the fifteenth day of the first month, and therefore on the morrow of the pass-over, lasted seven days, on which unleavened bread was exclusively to be eaten. On the first and seventh days there was a holy convocation and all “servile” work was laid aside, such perhaps as agriculture and trade, domestic work being probably permitted. If so, the rest enjoined on these convocation days was less strict than that of the weekly sabbath. On each of the seven days likewise there

was "an offering made by fire" (vers. 6-8). Connected with the feast of unleavened bread was the sheaf of first-fruits of barley harvest, when Canaan should be gained. This sheaf, brought to the priest, was waved by him, in sign of its being apportioned to him, and not before this ceremony might the barley harvest be eaten (vers. 9-14). (4.) **Feast of Harvest.** Such is its title here and in Exod. xxiii. 16. In Exod. xxxiv. 22; Deut. xvi. 9, 10, it is the "feast of weeks," to be kept when seven weeks (a week of weeks) had elapsed from the first day of unleavened bread. Its falling on the fiftieth day from that same caused it to be known, as in the New Testament, as *pentecost* (πεντηκοστός, fiftieth). The first-fruits of this harvest were brought to the priest in the form of two loaves of *leavened* bread, they being wholly for food and not for the altar. After the ceremony of waving they became the priest's portion. (5.) **Feast of Trumpets** (vers. 23-25). This is a title which is adopted by expositors but does not occur in Scripture. In the present passage it is "A memorial of blowing of trumpets," and in Num. xxix. 1, "A day of blowing of trumpets." The ceremony was observed on the first day of the seventh month, which was kept as a sabbath, with a holy convocation and without servile work. Trumpets were sounded on several other days and occasions, answering in that age the purpose of great bells, which had not then been invented. It is believed that they are mentioned on this particular day here because the civil year began now. (6.) **Day of Atonement** (vers. 26-32). This was the tenth day of the seventh month, more strictly commencing on the evening of the ninth and ending on the evening of the tenth. It was a day of holy convocation, with *no* work, the word "servile" being here omitted, "no work at all" (Lev. xv. 29), a day of afflicting the soul, and for an offering made by fire. This was the day of the annual entry of the high priest within the vail; and as we know all the observances (Lev. xvi.), we can gain from them the idea of what "holy convocation" meant. Such a day being placed among "feasts" proves that this term is used in the neutral sense of "solemnity." (7.) **Feast of Tabernacles**

(vers. 33-44). It began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and lasted seven days, with a holy convocation on the first. No "servile" work was permitted, and people were to dwell in booths of palm, willow, and other trees, rejoicing before God. The immediate occasion of this festival was the end of gathering in "the fruit of the land," *i.e.*, especially the tree-fruit, such as grapes and figs. It was the latest of the harvests.

XX. THE LIGHTS OF THE TABERNACLE (*Lev.* xxiv. 1, 2).—These were to be fed with "pure olive oil (R.V.) beaten," by which is probably meant the oil beaten out of the berry, a purer kind than that crushed out of it. The lamps of the candlestick were to be kept burning before the Lord continually, and Aaron was to attend to this from evening unto morning. In the corresponding passage (*Exod.* xxvii. 20, 21), Aaron and his sons are in charge of the lights. This is alluded to in *Ps.* cxxxiv. 1, 2.

XXI. THE SHEW-BREAD (*Lev.* xxiv. 5-9).—This consisted of twelve cakes made of fine flour, placed upon the golden table within the Tabernacle; each cake containing "two tenth-deals" of flour, and if this means two-tenths of an ephah, as is usually understood, about three-fifths of a peck went to a cake, which thus would weigh about six pounds. The cakes were placed on the table in two rows, or more probably piles (as the Hebrew word also means). Pure frankincense was placed on each pile, to be on the bread for a memorial, "an offering made by fire unto the Lord," implying that the frankincense was afterwards burnt on the golden altar near. The cakes, supplied by the people and set in order on the table by Aaron every Sabbath day, were eaten by him and his sons on the following Sabbath in the holy place: "for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the Lord made by fire," in allusion to the incense-memorial burnt on the golden altar. Whether this bread was leavened or unleavened, is not said. The word "shew-bread," which does not occur here, but appears in *Exod.* xxv. 30 and else-

where, means the bread of presence, namely, God's presence, as may be inferred from the passage before us, "set upon the table shew-bread *before Me* always." Beyond these expressions and the word itself, we are unable to point to any thing in the Bible which reveals the divine intention of the shew-bread. But these hints, few as they are, seem to convey a significance of no mean value. The bread, furnished by the people, placed them symbolically in the holy place, never in any other manner to be entered by them. There they remained in the continual presence of Him who was providing for them as well as for the priests who ministered in their behalf; and they could say, "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (Ps. xxiii. 6).

XXII. A BLASPHEMER STONED (*Lev.* xxiv. 10-23).—The son of an Egyptian, by an Israelitish woman of the tribe of Dan named Shelomith, when striving with an Israelite in the camp, blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed. Brought before Moses, the offender was placed in ward until the divine will was ascertained, the result being that he was conducted without the camp, where all who heard him curse laid their hands upon him, and he was stoned by "all the congregation," or the people generally. On this occasion, the law of death for blasphemy was enacted (ver. 16).

XXIII. THE SABBATICAL YEAR (*Lev.* xxv. 1-7, 18-22).—This institution, of course impracticable in a desert, was expressly reserved for the promised land (ver. 2). The ordinance was that during six years fields were to be sown, vineyards dressed, harvests and fruits gathered; but in the seventh year all this was to cease, and there was to be "a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord," and whatever grew spontaneously in the fields was not to be reaped (*i.e.*, not in the sole interest of the owner), nor the grapes of the undressed vine gathered (*i.e.*, not for him exclusively), "for it is a year of rest unto the land," and the "sabbath of the land" (*i.e.*, the spontaneous produce during this year) was to

be food for owner, servants, and resident strangers alike (vers. 1-7). In short the proprietor's exclusive ownership virtually ceased for that year; cornfields and vineyards were common to all. So also (Exod. xxiii. 11) were oliveyards. "Ye shall do My statutes and keep My judgments. . . . And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill and dwell therein in safety. And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? Behold we shall not sow nor gather in our increase. Then I will command My blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store." It will be observed here, that it was cornland, vineyards, and oliveyards that were included in this rest (Lev. xxv. 5, 11; Exod. xxiii. 11). Grass land required no tillage, bore its usual crop, and so cattle were fed. Dates and other wild fruits, forest roots and herbs, could be gathered as usual. The corn, the wine, the olive oil of the sixth year, not to speak of the previous ones, could have been stored. It is not said that herbs and roots might not have been cultivated in gardens, as well as such fruits as pomegranates and "apples" (*i.e.*, probably apricots). In short, it was the wide stretching farm lands under tillage, not the little patches about the house, that were intended to enjoy this sabbatical repose; and in times when rotation of crops, as well as manuring, were never practised, the ground would by this periodical fallowing be saved from exhaustion and its fertility improved. A similar effect, we understand, would follow to the vine by the cessation of one season's pruning. One thing at all events is clear, that the people could have learnt from this institution this lesson: that the seasons were under the providence of God, and that the divine favour was contingent on their faithful obedience, as expressed in Ps. lxxvii. 5, 6: "Let the people praise Thee, O God, yea let all the people praise Thee; then shall the earth yield her increase." There is no historical instance in the Old Testament of the observance of the sabbatical year, and from one passage (2 Chron. xxxvi. 21)

it must have fallen, to say the least, greatly into neglect, for the Captivity is there said to have lasted seventy years until the land had made good her sabbaths, "for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil three score and ten years." For 490 years, therefore, the observance of sabbaths had very markedly fallen off, but not necessarily had been formally discontinued, and that period included all the times of the monarchy. Indeed the very mention of its omission as a neglect of duty indicates that it was a legal institution all that time. The dereliction applied probably to the whole sabbath scheme, days, years, jubilees, so far as agriculture was concerned; for one kind of sabbath would not have been seriously neglected without producing a similar disregard of all kinds. After the Captivity the Jews became much more particular in regard to all their ancient institutions, sabbaths included, and in the times of Alexander the Great, the Maccabees, and the first Cæsars, there is positive testimony as to the observance of the sabbatical year (1 Macc. vi. 49; Josephus, *Ant.* xi. 8, § 6; xiv. 10, § 6; xv. 1, § 2).

XXIV. YEAR OF JUBILEE (*Lev.* xxv. 8-55).—This, like the Sabbatical Year, was reserved for the promised land, and was impracticable in the wilderness. After every seven sabbaths of years, or seven times seven years, or forty-nine years, as it is variously expressed, there was to succeed in the fiftieth a Year of Jubilee (Jubile, A.V., R.V.), to commence on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement, and to be signalled by the sounding of trumpets throughout the land (vers. 8-10). The year was characterised by three ordinances, one of these being the discontinuance of sowing and reaping, as in the sabbatical year (vers. 11, 12); the second, the return of every man to his possession; and the third, of every man to his family (vers. 10, 11). In regard to the first point, it is to be noticed that if the year from which the first jubilee was reckoned corresponded with the year from which the first sabbatical year counted, that jubilee year would follow a

sabbatical year, and there would be for the land two successive fallow years, while each subsequent fallow jubilee year would, as a rule, continue to fall somewhere between two fallow sabbatical years. This inconvenience suggests that the initial jubilee year was by a designed calculation made coincident with a sabbatical year, every jubilee year also to be counted the first year in the new jubilee cycle, and then the coincidence would ever afterwards continue. The second characteristic feature of the jubilee year was that whoever had sold any part of what was his proper family landed estate, now retook possession of it. Property sold under this condition would of course command a price simply in proportion to the term remaining unexpired until the following jubilee; in modern phrase the land was leased only, the freehold remaining with the original possessor. A rule thus forbidding permanent alienation tended greatly to prevent a confusion of tribes, an obliteration of families, and a loss of genealogies. The principle on which the law was based is thus strikingly worded: "The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is Mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me" (ver. 23). Another ordinance of the jubilee year had reference to Israelites in servitude. If one under the pressure of poverty had sold himself to a fellow-Israelite, he was to serve as an hired servant, not as a bondslave, returning with his children in the year of jubilee to his own family and to the possessions of his fathers; "for they are My servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as bondmen" (vers. 39-42). The word *jubilee* is from the Hebrew *jobēl*, a loud sound, in allusion to the publication of the year of jubilee by the sound of trumpets. The joyful sound must have immediately followed the penitential rites of the day of atonement. No express instance occurs in the Bible or elsewhere of the observance of the jubilee year; but the institution is distinctly referred to in Num. xxxvi. 4, in connection with the daughters of Zelophehad. The prophetic language of Isa. lxi. 1, 2 is thought to be formed in allusion to it. That the Israelites were familiar with it in the time of Ezekiel is plain from Ezek. xivi. 17.

XXV. PROMISES (*Lev. xxvi. 3-13*).—The promise to Israel was that in observing the sabbaths and keeping the statutes there would be this great reward—fruitful seasons, large crops, peace at home, victory at war, an established worship, and the favour of God ; in short, their happy continuance as a Church and nation in this present world. Entrance into an eternal future life is not expressed, but substantially it is not absent. The revelation through Moses, that man was created in the image of God, followed up by the constant promise, as in this place, that God interested Himself in man's spiritual efforts to walk with Him, gave ample assurance that man was a spiritual being ; and if that, then an heir, not of transitory promises only, but of a life that is eternal. Coming from God, he would return to God.

XXVI. A SUMMARY OF THE ISRAELITE RELIGION (*Lev. xxvi. 1, 2*).—Here are three principal pillars of the religion enjoined on Israel : (1) An unseen, unimagined, personal God ; (2) a day of rest ; (3) a ritual worship. The first implied a foundation of **faith** for the whole system. The worship of One Unseen could only be by faith. The question was, How should that faith be declared? Other people proclaimed their faith in God by images of Him. Israel was to do it not in that way, but by a stated, public, general **rest** from the pursuits of secular life, on the express ground of its being an image of God's rest, implying, therefore, that they worshipped **One** who created the world, which, and not a stone image cut out by human hands, was the true sign of His existence. Faith in an invisible God might easily lapse into a passive atheism, even with earth and skies around them ; the observance of this weekly rest was a perpetual reminder of God, for the rest was emphatically His. The cheerful, punctual, conscientious observance of the sabbath was the Israelite's confession, without words, of faith in the unseen Creator. Then lastly, the sanctuary bound the people's hearts to God as the sabbath did their minds and memories. The worship proceeding there proclaimed God's purity, their impurity ; God's provision of a

redemption from sin and their own dire need of it ; it declared Him a Saviour and a Deliverer first ; not a Punisher until last.

XXVII. WARNINGS (*Lev. xxvi. 14-39*).—This address, if commencing with the sword, concludes otherwise. Israel's return in penitence is contemplated, and the final words breathe relenting and grace. "I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them : for I am the Lord their God. But I will, for their sakes, remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God : I am the Lord."

The gracious promises (vers. 3-13) and terrible warnings (vers. 14-39) thus brought before us were immediately occasioned by the sabbatic ordinance, and are in close organic connection with the sabbatic year and the year of jubilee, in which all the sabbatic system culminated. No one can possibly miss seeing how the sabbatic idea runs through this whole address. The predominant thought is that if the sabbath was lost in Israel all was lost, and neither the sanctuary nor faith in the invisible Lord could survive. That abundantly accounts for the position occupied by this eloquent chapter, following one series of formal details, and immediately followed by another just as technical, just as dry. No one with any insight into all that the sabbath system was to Israel, the weekly sabbath, the festival sabbath, the seventh year sabbath, the jubilee sabbath, will be surprised at encountering it where it stands, or be unprepared for the outburst of prophetic fire in the very midst of the law-giver's details. In its sabbatic scheme the whole Jewish polity as a theocracy lay hid, and in the faithful observance of it the nation's welfare was bound up. The sabbath was a sign between this people and their God. The idea of giving rest to men's limbs and adding fertility to fields had its place of course, for man's welfare is never out of God's care. But it was God's sabbath, and not man's

The interest which this one chapter gives to the whole Book of Leviticus can hardly be overstated. It is a significant comment upon that multitude of intricate rules, in themselves sometimes but little attractive. It reveals what they all mean. They were deeply based on the infinite grace and tremendous holiness of God. They were God's demand on His people to be holy as their Lord God was ; and what can surpass the interest of that ?

XXVIII. PERSONS AND THINGS DEVOTED (*Lev.* xxvii. 1-29).—(1.) *Persons*. A male or a female might be vowed or devoted, but the information here given relates solely to the money price at which each might be redeemed, *i.e.*, the devotion cancelled, and this varied according to age and sex. The redemption price of females was always less than that of males, one-half, three-fifths, two-thirds, according to circumstances. We are not here informed for what purposes the person was vowed, nor with what consequence in the case of no redemption being made. It is thought probable that their lives were given up to services in connection with the Tabernacle. Hannah's vow of her son Samuel was thus carried out (1 Sam. i. 11, 28). One thus vowed might after a time wish to terminate the engagement, and then the power of redemption would apply. (2.) *Cattle* (*Lev.* xxvii. 9-13, 26, 27). The animal vowed might prove unclean and unsuitable for sacrifice. If after the vow there was a desire to replace the faulty animal by a perfect one, this could be done only by first redeeming it, at the priest's valuation, with a fifth, or twenty per cent., extra. The text is understood as implying that every properly qualified animal thus vowed was offered in sacrifice, while a disqualified one, if unredeemed, was sold for the benefit of the Tabernacle. The first-born of any animal might not be the subject of a vow, it being already the Lord's (ver. 26). (3.) *Houses and land* (vers. 14-24). A house devoted might be redeemed at the priest's valuation and one fifth extra (vers. 14, 15). If a field, it was to be valued by the priest up to the next jubilee, and might be redeemed on a similar valuation and a fifth extra.

If not redeemed, it belonged at the jubilee to the priest in perpetuity (vers. 16-24). (4.) *A Chērem* (vers. 28, 29). This is a special term in the subject, denoting a thing that is devoted to destruction; and what was vowed under that designation was to be destroyed without redemption. Presumably it was some article deemed unfit to remain in existence. If a person, he was put to death; but it must be understood that he was a criminal capitally condemned. A vow contrary to the divine law would be invalid.

XXIX. TITHES (*Lev.* xxvii. 30-33).—The tithe or tenth occurs first in *Gen.* xiv. 20, where Abram, after the rescue of Lot and his goods, gave Melchizedek "tithes of all;" and next in *Gen.* xxviii. 22, where Jacob vowed to God a tenth of all that God should give him. In this passage of *Leviticus* tithes are first subjected to legal regulation. Things to be tithed were crops raised from seed, the fruit of trees, the increase of herds and flocks, "even whatsoever passeth under the rod," *i.e.*, the shepherd's rod, or his care symbolised by his rod (*Ps.* xxiii. 4; *Jer.* xxxiii. 13; *Micah* vii. 14). This tenth was "the Lord's," and "holy unto the Lord." It was redeemable by the payment of its estimated value, with the addition of one-fifth.

N U M B E R S

I. THE TITLE.—This section of that one continuous work, called by the ancient Jews, *Torah, the Law*, was headed by them **Vayēdabber**, this being the first word in it, meaning *And he spake*. The present Hebrew Bible, instead of that heading, has **Bēmidbar**, the fourth word in the text, meaning *In the wilderness*; and this, whether intentionally or not, declares in the happiest manner the subject of the section. The Greek Septuagint version gives the descriptive title Ἀριθμοί, *i.e. numbers*, but this is a very partial and inadequate title. The Latin Vulgate version, imitating the Septuagint, heads the section **Liber Numeri**, *i.e., Book Numbers*, and thus makes it a separate book, as does the English version, with increased emphasis, **The Fourth Book of Moses, called Numbers**. Its narrative begins with the numbering of the people fit for war at Sinai, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after their leaving Egypt, and it ends with their arrival, after about thirty-eight years of wandering in the wilderness, on the plains of Moab at the river Jordan and the border of Canaan opposite the town of Jericho.

II. MOSES DIVINELY INSTRUCTED (*Num. i. 1*).—“And the Lord spake unto Moses, in the wilderness of Sinai in the tabernacle of the congregation, in the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt.” The Book of Numbers, which opens with these words, ends thus: “These are the commandments and the judgments which the Lord commanded, by

the hand of Moses, unto the children of Israel, in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho."

III. THE PEOPLE NUMBERED (*Num.* i. 2-54).—This was a military census, including men only, namely, those twenty years old and upwards, fit for war. In this measure Moses was assisted by Aaron and a leading man from each tribe. The men that were numbered "declared their pedigrees after their families, by the house of their fathers," thus guaranteeing their being true members of the tribe to which they were reckoned. The entire body numbered 603,550. By that tribal formation, based on pedigrees preserved and examined, by that numbering for war, immediately after the delivery of the rules of the sanctuary, Israel must have been reminded that they were no unorganised rabble, but a disciplined and ordered, as well as a religious nation, with a strong family spirit pervading the whole body, ever kept looking back to their patriarchal ancestors, and to God's covenant with them through Abraham. Realising that, they would war a good warfare.

IV. THE ENCAMPMENT (*Num.* i. 50-53 ; ii.). The tents of the Levites, in whose exclusive charge was the entire Tabernacle, which they took down, portered, and set up, were pitched immediately about the sacred enclosure. Further off were the twelve camps, in four groups, each group consisting of three tribes. Of the three tribes one was leader, to whose standard the other two were subject. The rule by which the four groups always knew their places on a halt, shows that the Tabernacle was invariably erected with its four sides facing the cardinal points, the front being eastward (*Num.* iii. 23, 38). The three eastern tribes, under the standard of Judah, were Judah, Issachar, Zebulun. The three southern, under the standard of Reuben, were Reuben, Simeon, Gad. The western group, under the standard of Ephraim, included Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin. The northern, under the standard of Dan, consisted of Dan, Asher, Naphtali. Such an arrangement, the hosts

of Israel surrounding their sanctuary, was indeed a speaking one. The Israelities had their religion in the very mid-point of their system. It was their centre of unity, their seat of life. The central object of the sanctuary was the Ark of the Covenant ; the treasure of the Ark was the Law of the Covenant, the pledge of their continued existence as a nation. Their hosts were therefore bound to defend it at all hazards, as their priceless possession, as a man would protect his heart.

V. THE LEVITES (*Num.* iii.).—The Levites, descendants of Levi, one of the sons of Jacob, ranked in three lines, which sprang from Levi's three sons, Gershon, Kohath, Merari (*Num.* xxvi. 57, 58). Kohath was the father of Amram, whose children were Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Tribally Aaron and his sons were Levites, but by special office they were priests. All other male Levites were ministers of the Tabernacle of an inferior grade, assistants to the priests, and the term "Levite" often denoted this office only. Moses was not in this sense a "Levite," ranking officially even above Aaron. The divine injunctions as to the official duties of the Levites are laid down in vers. 6-9. The Gershonites encamped behind the Tabernacle westwards, and had charge of the coverings, hangings and curtains. The Kohathites camped on the south side, having charge of the Ark, the Table, the Candlestick, the Altars, the vessels of the sanctuary, and the "hanging," which here must mean the veil. The Merarites were placed on the north side, and were responsible for the boards, pillars, sockets, pins, and cords. Thus the Levites surrounded the Tabernacle on its two long sides and at the rear end. But those who encamped before the Tabernacle eastward were Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons, "keeping the charge of the sanctuary, for the charge of the children of Israel ; and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death" (ver. 39).

VI. HOW THE TABERNACLE WAS TO BE REMOVED (*Num.* iv.).—The following rule was laid down. Aaron

and his sons were first to enter and take down the veil, with which they covered the Ark. They then wrapped it in two other coverlets and put in staves for carrying it. The Table and its implements were also well covered up and enstaved, as was the golden Altar. The Candlestick, carefully wrapped, was placed upon a bar by which it was to be carried, and similarly all other articles employed in the Tabernacle. The brazen Altar was likewise covered up. This done, and the sacred tent entirely dismantled, all the able-bodied Kohathite Levites, between the ages of thirty and fifty, entered and took charge of the entire contents thus prepared for removal, under the superintendence of the priest Eleazar, into whose special and personal care were delivered the oil for the lights, the incense, and the anointing oil. The curtains and hangings, properly enveloped, and packed (we may suppose) in convenient burdens, were placed in charge of the able-bodied Gershonites, who presumably took down and packed up for themselves. This body was under the command of the priest Ithamar, as were also the Merarites, who took in hand the timber framework of the Tabernacle and that of the boundary wall, with the sockets, pins, cords, and etceteras. All was then ready for the march, the order of which will come before us later on.

VII. RESTITUTION IN TRESPASS (*Num.* v. 5-10).—Any one led by conscience to confess a sin of trespass (here to be understood as one of fraud) was to recompense the injured party with the full value and a fifth extra, besides making an offering to the Lord, against whom essentially the sin was committed.

VIII. THE NAZARITE (*Num.* vi. 1-21).—The word (Nazirite, R.V.) means one set apart. The Nazirite was a man (or woman) separated unto the Lord for some period of time. All the days of his separation he was holy unto the Lord. During that time his hair was to grow and he was to abstain from wine. He was also to refrain from touching

the dead, were it even father, mother, brother, or sister. The particular purpose of this ordinance is not stated. Perhaps the rites observed at the termination of the vow may convey a hint. All the round of offerings, except the trespass, were offered, first the sin, then the burnt, with its meat and its drink-offerings, then the peace. The long hair was cut off and burnt in the fire of the peace-offering. Thus the vow of the Nazirite had consecrated him to God and brought him as one of the people to the altar "with the consecration of his God upon his head" (v. 7), and he was all the days of his separation "holy unto the Lord" (v. 8). In other words, he was as near to God as the high priest himself. Yet the very first thing he had to do at the end of his vow was to offer a sin-offering before he might offer his burnt or his peace-offering; as much as to confess that his very holiness needed atonement, he being still a sinner, just as the high priest, just as the leper. He had no holiness in himself, let him be as strict as possible; and that was the constant lesson of the Tabernacle ritual. It is impossible to suppose the end and object of the vow to have been the wearing of long hair and the abstention from wine. These things would be merely the public signs and tokens of the vow, the vow which pledged him to special consecration of heart and life to God and duty, to prayer and to acts of charity.

IX. THE BLESSING OF GOD ON ISRAEL (*Num.* vi. 22-27).—The following form of blessing to be pronounced on the people by Aaron and his sons, probably at the conclusion of every service of the Tabernacle and on other solemn occasions, was dictated by God: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." God was said thus to put His name upon the children of Israel.

X. OFFERINGS FOR THE ALTAR (*Num.* vii. 10-88).—When the Altar was dedicated each of the twelve tribes,

through its leader or prince, beginning with Judah and ending with Naphtali, in the order of the camps, and on successive days, offered as follows : A silver charger weighing 130 shekels ; a silver bowl, thirty shekels, both full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat-offering ; a golden spoon of ten shekels full of incense ; a young bullock, a ram, a lamb, for a burnt-offering ; a kid for a sin-offering ; two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs, for peace-offerings.

XI. HOW THE DIVINE COMMANDS WERE COMMUNICATED TO MOSES (*Num.* vii. 89).—"And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of the testimony from between the two cherubims ; and he spake unto Him."

XII. THE LEVITES CONSECRATED (*Num.* viii. 5-22).—The Levites were regarded as Israel's offering to God, by His permission, in lieu of the first-born claimed by Him from Israel when the first-born of Egypt were destroyed. In His turn God bestowed them as a gift upon Aaron and the priesthood, to assist in the service of the Tabernacle. This principle determined some of the ritual observed at their consecration. No prescribed dress is mentioned for them, and no anointing. Water of purifying was sprinkled upon them ; they were shaved, and their clothes washed. A body of them were brought before the Tabernacle, where the people who had assembled laid their hands upon them, and they were offered to the Lord for an offering of the children of Israel. Thus they were offered with the ceremony of the imposition of hands, like as when an animal victim was brought to the altar. But they were offered to "execute the service of the Lord." In their turn the Levites laid their hands upon a sin-offering and a burnt-offering, which were then offered "to make an atonement for the Levites." Aaron and his sons presided at these ceremonies.

XIII. THE PASSOVER AT SINAI (*Num.* ix. 1-5).—On the fourteenth day of the first month at even, in the second year after they had come out of Egypt, the Israelites kept the Passover at Sinai, according to the divine command communicated to Moses in the same month. This is the earliest dated event in Numbers, it being prior to the command to number the people delivered on the first day of the second month. This Passover was the only one known to have been kept in the wilderness, and it was observed with all its proper rites.

XIV. THE CLOUD AND THE FIRE (*Num.* ix. 15-23).—On the day that the Tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered it, and at even there was upon the Tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire until the morning. So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the Tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed; and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.

XV. THE SILVER TRUMPETS (*Num.* x. 1-10).—"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them, that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes, which are heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee. When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward. When ye blow an alarm a second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey: they shall blow an alarm for their journeys. But when the congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm. And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets; and they shall be to you for an ordinance

for ever throughout your generations. And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets ; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies. Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings, that they may be to you for a memorial before your God : I am the Lord your God.”

XVI. THE DEPARTURE FROM SINAI (*Num.* x. 11-13).—Paran is considered as being the tract of country stretching northwards from Sinai to the border of Canaan, mainly, therefore, the region now known by the Arabic name *Et Tih*, *i.e.*, “The Wandering.” Et Tih is an elevated limestone plateau, to be reached from the foot of Sinai by a multitude encumbered with baggage only at a spot where the plateau gradually lowers, allowing an easy ascent, and that is near Eziongeber, at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, the eastern arm of the Red Sea. It is there that the pilgrim caravans from Cairo, after crossing Et Tih from west to east, make their descent in order to reach Mecca ; and it is there that they ascend on their return. To reach that place the Israelite host had to journey in a north-easterly direction after quitting Sinai. To that quarter the Israelites now direct their march, taking with them the Law and the Worship that was to be established in Canaan.

XVII. ORDER OF THE MARCH (*Num.* x. 14-28).—The van was led by the three tribes which camped at the eastern end of the Tabernacle, Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, all under the standard of Judah. Then followed the Gershonite Levites conveying the framework of the Tabernacle, having to assist them two waggons each drawn by two oxen (*Num.* vii. 7). After these came the Merarites, in charge of the hangings, with four waggons to help them. These two bodies were under the command of Ithamar the priest. Next marched

the three tribes that camped on the south of the Tabernacle, Reuben, Simeon, Gad, under the standard of Reuben. Next marched the Kohathites, bearing, by staves resting on their shoulders, entirely without waggons, and under the command of the priest Eleazar, the furniture of the sanctuary, to find, on reaching their brother Levites in front of them, the Tabernacle erected for its reception. Then set forward the three western tribes, Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, under the standard of Ephraim; and the rear was brought up by the northern tribes, Dan, Asher, Naphtali, under the standard of Dan.

XVIII. HOBAB INVITED (*Num.* x. 29-32).—For the relation of Moses to Hobab, see *Exod.* ii. 15 and *supra*, p. 88.

XIX. THE ARK GOING BEFORE (*Num.* x. 33-36).—During the march, as we gather from this passage, the ark, instead of accompanying the rest of the furniture of the sanctuary, was carried in front of the host, leading the way, as when afterwards it crossed the Jordan. Moses, Aaron, and a company of priests would be with it. A cloud-like appearance, hovering over, indicated by its movement the direction it was to take. At night there would have been simply a bivouac, and at the end of the stage, where there was to be a pause of any length, the Tabernacle was re-erected. The first proper halt occurred at the end of a three days' march.

XX. TABERAH, KIBROTH-HATTAVAH, HAZEROTH (*Num.* xi. 1-35).—In the first halt the people gave way to unreasonable complaints, but the particular grievance is not stated. A consuming fire sent among them indicated the divine displeasure, but at the intercession of Moses it was quenched, and he called the place *Taberah*, *i.e.*, "burning" (vers. 1-3). Its situation is not now known, but from the sequel it was certainly eastward or north-eastward of Sinai, in the direction of the eastern arm of the Red Sea, the Gulf of Akaba. At the next halt a discontented spirit again showed itself, at first among the mixed multitude, from whom

it spread to the Israelites. They pined for the fish and the vegetables so abundant in Egypt, despising the manna sent them miraculously. This food resembled a cereal grain, and falling nightly upon the ground along with the dew was gathered in the morning, pounded, and made into flat cakes, which were baked in pans (vers. 4-9). Vexed at the people's murmurs and feeling his burden as leader beyond his strength, Moses himself gave way to complaints, and God directed him to bring to the Tabernacle seventy of the elders of Israel, who should share the toil with him. As to flesh, which the people demanded, they should have it for all the next month until they were as weary of that as of the manna (vers. 10-23). The seventy elders, all but two, were brought to the Tabernacle; and God took of the Spirit that was upon Moses and gave it unto the seventy, and they prophesied. In short, the inspiration of Moses was imparted to them, and of this they gave proof by an elevated strain of utterance which was beyond the reach of others. It indicated to all who heard that the seventy were divinely appointed as coadjutors of Moses (vers. 24, 25). For some reason not stated, two of the selected seventy, Eldad and Medad, did not appear among their brethren at the Tabernacle, but remained in the camp, where nevertheless they were endued with the same prophesying gift. Whatever was the reason of their non-appearance at the Tabernacle, they were not rejected by God; and the incident, whether so intended or not, had this good result, that whereas the sixty-eight prophesied before Moses, the priests, and other heads, the two prophesied before the people, who were thus convinced of their divine call. A deep impression was instantly created in the camp, and a young man ran to the Tabernacle to report the prophesying to Moses. Joshua the son of Nun heard the announcement with indignation, and imagining that the two absent brethren were presuming to act independently and so were encroaching on the supreme authority of his master, exclaimed, "My lord Moses, forbid them!" Moses replied, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His

Spirit upon them." The Hebrew words, which we render *prophet, prophecy*, denote generally a speaker and a speaking by divine inspiration, and not only a foreteller and a foretelling of future events. Then went Moses and the inspired elders into the camp, and the divine word as to flesh for food was fulfilled. By a wind from the sea flights of quails (as our versions call these wild-fowl) were borne towards the camp and descending within two cubits of the ground were easily taken, as the sense of the passage seems to be (see R.V.). Greedily the people went out to possess themselves of the prey; but no sooner did the meal begin than the Lord in His anger smote the people with a very great plague, and Moses called the place *Kibroth-hattaavah*, "the graves of lust," because there they buried the people that lusted. The spot was believed by Professor Palmer to be identical with that now called *Erweis el Ebeirig*, twenty-eight miles north-east from Sinai and twenty from the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, having the remains of a large encampment, proved to be of great antiquity by its differing essentially from any others to be seen in Sinai and Arabia. Travellers, as noticed by Dean Stanley, have observed vast flocks of birds (but they were cranes) coming from the sea and alighting there. That *Kibroth-hattaavah* was in the direction of the sea is plainly hinted in the narrative by the expression, "a wind from the sea." The halt here appears to have lasted about a month (vers. 30-34). The next station which the Israelites made their abode was *Hazeroth*. It is identified by Professor Palmer and others with a place bearing the Arabic name of *Huderah*, and meaning, like the Hebrew *Hazeroth*, "enclosures." Its situation is twelve miles north-east from *Erweis el Ebeirig*, about forty from Sinai, and twelve or thirteen from the sea, at the foot of the mountainous fringe of the elevated desert of *Et Tih*. According to every means we possess of discovering, the Israelites are marching towards that corner we have indicated, where *Eziongeber* stands at the head of the gulf of *Akaba*, and where the pilgrim road from *Mecca* begins to ascend to the limestone plateau. Their possessing waggons is a fact not

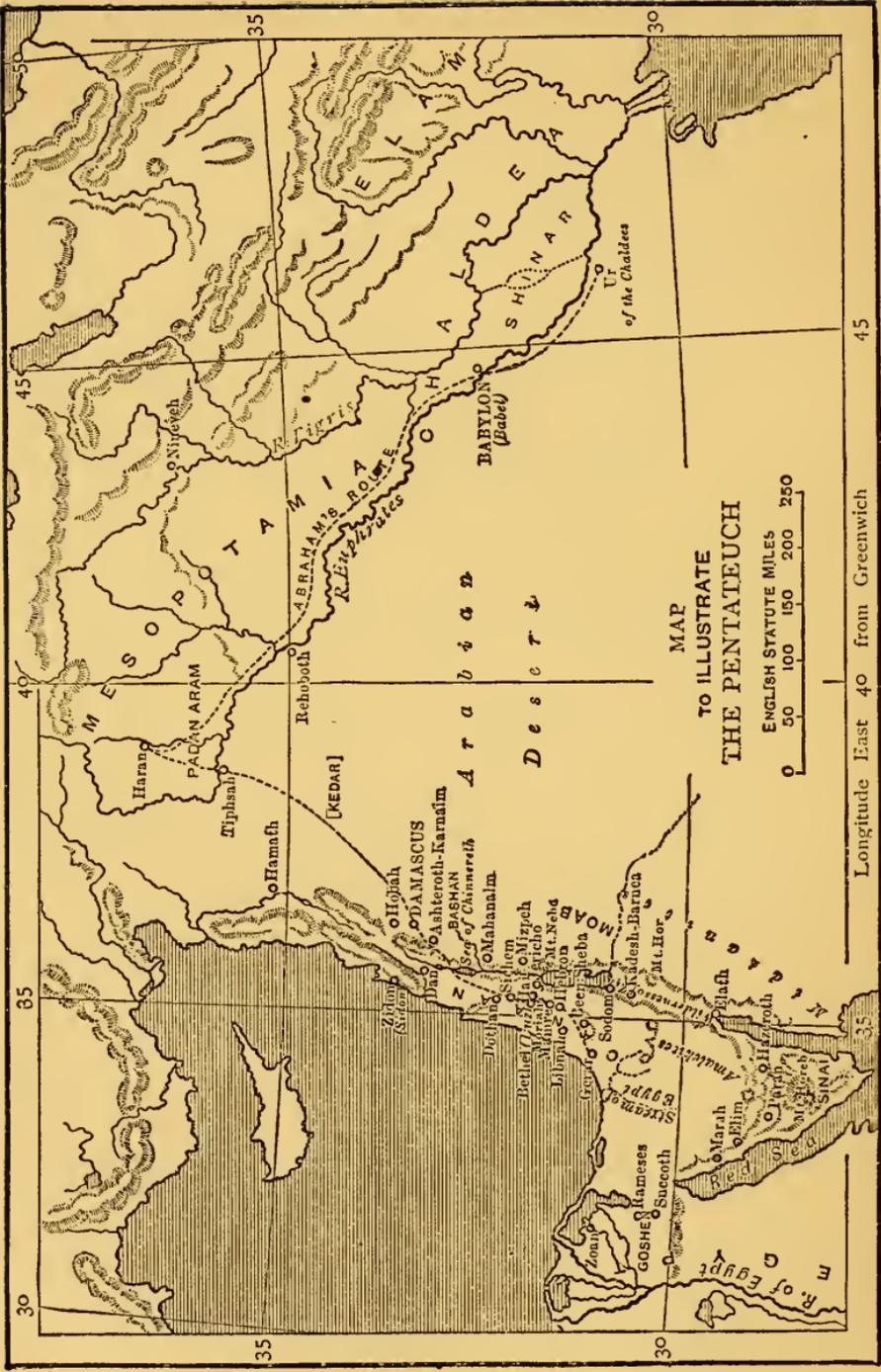
lost sight of by explorers seeking to determine the actual roads.

XXI. MIRIAM AND AARON ASSERT THEMSELVES AGAINST MOSES (*Num.* xii. 1-15).—This occurred at Hazeroth, where Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses on account of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married. They demanded, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not spoken also by us?" The voice of God summoned them to the Tabernacle, and said, "Hear now My words. If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream;" as much as to say they misunderstood the position of Moses entirely; he was no ordinary prophet instructed in nightly visions; he was one whose place was very near to God, far beyond the reach of any equal; one audibly addressed by God, their mediator and the head of that dispensation: "My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house. With him I will speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold. Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" The departure of the cloud from off the Tabernacle, and Miriam becoming leprous, indicated the divine displeasure. Aaron humbly apologised to Moses for his and his sister's folly, and on the intercession of Moses the offence was forgiven, Miriam's leprosy and exclusion from the camp lasting only seven days. The lesson of the incident was that Miriam and Aaron might be employed in prophetic utterances, as when Aaron was appointed to speak before Pharaoh jointly with Moses, "I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth" (*Ex.* iv. 15), and "Miriam the prophetess" took the timbrel at the head of the women and sang to the Lord after the passage of the Red Sea (*Ex.* xv. 20); but the authority of Moses was unique and could be shared with no other. Moses being allowed to behold the similitude of God must refer to such visions as *Ex.* xxxiii. 18-33; not God Himself, but visible tokens of His presence.

The leprosy of Miriam indicates that the halt at Hazeroth lasted seven days at least.

XXII. ARRIVAL AT KADESH-BARNEA (*Num.* xii. 16).—“And afterwards the people removed from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran.” It was said further back, on their breaking up from Sinai (*Num.* x. 12), that “the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran;” which we understand to mean, that the journey was to be directed towards that elevated region already spoken of, known in modern geography as Et Tih. This they have now reached from Hazeroth, by a north-eastward march towards the head of the Gulf of Akaba, and there ascending by what is now the pilgrim road between Mecca and Cairo. The plateau gained, their next object was to reach the southern border of Canaan, by a route more or less northward; and the particular part of the wilderness of Paran in which they established themselves, was that limited portion of it called the wilderness of Zin; within which again was the still smaller wilderness of Kadesh, so named from a spot in it called Kadesh-barnea. Here and all about the Israelite host sojourned a long time, covering a large tract, and the sacred narrative calls the locality by the various names we have mentioned without very much discrimination.

The grand difficulty of geographers has been to settle the position of Kadesh-barnea, the key to very much of the Bible narrative, and it has been reserved for recent years to identify the spot with a certainty that seems scarcely open to doubt. A place bearing almost the very name (*Ain Gadis*, “spring of Gadis”), was first discovered by an Englishman, the Rev. John Rowlands, in 1842, and after a long oblivion following upon his death, rediscovered by an American, Dr. Trumbull, whose volume, entitled “Kadesh-barnea,” published in 1884, giving full particulars, is one of striking interest. Why the spot should have been so long unknown, and when lost so difficult to reach a second time, is that, being a luxuriant oasis of the desert, it was most jealously guarded and concealed, by the fiercest of all the



MAP
TO ILLUSTRATE
THE PENTATEUCH

ENGLISH STATUTE MILES
0 50 100 150 200 250

Longitude East 40 from Greenwich 45

Arab tribes, the Azazimehs. It lay aside from all the usual routes, and the guides, knowing the risk they ran in leading travellers to it, never spoke of it, and if asked, professed absolute ignorance. A spring bursting from a rock in a recess reached by an unsuspected sudden turning among the cliffs, a paradise of delightful greensward, fruit-trees, and game, and outside this a wide expanse shut in by hills, and called Wady Gadis, producing crops in their seasons, and having narrow outlets to the wilderness world around, make up the description of this happy discovery. The large isolated tract occupied by those Azazimeh Arabs may be considered as generally representing the wilderness of Zin ; the Wady Gadis, the wilderness of Kadesh ; and likewise Kadesh-barnea. Measured on the map, Ain Gadis is about forty-seven miles due south of Beersheba, fifty-six south-west from the Dead Sea.

XXIII. THE MISSION OF THE SPIES (*Num.* xiii.).—By the command of God, and as stated in Deut. i. 20, on the proposal of the people themselves originally, Moses sent forth twelve leading men, one of each tribe, to search the land of Canaan. Judah was represented by Caleb, Ephraim by Oshea or Hoshea, a name meaning *Salvation*, and now, by the prefix *Je* standing for Jehovah, changed to Jehoshua or Joshua, denoting Jehovah's salvation. Their instructions were to penetrate to the farthest north : "See the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many ; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad ; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents or in strong-holds ; and what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land." The season was that of the first ripe grapes, which would be in or about August. So the twelve explorers went forth from the wilderness of Paran (*Num.* xiii. 3), from the wilderness of Zin (*ver.* 21) ; and after an absence of forty days they returned to the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh (*ver.*

26), or Kadesh-barnea (xxxii. 8), all these words being used. As specimens of its productions they brought pomegranates and figs, but especially a vine branch with one cluster of grapes, which had to be carried on a staff between two. It had been cut at the brook of Eshcol, and enormous as it was, it has been matched for size and weight, as is well known, by clusters grown under favourable conditions in England. Their report was as follows: "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled and very great. And moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South, and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and by the coast of Jordan." Caleb, observing some agitation among the people at this formidable account in the presence of Moses, here interposed and said: "Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it." The other spies (Joshua excepted) replied: "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. It is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof, and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature; and there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which came of the giants, and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." By the land eating up its inhabitants we are probably to understand an allusion to the perpetual war and bloodshed among a people addicted to arms, oppressing, enslaving, tyrannising over and grinding down the weaker classes; anything therefore but a united and really powerful people; no commonwealth but a multitude of contentious chieftains and castled robbers, the lives of the inferior orders sacrificed to their ambition. The weak point of this report was not its relation of facts, which were probably all true; but their saying—"We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." Such language was simply a denial of their being under God's leading. It was in flat contra-

diction to the words of Moses at the advance of the ark, "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered." If the spies were right, the people had been brought into the wilderness for their betrayal; there was no God leading them at all; Moses was an impostor; their Tabernacle was unmeaning, their polity an illusion; they were not a theocratic or a chosen people; the promised land was altogether visionary. The intrepid words of Caleb were quite lost upon the people, and the unworthy fears of the ten spies, leaders in Israel, prevailed. They broke out into open mutiny. "Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return unto Egypt? . . . Let us make a captain, and let us return unto Egypt." The folly of such a design was on a par with its undutifulness. The spirit of it was the spirit of grasshoppers indeed. To go back without Moses, without God; chased by every foe of the desert, expecting to be received back into Egypt as friends! Situated as they were, the Anakims in front of them, the desert and Egypt behind them, their only way of safety was the way of faith and courage, as when they were between the Red Sea and the Egyptians, and the order was "Forward!" In this sense Joshua and Caleb spoke out in a manner worthy of two true Israelites: "The land which we passed through to search it is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us, a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us. Their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Fear them not." This noble appeal was not seconded by the ten brethren, and it made no impression on the multitude, who were ready to stone them to death. "The Lord is with us, fear them not," was the watchword of the faithful. "We are not able," was the cry of the doubters. At the intercession of Moses the divine displeasure was so far averted that the protection and

guidance from above were not withdrawn ; but there was no contrition in the nation, and it was sentenced to exclusion from Canaan for forty years, dating from the time of their leaving Egypt, about thirty-eight years from the arrival at Kadesh. Not one of that generation who was over twenty should enter the promised land except Caleb and Joshua. As the searching of the land had occupied forty days, the penal exclusion was to last forty years. Thus the nation was pardoned, but not without the exaction of a penalty. God had declared Himself at Sinai (Exod. xxxiv. 6), as one who would forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin, but would by no means clear the guilty. There was to be a penalty for guilt, which would not otherwise be cleared. It was not cleared by being overlooked and forgotten. The passage of Exodus is quoted in the intercession of Moses (Num. xiv. 17, 19), and may be considered as illustrated by the pardon and sentence now under notice.

XXIV. REPULSED FROM CANAAN (*Num.* xiv. 40-45).—The people now came to a sense of their sin ; yet it was no genuine repentance, inasmuch as all real submission was lacking. They resolved on seizing Canaan at once, and the sentence of exile in the desert for forty years they were bent upon reversing, not by proper humiliation but by force and presumption, though plainly told by Moses that they were acting against the divine will. The inspiring words, "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered," were not heard, and the host was not preceded by the ark. The sacred narrative runs thus : "And they rose up early in the morning and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised ; for we have sinned. And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord ? But it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not among you, that ye be not smitten before your enemies. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword ; because ye are turned away from the Lord, therefore the Lord will not be

with you. But they presumed to go up unto the hill-top ; nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them and discomfited them, even unto Hormah." This repulse told them that they had judged most truly as to their inability to conquer Canaan by their own unassisted prowess. Their first sin had been unbelief, not looking to God ; their second, presumption, looking entirely to themselves.

XXV. KORAH, DATHAN, ABIRAM (*Num.* xvi.).—Korah was a Levite, belonging to the Kohathite division of his tribe, privileged to have the sanctuary under their charge at removals. Dathan and Abiram were heads of families in the tribe of Reuben. The Kohathite camp was south of the Tabernacle and near it ; the Reubenites were also on the south, but remoter. Joined with them on this occasion were two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown. All these set themselves up against the supreme authority of Moses and Aaron, whom they accused of assuming their high position without any divine sanction. Korah, supported by the two hundred and fifty, contested the authority of Aaron ; Dathan and Abiram, with their followers, that of Moses. Korah and his party, who had possessed themselves of censers and incense, assembled at the bidding of Moses in the court of the Tabernacle, where also was Aaron. Confronting the rebel party as they held their censers with incense burning in them, Moses reminded them of their privileges as Levites, and demanded, "Seek ye the priesthood also?" Dathan and Abiram, though likewise summoned, refused to appear, and when Moses went out to remonstrate with them in their camp, they charged him with having failed to bring them out of the wilderness, and with making himself altogether a prince over them. Upon both divisions of the rebellion the judgment of God fell. Dathan and Abiram, along with all their families, whom they had assembled at the doors of their tents, as if to share in their attitude of

defiance, were engulfed in the ground whereon they stood, while Korah and his adherents in the Tabernacle court perished by fire from God, but their families were not included in their fate. The two hundred and fifty censers were taken to be made into a covering for the altar. Instead of being subdued by this judgment, the people at large were provoked by it to further sedition, for the punishment of which a plague was sent among them, until, at the command of Moses, Aaron hurried out into the camp with his high priest's censer and incense burning in it, by which he is said to have made "an atonement for the people." "He stood between the dead and the living and the plague was stayed." Such a use by the high priest of his censer was unauthorised by the law, but in the emergency, and at the initiative of Moses, it was sanctioned and the plague ceased. This was enough to show the difference between the authorised censer in authorised hands, and the rebel censer in rebel hands ; one saving life, the other destroying it. It was an incontestible proof that Aaron stood accepted and the conspirators rejected. Nothing less severe than these judgments sufficed to discipline the ungovernable wilfulness of this people ; and if the punishment should seem to have been in excess, it must be remembered that it was their salvation in the end. For in their situation, surrounded by desolate wildernesses, on the borders of warlike populations all hostile to them, without the strictest subordination to their leaders, the nation must have gone to pieces and have perished to the last man. Such mutinous behaviour could have been justified by nothing but the most tyrannical use of authority ; but if ever a leader bore his people on his heart and carried them like a father, to say nothing of skill and remarkable success, that man was Moses. In order to place the fact of God's choice of the house of Aaron beyond all future dispute, and not let it rest simply on the punishment of gainsayers, Moses was bidden to take twelve rods, each bearing the name of a tribe, the rod of Levi being inscribed with the name of Aaron. This was done, and the rods were laid up before the Lord in the

Tabernacle. On the morrow Moses went in and saw that the rod of Aaron had "brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds;" and Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto the children of Israel, and they looked and took every man his rod. And the Lord said unto Moses, "Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels, and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not." This was done. In what precise manner Aaron's rod was kept "before the testimony" (ver. 10) and "in the ark" (Heb. ix. 4) is not clear. The effect of the judgment upon the rebels, and the budding of Aaron's rod, was to stay all murmurings of the people and curb their presumption. Any usurpation of the priesthood they saw would prove their destruction, saying to Moses: "Behold, we die, we perish, we all perish. Whosoever cometh anything near unto the tabernacle of the Lord shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?" (vers. 12, 13). By the expression, "cometh anything near the tabernacle," they evidently meant any attempt to usurp priestly functions, not the drawing near with offerings or as worshippers.

XXVI. WATER FROM THE ROCK (*Num.* xx.).—"Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month; and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there." The first month here means the first month of the fortieth year since the departure from Egypt, as is clear from other parts of the narrative, *e.g.*, the death of Aaron further on. The people had therefore now nearly spent the period of their penal wandering, some thirty-eight years, which are almost an historic blank, without any recorded incidents other than the rebellion of Korah, and the budding of Aaron's rod. We are now arrived at the eve of the final march towards the promised land from Kadesh. The probability is, that the Tabernacle and head-quarters of Israel had been stationed at Kadesh-barnea all the time,

while the main body of the people had partially dispersed more or less and from time to time. Now they were mustered for the final movement and there abode for a time, during which Miriam died, and water sprang from the rock by the hand of God. The account of this is given in vers. 2-6. Water was a necessity of life, and the craving for it was quite a different thing from the discontent which caused a rejection of the manna. Nor was this murmuring so offensive a thing as the rebellion of Korah. The present fault is one of another sort. A people cared for and blessed as they had been should have humbly betaken themselves to their heavenly Father. To wish themselves dead, to chide their leaders, accusing them of spite and betrayal, was to show the petulance of children rather than the fortitude of men and the faith of a chosen people. Moses and Aaron said nothing, but went to the Tabernacle to know the divine will. Without any reproofs, Moses was shown how the wants of the people should be relieved: "Take thou the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water" (ver. 8). The rod was taken accordingly, the people were assembled; and now came the turn of Moses and Aaron to be offenders, and the only ones punished, the meek, the humble, the obedient and faithful Moses, leading in the offence. In the first place he "spake unadvisedly with his lips" (Ps. cvi. 32, 33), when, instead of reflecting, in his expressions, the almightiness and the compassion of a common Father, their heavenly Guide, he burst out in a hurry of impatience, and in most unseemly self-assertion: "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch water for you out of this rock?" He had no commission for such irritable words, which expressed his own severity and concealed the goodness of God. His second offence was that, heedless of his instructions, he smote the rock instead of speaking to it; and when the first stroke produced no result, instead of being alarmed into recollection and to the recovery of himself, he smote a second time before the water flowed. The flow, however, did come, and

the leaders were not discredited before their people ; but they were reprovèd nevertheless, and with a severity that might surprise us : " Because ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This is the water of Meribah ; because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and He was sanctified in them " (vers. 12, 13). His character, His power, His holiness, were vindicated before them. The spot was also called Meribah-Kadesh (Deut. xxxiii. 8), and the waters of strife (Ps. cvi. 32). Meribah means strife. There was another Meribah, also called Massah. The miracle now under consideration, if it did not actually originate the spring and its concomitant fertility, may be considered to have restored it after a period of intermittance and drought.

XXVII. EDOM'S REFUSAL (*Num.* xx. 14-21).—The Edomite country was then mainly a mountain range of some 120 miles running between the Dead Sea on the north and the Akaba gulf of the Red Sea on the south. A sixty-mile line from Ain Gadis eastward would strike the centre of that range at the city of Petra. The Bible name Mount Seir is to be understood of that range. But there is also in Scripture a "land of Seir," occupied by Esau during his father's lifetime, and before his removal to the mountain range. This district, which we naturally look for in southern Canaan in the neighbourhood of Beersheba, may be considered as represented by that now known as *Es Seer*, an extensive upland plain south-east from Beersheba, south-west from the Dead Sea, and bounded on the south by the Wady Fekreh. It lay some thirty miles north-east from Ain Gadis : so that in desert geography Kadesh and Edom would sufficiently approach each other to allow of their being reckoned as bordering, all being wilderness between them. Kadesh is also here called a city, the Bible word employed being one applicable to any fortified or well defended spot, which the long Israelite occupation must now have rendered Kadesh. A temporary city, in the language of roving popu-

lations all the world over, it might well have been termed. The object of the Israelites was to gain the eastern side of the Edomite mountain range, and then march northwards to reach the Jordan. The range was a very difficult one to cross in the face of opposition. Up and down the western edge were lofty heights and precipitous cliffs, barring all entrance. Yet there are some few openings, one of which, now called Wady Guweir, midway between Petra and the Dead Sea, broad enough to admit an army, abounding in springs and pasture, may well be thought to have been the route which Moses desired permission to take. He could have reached it by descending the Wady Fekreh.

XXVIII. THE DEATH OF AARON (*Num.* xx. 22-29).—There is an old and general opinion that Mount Hor was the height now called by the Arabs *Jebel Harun*, Mount of Aaron, close to the city of Petra. It rises nearly 5000 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, and upon one of its two summits, conspicuous for a long distance, there is a Mahometan chapel over the supposed grave of Aaron. Against this identification there are very strong reasons, one, of itself fatal, being that the spot lay within the heart of the dominions of Edom, a people hostile and repellent. Wilton suggested and Dr. Trumbull felt no doubt that the true Mount Hor was *Jebel Madurah*, some twenty-seven miles north-east from Ain Gadis, a hill of very striking appearance from its isolated position, upreared above the surrounding plain like a natural pyramid. It stood at the head of Wady Fekreh and close to the border of Canaan and the land of Seir. If this identification is correct, Aaron, as Moses afterwards, died on the border of Canaan.

XXIX. THE KING OF ARAD (*Num.* xxi. 1-3).—King of Arad (not King Arad) is the rendering of R.V., and also of Jos. xii. 14 in A.V. His town is believed to have stood on the small hill now bearing the name *Tel Arad*, 30 miles due north from Madurah, 55 north-east from Ain Gadis, 20 south from Hebron, in the South, *i.e.*, in the south of

Canaan. This chief, hearing that Israel "came by way of the spies," fell upon them, and the Israelites, calling upon God, attacked the Canaanite king and utterly destroyed his cities. The march of Israel, or a detachment of them, to Mount Hor, if that was Madurah, might have been construed by the King of Arad as a menace of invasion, and so have led to this affair.

XXX. THE BRAZEN SERPENT (*Num.* xxi. 4-9).—Denied a passage across the Edomite mountains, the Israelites journeyed southwards "to compass the land of Edom," *i.e.*, to go round the lower end of them by the Akaba gulf of the Red Sea, a circuitous route which greatly wearied and discouraged them. Giving vent to a distrustful and murmuring spirit, they were plagued by a visitation of "fiery serpents," whose venomous bite caused a great mortality. There still abound in those regions reptiles deserving the same name, from the fever, inflammation, and intense thirst caused by their sting. The confession of their sin and the intercession of Moses were answered by Moses being commanded to make a "fiery serpent" and set it upon a pole, "and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." This remedial figure may be conceived as having been conveyed from station to station throughout the host, whenever sufferers were found or could be brought. Should not then so easy a cure have removed the plague absolutely at once? So it might seem; and yet its very simplicity may have caused distrust and driven patients either to despair or to the apparently more reasonable means of using any available medicaments. A remedy so simple as one requiring nothing to be done, nothing but a look, was a remedy of faith and trust, and the wisdom of it is seen as soon as it is considered that the lack of those two very things had brought the punishment upon them. So also when our Lord said (*St. John* iii. 14), "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life," might not God

have granted eternal life by a simple decree? A word? But it pleased Him to annex the condition that salvation should be sought for in faith. Nay more. This method of salvation declares that a *remedy* was needed. Such was the lesson of all the offerings under the law. The remedy for sin was one lying in the will of God, not any that human skill could provide, or could even explain when it was provided.

XXXI. THE MARCH TO JORDAN (*Num.* xxi. 10-35).—The Israelites, having gained the southern extremity of the Edomite range, rounded that and proceeded northward on the eastern side. Their route now corresponded more or less with the one commonly used by the Mahommedan pilgrims journeying between Damascus and Mecca, and called the *Haj* (*i.e. pilgrim*) road, having a general direction north and south, and gradually ascending northwards to a higher and higher level. Having reached as far in latitude as the northern end of the Edomite range and the southern end of the Dead Sea, they commenced skirting Moabite territory. At length they reached the river Arnon, flowing through a ravine, or *wady* in Arabic, the upper half of which is now known as *Seil Saideh*, and the lower half *Mojob*. The Arnon entered the Dead Sea midway between its northern and southern ends, and in the lower half of its course formed the northern boundary of the Moabite kingdom, beyond which dwelt an Amorite people ruled by King Sihon. The Israelites crossed the Arnon in the *upper* part of its course, and so avoided trespassing on Moab as they had done on Edom. A scarcity of water was now again felt. The Israelites had reached a land of water, though the water might be invisible. "Gather the people together," said the Lord to Moses, "and I will give them water." The gift came, not by the former miracles of smiting a rock, but by the people themselves, headed by their princes, digging down to it. Instead of the voice of murmuring, anger, and unbelief, the sound of praise and singing was now heard, and the well that was dug was named *Beer* (vers. 16, 17). Up to this time the Israelites had been, ever since leaving Egypt, wanderers in

no-man's-land, just like the Midianites of their own day and the Bedouins in ours. They had scrupulously avoided invading Edom from the west, and Moab from the east. Yet in order to reach the Jordan they *must* get through a settled country, forcibly or peaceably, for both Jordan and the Dead Sea, from top to bottom, were lined by settled peoples. Aggression on Moab had been forbidden, for Moab and Israel were kindred nations. They could reach the Jordan by breaking through the Amorites, who occupied the district between the Lower Arnon on the south, and the Jabbok on the north, a district once belonging to Moab, and in former days seized by the Amorites. The Israelites were not forbidden to make war on the Amorites; yet they did not court hostility, but in a peaceable manner asked permission to pass through as friends, just as they had done to Edom. Sihon, the Amorite king, who ruled at Heshbon, not satisfied with forbidding a passage, came out into the wilderness (ver. 23) to attack them, and so were the actual aggressors. He being defeated and slain, his whole kingdom fell a prize of war to the Israelites, who were now at length in a land of cities and cultivated fields. Then Israel "turned and went up by way of Bashan," a district rich in cattle in the far north, ruled by King Og, whose subjects, like himself, were Amorites, which probably accounts for this movement of the Israelites, who seem to have returned eastward out of their new possession into the wilderness and then to have marched north, possibly intending to secure the neutrality and allowance of Og in their projected crossing of the Jordan. Og, however, issued to the attack, was defeated and slain, and all his kingdom, which reached down to the Jabbok, fell to the Israelites. Thus the entire country east of the Jordan was become Israelitish.

XXXII. THE VISIT OF BALAAM (*Num.* xxii.—xxiv.).—The Israelites lay encamped by the Jordan opposite Jericho, in what are called "the plains of Moab," the reason of which appellation is, that the land just wrested from the Amorites was originally Moabite and was considered so still, after

the expulsion of those usurpers. Israel had fairly won that territory from the Amorites, not from the Moabites. The Moabites might be vexed to see a new tribe of invaders on their old soil, yet they had no just grievance. Israel had not molested Moab, and had no intention of molesting it; yet their proximity to the Arnon was naturally alarming. Despairing of all ordinary measures, the Moabite rulers sought to gain the supernatural powers to their side, and Balaam was sent for. Balaam dwelt at Pethor, by the river of his people's land (xxii. 5); otherwise, in Aram among the mountains of the East (xxiii. 7); and was of Pethor in Mesopotamia (Deut. xxiii. 4). *Mesopotamia* in Greek is equivalent to *Aram-naharaim* in Hebrew, *i.e.*, "Aram of the two rivers," these being Euphrates and Tigris. But Pethor has not been discovered, and all we can feel sure of is that it was, like Nineveh, somewhere near the upper streams of those rivers; for there only are "mountains," the lower parts of Euphrates and Tigris flowing through level plains. Balaam professed to reverence the one Lord God. Far and wide the potency of his blessing and his curse was believed in, and he had deluded himself into the idea that he possessed influence sufficient to change the will of God. As a means of teaching him the reverse, the Almighty allowed him, on his persistent request, to return with the messengers of Balak. He had refused that permission at first, but to convince the prophet that leave was given in displeasure, and to terrify him against daring to utter against Israel anything contrary to the divine inspiration, God permitted two portents to encounter him on the road; he was rebuked by words proceeding from the ass which carried him, speaking with a man's voice (2 Pet. ii. 16), while an angel with a drawn sword blocking the way became visible to him. Overawed and proposing to turn back, he was bidden proceed and pronounce upon Israel a declaration of the mind of God. At the Arnon, the Moabite boundary, he was met by Balak, whom he distinctly warned that he was but the mouthpiece of God. All in vain proved the imposing altar services and every endeavour to extract a curse from his lips;

nothing but blessings would issue : “ Behold, I have received commandment to bless ; and He hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel. The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel.” Convinced at length of the futility of his attempt to change the divine mind, Balaam desisted from it, and as he gazed upon that splendid orderly array of the chosen people tented according to their tribes, the Spirit of God came upon him, and now at length he uttered a really prophetic speech : “ How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel ! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river side ; as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar-trees beside the waters. . . . God hath brought him forth out of Egypt ; he hath, as it were, the strength of an unicorn. He shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows. . . . Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.” The interposition of the enraged king was brushed aside ; honour, great honour, a houseful of gold, had no power to check the prophet’s inspiration, and the word proceeded : “ I shall see him, but not now ; I shall behold him, but not nigh : there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly.” As the chosen people lay encamped on the border of Canaan, God declared that He had not beheld iniquity, nor seen perverseness, in them. What then of all the iniquity and perverseness of the forty years—the forty years of provocation ? They were facts, which had not been, never could be, obliterated. The words were not intended to deny that Israel was a rebellious people, but to declare that God would not at that moment behold their rebellion ; in other words, that He had pardoned it. They were entering Canaan therefore,

not for their righteousness but under the pardoning grace of God. In the Christian day an Apostle wrote the following queries and answers, which supply a striking comment on the proclamation of Balaam: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is He that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 33-37). That was the lesson of Israel's altar and Israel's priesthood, around which they were gathered when Balaam viewed them abiding in their tents; and by virtue of Christ, who was there typified, Balak's thrice seven altars could not prevail to hurt. Balaam could not curse when it pleased the righteous God to justify. Israel's pardon after all those wilderness years, proclaimed from the hill-tops to the surrounding nations, is a thought which for its impressiveness matches that of Sinai itself.

XXXIII. ISRAEL JOINED UNTO BAAL-PEOR (*Num.* xxv.). —Here are seen the abominations of heathen sacrifices in utter contrast to the pure and holy offerings ordained for Israel at Sinai. Those altar rites were not only attended with the wickedness here spoken of; they were direct incentives to it, expressly intended and contrived for the purpose of it. The same thing may be said in regard to some of the temple worships of Pagan classical antiquity and to the "religion" of some heathen peoples of the present day. In a period when altar sacrifices were the universal mode of worship, the absolute spotlessness of the Tabernacle offerings indicates a protest against the evil propensities of the human heart which cannot but powerfully impress the minds of such as reflect upon it. It is a fact in the Old Testament corresponding with the fact of the perfect character of Jesus Christ in the New; and as the one is a most powerful argument for the divine origin of the Gospel, so is the other of the Law. It removes all the difficulty of that expression, "Ye are a holy people," applied to the chosen race. So likewise does the fact that an outbreak of wickedness among

them on a national scale is never unaccompanied with severe chastisement. The death of the Israelite offenders instantly decreed, the pestilence at once slaying its thousands, terribly brought home to the people that they were a holy nation. Weeping, they flocked to the door of the Tabernacle ; and when with a defiant effrontery a high-born Israelite brought his high-born Midianitess into the camp within view of the penitential gathering, the high-priest's own son Phinehas, following them with a javelin into their tent, smote them to death, Zimri and Cosbi ; it was but another way of declaring, "Ye are a holy nation." It showed that the priesthood, like the great body of the people, was sound ; and as one way of perpetuating in Israel the memory of this deed, along with the divine approval of it, the high-priesthood was declared perpetual in his line by that memorable promise, "Behold, I give unto him My covenant of peace ; and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood ; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel" (vers. 12, 13). The deed was indelible in the records of Israel, and later ages sang, "Then stood up Phinehas and executed judgment, and so the plague was stayed, and that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore" (Ps. cvi. 30, 31). God's gracious proclamation by the lips of the vile Balaam, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob," remained true in the sense intended, though it was apparently contradicted so soon after it was spoken, and through Balaam's own wicked counsels too (Num. xxxi. 16). This example of pagan enormity was a new experience to that generation of Israel, reared in the wilderness, and there before crossing the Jordan they beheld by one specimen what the Canaanites beyond were. They saw enough to understand the awful dangers they were exposed to in settling among such tribes.

XXXIV. MIDIAN PUNISHED (*Num.* xxxi.).—"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites : afterwards shalt thou be gathered to thy people." So twelve thousand armed men, a thousand

from each tribe, mustered, and with them was the high priest's son Phinehas, the man so zealous for God, "with the holy instruments" (whatever these might have been), and the trumpets to blow in his hand. The Midianites fell before them; the males were slain, as were also the adult females, since "these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord." Five kings of Midian fell. "Balaam also, the son of Beor, they slew with the sword." All their cities and goodly castles were burnt, and there was immense spoil in flocks, herds, and treasure. In this chapter we first hear that the licentious idolatry by which Israel was seduced, originated in the diabolical counsel of Balaam, and that he fell in this awful punishment. The Moabite king, whose offence was his fetching the prophet to curse, was not punished, nor his people, except by the blessing having been pronounced in the place of a curse; but their Midianite neighbours and allies, who brought their iniquities and temptations into the holy camp of the Lord, provoking Him to His face, and gratuitously wronging the people whom they were assured were God's chosen, and by whom they were not molested, were destroyed by Him who sometimes employs for such judgments, fire, plague, and earthquake. He who brought the flood on a world of violence, rained fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, sent plagues on Egypt, destroyed the host of Pharaoh, sent pestilence on Israel in the wilderness, and will judge the world, issued the sentence against Midian. It is to be noted, that this is the first instance in which the Israelites, with the divine sanction, attacked any people who had not first attacked them in arms. Midian, however, had assailed them with temptations to wickedness, and that was worse.

XXXV. GILEAD APPORTIONED (*Num.* xxxii.).—The land of Canaan was that alone which lay west of the Jordan, the Sea of Galilee, and the Dead Sea. The country, however, which in later times was, and is, called Palestine, included

and includes the eastern district as well. This latter, which went by the general name of Gilead, was an elevated pasture land abounding in timber and of great fertility, much desired therefore as a settlement by the tribes of Reuben and Gad, on account of their exceptional wealth in sheep and cattle. Accordingly, they petitioned Moses and Eleazar for leave to occupy that country instead of receiving an allotment in Canaan. Since they made no proposal to the contrary, Moses interpreted their request as a design to escape the perils of the Canaanite war, and in terms of indignant remonstrance demanded—"Shall your brethren go to war and shall ye sit here? And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the Lord hath given them? Thus did your fathers when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land." In the severest language, therefore, they were menaced with the divine displeasure. If any such selfish part was originally contemplated by the two tribes, it was at once freely given up, and they hastened to satisfy Moses of their entire loyalty and obedience, assuring him thus: "We will build sheep-folds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones; but we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel until we have brought them unto their place; and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land. We will not return unto our houses until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance." What made the intention of lingering from the war (if that was entertained) the more unbecoming was that the marching place of the two tribes was in the forward half of the host, in the rear of one portion of the Tabernacle, and in the van of the other (Num. x. 18-21), a position alluded to in their words, "We will go ready armed before the children of Israel" (xxxii. 17). The spirit here displayed was held to be satisfactory, and the request was granted. Half Manasseh was also located in Gilead, as the tribe had distinguished itself in its conquest (xxxii. 39-41).

XXXVI. EXTIRPATION OF THE CANAANITES (*Num.*

xxxiii. 50-56).—In this passage the extirpation by expulsion is ordered, slaughter not being mentioned; a fact which leads us to infer that expatriation would have sufficiently fulfilled the divine command as to the Canaanites, leaving death as the alternative in the case of exile being declined. Numerous instances are given in Judg. i., in which the various tribes failed to *drive out* the native Canaanites, as though that were the primary intention, armed force being employed as only the means to that end. But neither was a riddance of the Canaanites the main purpose, so much as the annihilation of idolatry, with all its concomitant abominations. One small spot of the earth's surface, a spot important for its natural fertility, and for its commanding position, but in size no bigger than Wales, was to be rescued from the corruption into which the whole of mankind was sunk, and that small area was to form a centre and a stronghold of truth and holiness. God would carry out this design by rooting out the old, and rooting in the new. Israelites were in themselves no better than Canaanites; they were prone to many of the same evils. But a holy law had been revealed to them, and they were being trained to believe in it, love it, and obey it; trained by judgments, miracles, and fatherly leading. There is no conceivable way in which an element of holiness could have been effectually introduced into this fallen world, a handful of salt into this mass of corruption, save by planting a new worship, and a new nation to carry it on in the place of those in possession, that they might become one day in the course of God's providence the centre of a mission to all the world. In vain would the best of the Israelites be sent into Canaan as preachers of righteousness. Israelites, wholly untrained as they were, could not be trusted with such a mission. There must be a law and a worship established upon the mountains, a light upon the hills for all men to see, and a forcible removal of the abominable thing which no persuasion would stand any chance against. Idolatry, in short, was to be uncompromisingly rooted out by force of arms, at the cost of any amount of suffering to

the resisting idolaters, expulsion if that would suffice, death if it would not. In the then state of the world there was apparently no other possible way; and when it should come to the worst, that idolatry must fall in blood, no greater suffering was being inflicted than was daily occurring during the reign of the gods, in whose cruel names the land was (in the language of the spies and as was really meant) devouring the inhabitants thereof already, before the Israelites set foot in it. The Israelites were by no means, as compared with contemporary peoples, a cruel race. That they were not eager for war or bloodshed is shown by the incidents of the return of the spies, and by the petition of the tribes of Reuben and Gad; but still more by the fact that they persistently neglected their commission of judgment, tolerating from generation to generation both the Canaanites and their idolatries. Nor was it the design of a holy God to encourage in them a callousness to human suffering. It was that they should be merciless to idol worship, and all its pestilent accompaniments at any price. They were a chosen race for that purpose; not simply as favoured at the expense of other nations, but as special instruments in the divine hand; with the menace hanging over them, that should they prove untrue to their commission, they would in their turn fare as ill as the most unfavoured nation on earth. The terms of their commission then were these: "When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan; then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places: and ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it. . . . But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. Moreover, it shall come to pass, that I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them."

XXXVII. THE DELIMITATION AND DIVIDERS OF THE LAND (*Num.* xxxiv.).—While the eastern and western borders, Jordan and the Mediterranean, are clear, the northern and the southern, as detailed by Moses, are far from being so, in the absence of all proper systematic exploration of those parts with the express object of determining the lines. Few of the localities here mentioned have been identified. In the south the Mosaic frontier extended to Kadesh-barnea without including it; in the north to “the entrance of Hamath.” The Ordnance Survey gives no help, as it stopped far short in both north and south, confining itself to the later proverbial limits of Dan and Beersheba. As to the division of the land, Moses directed that it should be carried out, under the general superintendence of Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, by ten princes, one from each tribe, with the omission of Gad and Reuben, settled east of Jordan. Each of them was actually named by Moses, Caleb being fixed on for Judah. This precise delimitation, to the minutest particular, and the dividers of the land all told off, besides the actual settlement of the eastern portions, must have given the Israelites an impression of certainty as to what was coming to pass under their new leaders. Moses thus, as it were, put Canaan into their very hands.

XXXVIII. THE LEVITICAL CITIES AND CITIES OF REFUGE (*Num.* xxxv.).—Forty-eight cities, on an average four in each tribe, were to be set apart for the Levites, who had no tribal portion of their own like the rest, but were thus distributed all over the country. Every Levitical city was to have surrounding it a belt of land a thousand cubits (nearly six hundred yards) broad to serve as pasture for its cattle. This was in fact a landed endowment of the Tabernacle and the national religion. Six of the forty-eight, three on each side of Jordan, were to be cities of refuge for manslayers, and very particular directions are laid down as to the class of persons to be benefited, as well as for guarding the institution from abuse.

XXXIX. THE INHERITANCE OF DAUGHTERS (*Num.* xxxvi.).—Daughters inheriting lands from their fathers were not to marry out of their own tribe, lest it should result in the admission into it of strangers from another tribe. This general rule was made by Moses at the instance of the heads of the tribe of Manasseh, a member of which, Zelophehad, left daughters only to inherit his lands. These, therefore, were married to the sons of their father's brother, and all intermingling of tribes was avoided, a matter reckoned of great importance. Where the descent of landed estates was not involved there was no objection to the intermarrying of tribes.

DEUTERONOMY

I. TITLE, PERIOD, INTRODUCTION (*Deut.* i.–iii.).—This fifth portion of the *Pentateuch*, or *Book of the Law*, was headed by the Jews *Elle haddebârim*, which are the first two Hebrew words of it, meaning *These be the words*. For this heading the Greek Septuagint translators substituted one which should indicate the general contents, viz., *Δευτερονόμιον*, a word denoting *a repetition of the law*, evidently, in the main, from the circumstance that the Ten Commandments are here introduced for the second time, and that very prominently, their application and obligation being urgently pressed on the Israelites all through. The Latin Vulgate translators, while preserving the Greek title, made the portion a distinct book, naming it *Liber Deuteronomii*. The English title, an amplification of the Vulgate, is **The Fifth Book of Moses, called Deuteronomy**. The bulk of Deuteronomy consists of a great variety of miscellaneous rules, some repeated and amplified from previous books, others altogether new, set down without much method or arrangement ; and as they stand in the text it is impossible to group them in any kind of useful classified order. Apparently they were added to the work just as each was called for by the occasion or was suggested to the mind of the Lawgiver. In this respect they answer exactly to our own printed collection of the national statutes, where a militia act may be followed by a church-building act, and that by a turnpike-road or a vagrancy act, each being added to the statute-book as it was wanted, or as it was convenient to enact it. The Book of Deuteronomy has all the appearance of having been composed in the same undigested order, quite in keeping with

the character of a contemporary work written in a camp. The time comprised by the Book was about forty days, computed thus. The discourses began on the first day of the eleventh month in the fortieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt (Deut. i. 3). About seventy days after that the Jordan was crossed, since it was on the tenth day of the first month in the forty-first year (Jos. iv. 19). But thirty days before the crossing Moses died; for the Israelites mourned thirty days for him before crossing (Deut. xxxiv. 8); thus leaving the first forty of the seventy days for the discourses. By way of introduction Moses first states the precise time and place, when, and where he opened these his last instructions, the time as above mentioned, the place in the land of Moab east of Jordan (i. 1-3). Then he proceeded to take a retrospective view of past events since the departure from Horeb; noticing the appointment of judges, the arrival at Kadesh-barnea, the mission of the spies, the sentence of a long exclusion from the land, their presumptuous attempt to defeat that sentence, their ignominious repulse, their long detention at Kadesh, their circuitous journey round the Edomite range in order to reach another part of Canaan, the crossing of Arnon, the defeat of Sihon and of Og, the allotment of their conquered territories, their arrival at the spot where they were encamped near the Jordan. God had been, for His part, faithful to all His promises, the fulfilment of which, long delayed by the distrustfulness of the nation, had not been forfeited.

II. ISRAEL'S FUTURE (*Deut.* iv. 1-40).—To their prospects immediate and remote the Lawgiver now turns after having recapitulated their past. That divine and hardly unseen hand which had brought them thus far is still nigh; they have in their own experience now learned the absolute certainty of God's word, equally in its promises and its warnings; and if they will but bear that in constant remembrance, all will be well. In language that for pathos and beauty is nowhere surpassed in Holy Writ, and has not been approached by any other books deemed sacred in the world,

the tones of which those who have early learned to love them can never afterwards forget, this father of his people proceeds in chapter after chapter to utter his farewell charges. As to their future security, it lies, in one word, in their obedience : (Read iv. 1-5.) Then as to their future greatness he continues : (Read iv. 5-8.) Here is their superiority in the world, that they possess a holy law given them by God Himself. But one thing is essential, an absolute loyalty to the covenant by which they take the Lord for their God. Their duty in avoiding idolatry is so clear, so unmistakable, so easy, that the very slightest deviation even in heart and thought would constitute an unpardonable offence. Let them remember Horeb : (Read iv. 12-21.) Israel was entering a land teeming with visible gods. In that respect a new experience awaited them ; for this generation never were in Egypt where such gods held possession, and the wilderness in which they had been brought up was not occupied by them. The dominant religious thought of the wilderness was monotheistic. Everywhere that great solitude echoed the voice of one true God, and it reverberated in their ears with the Sinaitic Law, as they had experienced in many a chastisement ; through its length and breadth for forty years the cloud-pillar and the manna had accompanied them ; there they drank of the spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ ; there all that while the Tabernacle had sojourned, and there on Mount Hor its first priest was resting in the flesh. To Israel the whole wilderness had been, in a way, no other than the house of God and the gate of heaven, in which dread place they had been brought up. Once, after leaving it, they had been for a moment, at Beth-peor, in touch with idols ; but in that case it was vicious indulgence rather than any religious system that allured them. Henceforth, it would be different, and idolatry would appeal to their religious instincts as well as to the propensities of their sinful nature, meeting them with temples, priests, processions, altars, worship, and image forms of God. Now Israelites are warned that they must neither bow down to those forms nor imagine that they

might bow down to their own God *through* them. Their thoughts must revert to the wilderness and its miraculous manifestations. Before their eyes had been God's attribute of Power, and God's attribute of Holiness, in every deliverance, and in every judgment. God's attribute of Personality, however, had never once been revealed to their bodily eye, but to their ear alone, to their ear by words afterwards written and recorded; words declaring His character as a person, and proclaiming Him the author of that power which had divided the sea for their passage. A holy one, a gracious one, a deliverer—that was to be the ruling idea of Him in their hearts, and they were to fashion themselves into copies of Him. Inspired words, recorded in writing by the hand of Moses, *they* were to be the memorials of Him; they alone, and not a form of any kind drawn from their own imagination—for as to any authoritative form, there was absolutely not one. Every attempt, therefore, to portray God's personality by human art was peremptorily forbidden. It would necessarily degrade that personality, and by consequence degrade man. Israel had been taught that all things in visible nature before their eyes were the work of God's hand, from the creeping worm to the glorious sun, and none of them could possibly be God. To worship their dead imitations of these things was a thousandfold more insulting. Such imitations too! Their revolting conceptions, their rude, their hideous execution, in the infancy of the arts, were enough to move scorn and derision; while as soon as man had acquired true artistic skill to shape out things of beauty, their gods and goddesses so designed might be executed by the most corrupt of artists to stimulate the basest passions of those admitted to worship them, as it was called. In mercy to man God allowed Himself to be heard but never seen, prior to the Incarnation of the Son. He encouraged no pretence of any authorised exhibition of His personality, and more especially He forbade it to Israel. Israel was God's inheritance, holy as God was holy; and by an expressive word, "jealousy," He declared every attempt to dishonour Him and corrupt them as a provocation past

forgiveness. Loyalty to their God, as against idol worship, was then the sole condition of Israel's continued possession of this land. On that question God declared Himself "jealous," or absolutely uncompromising, and expulsion would prove the certain consequence of any incorrigible national failure. In case of that punishment ever befalling the nation, re-admission was assured to them on repentance, *i.e.*, on reformation, which repentance means. Such a restoration was in fact guaranteed by the great redemption by which they were brought out of Egypt and planted in Canaan, a grace that should never prove in vain when God's "inheritance" appealed to it in a right spirit.

III. THREE CITIES OF REFUGE (*Deut.* iv. 41-43).—In Num. xxxv. 9-34 Moses was commanded to set apart six cities, there called *Cities of Refuge*, three on each side of Jordan, and the design of them is there explained in detail. The three eastern cities are now specified, Bezer in the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead belonging to Gad, Golan in Bashan to Manasseh. Bezer has not been identified. Ramoth in Gilead is usually placed at the modern city of *Salt*. Golan remains unknown, but is considered to have given the name of *Gaulonitis* to a district frequently mentioned in after times. In a later chapter of Deuteronomy (xix. 1-13) some further rules were added. There were to be three additional cities, making nine in all, in case the Israelite dominions should be enlarged to their fullest extent in consequence of the nation's obedience. If the man-slayer was known to be a murderer, not entitled to the benefit of this institution, the elders of his city were to fetch him home and deliver him to the avenger of blood.

IV. THE DECALOGUE RECITED (*Deut.* iv. 44-v. 33).—Here more properly begins that special feature of this book which occasioned its being named in later times *Deuteronomy*, a repetition of the Law: Not at the foot of Sinai but in the valley over against Beth-peor, in view of Canaan, the new generation of Israel heard with their own ears the

laws and regulations which they were brought there to plant within that land ; and Moses, who had delivered the two tables to their fathers, had been spared thus solemnly to recite them. The Decalogue was the covenant made by God with Israel in Horeb ; *i.e.* the condition on which they were to be admitted into the promised land. In the recital on the present occasion, the Ten Laws are almost, but not absolutely, *verbatim* those of Exod. xx. In the fourth, for instance, the reason for the institution of the Sabbath, namely as commemorating the Rest of creation, is omitted, and instead of it Moses pressed upon the people the rest given them by God from their Egyptian bondage as a great motive for observing and loving the day. After the recital Moses added something which he had not recorded before, namely, the impression made on the people by what they had heard at Sinai. They said to Moses : “ We have seen this day that God doth talk with man and he liveth. Now therefore why should we die ? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more then we shall die. . . . Go thou near and hear all that the Lord our God shall say ; and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it and do it.” Then said the Lord unto Moses : “ I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken unto thee. They have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children for ever !” Something yet further arose from this incident which Moses took occasion to mention later on.

V. GOD TO BE LOVED (*Deut.* vi. 4, 5).—“ Hear, O Israel ; the Lord our God is one Lord ; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” The imaginary beings whom the pagans of old learnt to believe in were never set before them as objects of love ; while as to present-day heathen the entire absence of signs of love for their gods is quite

conspicuous ; they are often deeply touched on first hearing from a Christian that God loves them, and desires their love equally with their fear. Even the New Testament does not more urgently inculcate the same sentiment, on the same principle, the priority of God's love to man, than does the above passage, which is cited by our Lord Himself (St. Matt. xxii. 37), and many another in the Old Testament ; nor, on the other hand, in the face of apostasy and wilful sin, are the terrors of the Lord more solemnly appealed to in the Mosaic Scriptures than in the Apostolic and Evangelic.

VI. A TRADITION FOR FUTURE TIMES (*Deut.* vi. 20-25).

—An Israelite in future days might be ready to ask why God should have put the nation under so elaborate a system, when the simplest ritual had sufficed for patriarchal days and for Israel since. This passage answered that question beforehand, and would form an authentic tradition from father to son from one generation to another. As slaves in Egypt they could hardly have maintained the clear views of divine revelation enjoyed by the patriarchs, and were in danger of absorption into the heathen world. To bring them nearer to God, and for their own happiness, they needed a training such as the Mosaic system could supply. The tradition in Israel then would be this, that they were chosen out from the rest of the world, in order to reach a higher level of knowing and serving God ; so that to become amalgamated with the heathen around would be their dishonour as well as their destruction. Their mission in the world was to testify to the existence, the unity, the righteous government of God their Creator, and that righteousness alone exalteth a nation.

VII. WHY THE CANAANITES MUST BE ROOTED OUT (*Deut.* vii. 1-16).—The Canaanites who resisted with arms were to be destroyed, and the reason given was for Israel a most humiliating one. For notwithstanding the barbarities and loathsome impurities of the Canaanite idolatry, Israel was not to be trusted in any social footing among that

people, lest they should apostatise to them from their own holy law. In any intermingling Israel would not purify Canaan ; Canaan would corrupt Israel. The worse influence, not the better, would prevail. It is hardly possible to state in a more forcible way the fatal bias of human nature towards evil. The injunction ran : "And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee ; thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them : thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them : neither shalt thou make marriages with them ; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods ; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them ; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire : for thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God : the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."

VIII. THE CONQUEST WILL BE GOD'S (*Deut.* vii. 17-26).—It would also be by a gradual process and a continued struggle, which should test their own perseverance, trust in God, and fidelity.

IX. THE WILDERNESS TO BE REMEMBERED. (Read *Deut.* viii.).—The goal was now before them. "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills ; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates ; a land of oil olive, and honey ; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it ; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass." In enjoyment of all those bounties still less should they forget Egypt, and the wilderness, and the forty years, or dare to take the

credit of possession to themselves. To forget the wilderness in the hour of their fulness were to forget God Himself and the Covenant. "And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God and walk after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God." To forget God and God's hand at the very moment of enjoying His bounties, and to bow prostrate to the visible gods His flattest contradiction, would be an offence to be expiated only by a re-expulsion into the desert. For a people betraying its trust so grossly to be left in triumphant possession where their predecessors, hardly worse, had been disinherited, would be an intolerable justification of the world's worst imputations against the righteousness of God.

X. NOT FOR THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS (*Deut.* ix.).—The conquest of Canaan was to come about no more as a reward for Israel's goodness than as the result of Israel's prowess. In most emphatic terms Moses asserted that the victory would be God's, and by them wholly unmerited. In spite of all that was said in Numbers, "I have not seen perverseness in Israel," it remained a dismal fact that they were a stiff-necked people all along. Deuteronomy declares what they were; Numbers, what they were forgiven. (Read vers. 1-7.) On one example of their perverseness he especially dilated, that aggravated offence of which they were guilty, when he broke the very tables of the law before their eyes, and ground their infamous idol to dust. The names of Taberah, Massah, Kibroth-hattaavah, Kadesh-barnea, recalled other rebellions. "Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you." Moses, in short, took the same pains to caution the nation of his day against all idea of their own merits, and to make them understand that their new possession, and even their own existence, were of God's unmerited gift, granted to his own intercession with a confession of their sins, that St. Paul in

apostolic days took to impress upon the infant church that their entry into God's kingdom was through Christ, by faith, and of grace; "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9).

XI. THE SERVICE OF LOVE (*Deut. x.*).—God's continued favour after all those rebellions, His restoring the tables of the law to accompany the Ark, His continuing the priesthood in Aaron's line after Aaron's fall, His separating Levi to bear the Ark and its precious contents, permitting the nation's advance from the scene of its disgrace towards the promised land—all this grace, this unmerited favour, is made the ground of a further appeal to Israel's heart, their heart of love, their heart of fear. (Read x. 12, 13, 20, 21.)

XII. THE FERTILISING OF CANAAN (*Deut. xi. 1-17*).—Israel is to understand that besides the conquest of Canaan, its subsequent fruitfulness also will in a very special manner depend on the favour of God, a favour which will be regulated by their obedience. The fertility of Canaan as a land of milk and honey is not to be reckoned on as a matter of course, and as resulting from a blind law of nature. If the conditions on which the Israelites are to be established in the land are violated, a discontinuance of that fertility must be looked for. Having plainly laid down those terms, Moses proceeded in illustration to show the natural causes to which the fertility of Canaan was owing, as contrasted with the causes of that of Egypt, which they knew more about. In the fertilisation of Egypt man had a great share. The level surface, where it seldom rained, was watered by the overflow of the Nile once in every year, filling innumerable canals by which the inhabitants, retaining the waters after the subsidence of the river, continually fed the land. The irrigation of Egypt was thus an elaborate system of artificial works, demanding the incessant attention of man. In the mountainous country of Palestine man has comparatively little to do in bringing the water in contact with his fields. He depends upon the rainfall at two special seasons of the

year, the early and the later, to feed springs, fill hollows and tanks, and swell the grain. The Nile overflow, though occasionally deficient, never actually failed altogether; the rainfall in Palestine, the earlier or the later, sometimes did. The warning then ran thus :—(Read xi. 10–18.)

XIII. THEIR CONSTANT OPEN PROFESSION (*Deut.* xi. 18–21).—Being so absolutely dependent, as tenants at will, so to speak, Israel was in an especial manner required to keep the terms of their tenure perpetually before them in public and private life, while every younger generation in its turn was to be taught them and preoccupied with them. Besides having those divine injunctions buried in the invisible recesses of the heart, the members of this wondrous nation were to profess them to the whole world on their persons and their abodes. What among other peoples were mere amulets, or bracelets, or frontlets, for hand or forehead, were with them to be decorative texts from the sacred word. The very entrances of their homes were to be inscribed in a similar manner. Thus the whole land and the whole people were to declare to all men and to one another, whose they were and whom they served. The 119th Psalm shows itself to have been written among a people thus trained, by one having the secret love as well as the outward profession. Thus Moses enjoined: “Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house, and upon thy gates: that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.”

XIV. ONE CENTRAL ALTAR FOR CANAAN (*Deut.* xii.).—The places and monuments of idolatrous worship were to

be destroyed ; the whole apparatus of idol religion to be swept away ; the heights whereupon the heavens were insulted by it were to be cleared, and the groves which harboured all its impurities to be given to the flames. This injunction, expressly given to Israel to be observed in Canaan alone, is no guide for other nations or churches. In modern Christian missions the only allowable proceeding is to convince the devotees of the vanity of idols, until they learn themselves to become their destroyers. "Ye shall surely destroy all the places wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree ; and ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire ; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place." As if to exclude all possible danger of Israelite worship being partially carried on in the places of the destroyed idols, and of the heathen altars being converted into Israelite ones, the law enjoined in the strictest manner that there was to be one central altar for the whole nation at a selected place, and no others. The idea of any spot having acquired a sacredness from its pagan associations in the past was out of the question, and no true Israelite could entertain it for one moment. Anything that would interfere with the unity of worship, or tend in the least degree to break it up, was sternly forbidden ; hill-altars and grove-altars at every one's option were peremptorily condemned. "Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God. But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither shalt thou come ; and thither shall ye bring your burnt-offerings and your sacrifices, and your tithes. . . . And there shall ye eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the Lord thy God hath blessed thee." Careful attention to these prohibitions makes it clear that Moses had in his view the stated public worship of Israel as established at Sinai : the national worship was not to be set up in

plurality (see Josh. xxii. 10 to end). Any thought of prohibiting an occasional sacrifice in circumstances which seemed to call for one on the spur of the moment, and where a resort to the Tabernacle was out of the question, such as Gideon's, Samuel's, Elijah's offerings, was outside his intention. Those sacrifices were avowedly but occasional and temporary, without the slightest risk of their starting a rival national worship. The altars which Moses had distinctly in view were of another type altogether, like those set up in after times by King Jeroboam at Dan and Bethel. The distinction is to be carefully borne in mind, since it has been suggested that when Gideon, Samuel, Elijah reared their altars, no rule for one central altar existed; in other words, that Deuteronomy, which forbade a plurality of altars, had not yet been written, in short, was not written by Moses at all, nor in his time, but ages later. The suggestion is entirely gratuitous. The occasional altars of those eminent Israelites offer no difficulties, need no explanation.

XV. ENTICERS TO IDOLATRY (*Deut.* xiii.).—On so plain and obvious a matter as idol worship, where there could be no possible ground for misapprehension, God's word, as revealed through Moses, was to be followed, even against miraculous evidence to the contrary. However real a miracle might seem, or even might be, it was to be no excuse or justification for an act of idolatry. If a real miracle, it was permitted by God as a test of obedience to a plain command. The art of man in imitating the supernatural has been in all ages so remarkable that ordinary people might well be pardoned for a lack of skill in detecting the imposture, where it was one. Yet they are plainly warned that that will make no difference. Even granting the miracle, an appeal in favour of idolatry must be rejected absolutely and unhesitatingly. "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, . . . thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that

dreamer of dreams ; for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God, with all your heart and with all your soul. . . . And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death ; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God." Even if the enticer should be the dearest relative or a bosom friend, he is to be handed to the authorities without pity. If a town has been enticed to idolatry, it is to be given to the flames and its inhabitants put to the sword, like any idol city of Canaan. There was to be no distinction of persons, no partiality shown to an Israelite town. Thus utterly and indiscriminately was the epidemic of idolatry to be stamped out.

XVI. TITHE (*Deut.* xiv. 22-29).—The tenth of the produce of the ground was to be employed in two ways, constituting annual and triennial tithe. Annual tithe was to be conveyed two years following to the Tabernacle, and there feasted on in company with the Levites, to whose support it thus contributed. Should the Tabernacle be far distant and the tithe a heavy load to transport, it might be turned into money and other material purchased at the Tabernacle. Triennial tithe, falling every third year, instead of being taken to the Tabernacle, was to be employed at home in hospitality, to which were to be invited the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, the widow. In these ways tithe constituted what we should call a church-rate and a poor-rate, the mode of its contribution being brotherly, neighbourly, and religious.

XVII. THE DEBTOR'S RELEASE (*Deut.* xv. 1-11).—"At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. . . . Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it ; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother ; because it is called the Lord's release." This law applied not to trade debts, but to loans borrowed in poverty by an Israelite, not by a stranger. Commentators understand that repayment of the debt could only not be enforced in the year of release, and that at the end of it the lender's

claim revived. The Israelite is exhorted not to be so unfeeling as to withhold a loan on account of a proximity of the year of release. A liberal spirit would bring its reward. "Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto. For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land."

XVIII. THE SERVANT'S RELEASE (*Deut.* xv. 12-18).—A Hebrew servant in the seventh year of his servitude must be sent forth free unless he prefer to abide in his condition, in which case he must submit to having his ear bored with an awl, in token of his preferring perpetual bondage. The rule is a repetition of that enjoined in *Exod.* xxi. 2-6, except that it is now extended to women servants; and it is added that the servant, in case of accepting freedom, must be liberally furnished with gifts. As a motive to bestow them ungrudgingly, and the freedom besides, the lawgiver urges: "Thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee;" and we cannot avoid remarking that the frequency with which the Egyptian deliverance is incidentally interposed at every turn throughout the Book is in entire keeping with the profession it makes of having been composed by Moses himself when the Egyptian deliverance was fresh in the memory of all.

XIX. THREE CHIEF FESTIVALS (*Deut.* xvi. 1-17).—Out of the seven festivals mentioned in *Lev.* xxiii., three, not there distinguished from the rest, were selected for special honour, viz.: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. These, and only these, were to be kept at the Tabernacle by all the males of Israel, assembled there for the occasion. It was reserved for Deuteronomy (repeating *Exod.* xxiii. 14; xxxiv. 23) to emphasise this, it being one special object of that Book to promote in a most particular manner the

unity of the national altar and worship at one fixed centre. The injunction to attend is limited to men, but women might be there likewise. 1. **The Passover** (vers. 1-8). For this festival, and for that of Unleavened Bread, which accompanied it, many directions had already been given (Exod. xii. 1-27; Lev. xxiii. 5-8; Num. ix. 1-14). The original injunction was that the lamb should be killed and eaten as a family meal in each separate home, under the direction of the head of the house. It is called a sacrifice in Exod. xii. 27; but as there was yet no altar enjoined, that term is employed in an unusual sense. The feast in Egypt was kept in the only way practicable in the circumstances of the moment. Unleavened bread was eaten for at least six days afterwards on the march. The next celebration, the only one recorded in the wilderness, was at Sinai (Num. ix. 1-5), but there are no details of the way in which it was observed. The term offering, however, is applied to it. The settlement in Canaan involved many new circumstances, in accordance with which Moses now in Deuteronomy modified the rule in some particulars. In regard to the lamb, the central figure of the whole service, the day and hour of the meal, the seven days' duration, including the feast of unleavened bread, no change was made; the passover in Canaan was to be substantially a copy of the passover in Egypt and the wilderness. It was, however, specially enjoined that the festival was not to be kept at the people's tribal homes but at the central Tabernacle. This was really an immaterial change, for instead of the family home in Reuben or Naphtali, it was the family tent brought to Shiloh; it was the family still, and that was the main point. Another apparent change occurs in this passage: "Thou shalt sacrifice the passover of the flock and the herd;" whereas originally it was a lamb or a kid. Here we observe that each day of the feast of unleavened bread had its sacrifice (Lev. xxviii. 17-19), supplied from "the herd," as the lambs would be from "the flock." The whole seven days' solemnity was called in a wider sense the Passover from the initial and dominant portion of it.

“Thou shalt sacrifice the passover of the flock and the herd . . . seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith” (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 9). 2. **Feast of Pentecost**, here called Feast of Weeks (vers. 9-13). Deuteronomy adds nothing new as to the mode of celebration, but lays the greatest stress on its being held at the Tabernacle, and its festivities being shared with the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. 3. **Feast of Tabernacles** (vers. 13-15). As before, there is a special injunction for this festival to be held at the Tabernacle, where was to be rejoicing before God, in which sons, daughters, servants, Levites, strangers, orphans, widows, were to participate.

XX. THE FUTURE KING (*Deut.* xvii. 14-20).—Upon this statement we observe: (1.) A king is not commanded, nor recommended, nor yet forbidden, but allowed. (2.) He must be one chosen by God. (3.) He is to be an Israelite, not a stranger. (4.) The multiplication of horses, not required for peaceful purposes in Canaan, would imply warlike schemes, and commerce with Egypt (where horses were principally reared), and on both accounts would be bad for the nation; but it was one of the temptations of royalty. (5.) Excessive polygamy, and an accumulation of treasure, which again were temptations of royalty, would lead to luxurious living, the deterioration of the female sex, laxity of morals, the introduction of foreign pagan women, and idolatry. (6.) The transcription of the Law, not necessarily by the king's own hand, was an intimation that on no account was the regal constitution to supersede or interfere with the fundamental enactments delivered by Moses, but must adapt itself to them absolutely. It may not have been intended that each successor on the throne should have a new copy, but there was always to be one in good condition in the hands of the king, besides that in custody of the priests, and independently of it, so that both branches of the state, the civil and the ecclesiastical, should be bound equally to govern themselves by the divine law, and should concur in faithfully carrying out every syllable of its enactments. Thus it would be provided

that all the regulations in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, in the letter and in the spirit, should be maintained; that the centre of worship should ever continue where God appointed, without any second altar; in short, that the king and his whole authority and power must exist for the nation and its law, not these for him. Should the relations ever become reversed, the king and his kingdom together would be discarded. (7.) Moses contemplated a future in which the people themselves should desire a king, not one in which some powerful individual should grasp sovereign authority over them.

That Moses should have surmised a future desire for regal government was anything but strange. Not only were people everywhere at that time ruled by kings, but he was himself in all essential respects a king, and Israel was at that very moment, as it had been for forty years, under a monarchical administration. Moses (as many interpret) was king in Jeshurun (xxxiii. 5). He knew there could be no one who would succeed him in all respects, and that authority in some degree monarchical, would follow after his departure, just as it came to pass. Joshua and the Judges were raised up by God, who endued them frequently with special powers, and made known His will for their guidance. Thus the constitution down to Samuel was a *theocracy*, one in which God was at the head, with a human monarch to administer. Samuel was such an administrator, when the people declared for a termination of the theocracy. Impatience of his office, with a rejection of the divine guidance, constituted their offence. The divine supervision was promised nevertheless, and the whole spirit of the theocracy would continue, under the new form as under the old, if the nation and its ruler should go on in submission to God. In reading the narrative of Saul's appointment to the kingdom, it seems difficult to think that the people in Samuel's days did not remember the words of Deuteronomy. Indeed, we might almost say that the forecast or prophecy (whichever it was) of Moses helped, along with some circumstances of Samuel's day, to bring about its own fulfilment. There are two points, how-

ever, which call for explanation. (1.) Moses gave no hint that the desire for a king would be displeasing to God ; whereas Samuel treated it as a sin, even bringing the people to confess as much : " We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king " (1 Sam. viii. 6 ; xii. 19, 20). The real sin, however, did not consist in preferring a regal constitution, but in their rejection of Samuel without adequate reason, amounting to a rejection of God (1 Sam. viii. 7). (2.) Then again, when Samuel dilated so fully on all the burdens of a regal *régime*, standing armies, court magnificence, forced levies, forced labour, heavy taxes, he made no reference to what Moses had said on the same topic. This would be surprising, if we did not distinguish the objects Moses and Samuel had each in view. Moses was portraying the character and qualities of the king that should reign, and these would have to be the same whatever burdens and inconveniences might result from a regal administration. Samuel, on the other hand, was describing those burdens that would inevitably fall on subjects, let the king be as prudent and virtuous as he might. In short, Moses was lecturing the future *king*, bidding him be a God-fearing man ; Samuel was warning the people of a *kingdom* and all its demands. The two passages run therefore on different lines : it would not in the least have helped Samuel's argument to remind the people of what Moses had said ; it would have been irrelevant ; so Samuel cited it not.

XXI. THE DARK ARTS (*Deut.* xviii. 9-14).—Among the abominations of Canaan were the arts of divination, the professions of an observer of times, an enchanter, a witch, a charmer, a consulter with familiar spirits, a wizard, a necromancer ; all of which were forbidden to the Israelite, who was not to resort to such vain impostures for the learning of the secrets of Providence, the events of the future, the paths of wisdom and success, but would be taught by God in some better way all that it was good for him to know.

XXII. THE PROPHET LIKE UNTO MOSES (*Deut.* xviii. 15

-19).—This promise, then, was another outcome of the people's terror at the voice of Sinai (cf. Deut. v. 25-27), and it is with peculiar fitness recorded here after the warnings against vain attempts to discover the unknowable through familiar spirits, wizards, and necromancers. A genuine prophet like Moses himself, inspired to make known in no doubtful tones the will of God, should be raised up, to whom the people might safely resort, and indeed were bound to listen. By St. Peter and St. Stephen (Acts iii. 22 ; vii. 37), this prophet is plainly identified with the Messiah. But it seems reasonable to conclude that Moses was here predicting the rise of a prophetic order, inspired like himself immediately from God, to instruct Israel as to the divine will in their various emergencies, an order of which Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, and the rest were examples, but the Messiah the most illustrious one of all.

XXIII. THE PRESUMPTUOUS PROPHET (*Deut.* xviii. 20-22).—Thus a pretender to the prophetic gift was to be discerned by the failure of some near event on which he staked his credit. By this test Samuel calling on God for rain (I Sam. xiii. 16-18), Elijah for drought and for fire from heaven (I Kings xvii. 1 ; xviii. 24, 39), were found true prophets. Should a so-called prophet come forward in the interest of idolatry he was by that very fact convicted of being no prophet of God, even though a miracle should follow his words (Deut. xiii. 1-3).

XXIV. SIEGE OF DISTANT CITIES (*Deut.* xx. 10-18).—Cities beyond the limits of Canaan, when submitting, were to be received to tribute, their idol worship notwithstanding, for Israel's commission was not a forcible extermination of idolatry everywhere, but only in Canaan. If such cities had to be taken by storm, the lives of only the male inhabitants were forfeited ; all women, children, and cattle were spared. When cities of Canaan were so captured, all were put to the sword ; the reason being not altogether that idolatry should be punished, but mainly that Israel should

not be infected by it, to which one consideration every other was to yield: "That they teach you not to do after all their abominations which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the Lord your God." That one little territory of all the world was to be freed from the plague of false worship, be the severity of the process what it might. The cruelties of idolatry far surpassed the severities by which it was exterminated. Things being as they were, pure worship could not be effectively established otherwise.

XXV. MURDER BY HAND UNKNOWN (*Deut.* xxi. 1-9).—Here was an instance of the extreme reverence for human life fostered by the law that was so pitiless against the votaries of idols. The nation commanded to be so callous against the one mother-crime, was trained to a perfect horror of blood innocently shed, and taught to reckon the very ground polluted until a solemn inquest had failed to discover the murderer, and the Almighty had been besought for expiation in the name of the whole public. The sacredness of human life, here so clearly acknowledged, and so carefully fostered, added all its awfulness to the punishment they were required to execute on the pestilential idol service.

XXVI. ENTERING A VINEYARD OR CORNFIELD (*Deut.* xxiii. 24, 25).—Compare St. Matt. xii. 1: "Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and His disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat."

XXVII. BASKET OF FIRST-FRUITS (*Deut.* xxvi. 1-11).—When the nation was settled in Canaan, the Israelite was to present in a basket, from time to time (that the Feast of Tabernacles was the rule is only a conjecture), at the Tabernacle, a portion of the first ripe fruits of his land. The various productions would not all ripen at the same time, but it would be in the spirit of the ordinance if the basket were furnished with what might be in season when it should be convenient to visit the Tabernacle. On appearing with his basket before the priest he was to say: (vers. 3-11).

Thus the Israelites individually were taught to be familiar with the epitome of their early history, and trace every thing up to the gift and grace of God. It was his historic creed. The "Syrian" was Jacob in the famine and in other dangers. Again and again and again the deliverance from Egypt recurs in this Book. The basket of first-fruits was a gift to the Tabernacle, like the tithe, but not one of the offerings.

XXVIII. THE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN GOD AND ISRAEL (*Deut.* xxvi. 16-19).—Publicly and nationally Israel was pledged to be God's people, and God by express revelation was pledged in a peculiar manner to be Israel's God. That was in fact the covenant between God and the chosen race. There has been no other nation in such a covenant with God. But the baptized Christian of all nations enters into a like covenant; because he avouches God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for his Lord, and God by express revelation promises His presence with him for ever, if he lives the rest of his life according to that beginning.

XXIX. EBAL AND GERIZIM (*Deut.* xi. 26-32; xxvii.).—By an expressive ceremony, the nation, upon getting possession of the land, was to declare the terms of their tenure. The scene of it was to be a pair of remarkable hills contiguous to one another. "Thou shalt put the blessing upon mount Gerizim and the curse upon mount Ebal" (xi. 29). On Ebal was to be erected an altar of unhewn stones, plastered; and upon this were to be offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, the people feasting upon the latter and rejoicing before God. Upon the plaster were to be written, "All the words of this law very plainly"—some brief summary of them, of course, perhaps the Ten Commandments. Upon Gerizim were to stand six tribes—Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, Benjamin, who were to bless; on Ebal the other six, who were to cite certain offences and declare those guilty of them accursed. The first of these was, "Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image;" the twelfth and last, "Cursed is he that confirmeth not all the

words of this law to do them." Ebal and Gerizim are accurately known, near the town of Sichem, and the mind's eye can see the groups of elders representing the tribes, six on one hill, six opposite them on the other, on the rising slopes, and the very area at the base where the mass of the people stood between them. Those two striking hills remained a perpetual memorial of the scene, to be associated with it for ever, while no artificial monument that could be erected then would have lasted above a few generations.

XXX. BLESSINGS ON OBEDIENCE (*Deut.* xxviii. 1-14).—This passage is perhaps the most beautiful and affecting of all this Book, reminding us of *Lev.* xxvi. 3-13.

XXXI. CURSES ON DISOBEDIENCE (*Deut.* xxviii. 15-68).

XXXII. PROPHECIES AND PROMISES (*Deut.* xxx. 1-10).—In previous chapters there were promises on obedience, and threatenings on disobedience; here are promises on repentance.

XXXIII. THE COMMANDMENT PLAIN (*Deut.* xxx. 11-14).—In short, what God required Israel to do had been so plainly revealed that all could understand and teach it if the heart were inclined. It would be in vain to say, How can we know the mind and will of God? It is a mystery, out of reach, out of ken, beyond the sea, above the heavens. Vain would be such excuses. From heaven the mystery had been sent down and uttered to Moses; beyond the sea, or in the depths of man's intellect, it was not. Israel possessed it, and needed not to ask the thinkers of the world to weave them a philosophy as the truth of God. They needed none of the religion of the nations, Egyptian, Assyrian, Phœnician, Greek, Roman, Indian, Chinese. With their systems Israel had nothing to do. The word of their God was in the lips of fathers and children, teachers and taught, visible wherever eye turned, on their foreheads, on their hands, on their doorposts. There was no escaping it, and a child or a fool

could understand. With that word, and with no other, Israel had to do. God had not dealt so with any nation, neither had the heathen knowledge of His laws. It was vain to look to them. The same words were used by St. Paul in respect to the Gospel of Christ (Rom. x. 14, 15). This was equally plain, equally authoritative, "the word of faith" which he preached, declaring Christ incarnate, Christ crucified and risen; and when that message was heard the darkness had passed, the true light shone.

XXXIV. THE LAW TO BE READ EVERY SEVENTH YEAR (*Deut.* xxxi. 9-13).—The Book of the Law which Moses had written was committed by him to the custody of the priests, who were enjoined to read it in the ears of all Israel every seventh year, the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, when they came to appear before the Lord in the place He should choose. It is not of course implied that the people were to be instructed in the law only at those long intervals. Anything but that. Fathers were to be teaching their children sitting in the house, walking by the way, lying down to sleep, rising up to work (*Deut.* vi. 7). The delight of the true Israelite was in the law of the Lord, and in it did he meditate day and night (*Ps.* i. 2). The septennial reading was a great public solemnity, when the nation was gathered to its altar, that they might think of the assembly at Horeb and of that in the plain of Moab. One such reading is described in *Neh.* viii. 7. Their acceptance of the law was thus again and again ratified in their national capacity, besides what was done by individuals in private every day.

XXXV. APOSTASY PREDICTED (*Deut.* xxxi. 14-30).—Notwithstanding all the threatenings, all the promises, all the exhortations, Moses was assured by God that Israel would prove unfaithful to their covenant and be a God-forsaken people. Yet not in every sense, and for all time. Their land and their ritual worship they would forfeit; but their law should never be taken out of their hands; in

which respect they would never cease being the people of God. Moses was therefore commanded to compose a song, from which in later times, when under the rod, they would be reminded of the cause.

XXXVI. THE SONG OF MOSES (*Deut.* xxxii. 1-46).— This lyric poem, intended to remain Israel's monitor to all future ages, for warning while they stood, for encouragement when fallen and afflicted, contains four leading thoughts: their original exaltation by the hand of God; their corruption through prosperity; their consequent chastisement; their recovery by divine grace. Under each head we sub-join a few passages from the Song. (1.) *Their exaltation.* "Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask thy father, and he will show thee, thy elders and they will tell thee." In every age of the nation's life their wonderful and providential past should never fade from memory. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Israel's place among the nations was assigned from the beginning in the fore-knowledge of God. "For the Lord's portion is His people, Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." It was no other than God Himself, who brought Israel in triumph; idol-gods had no share in it. "He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;" placed Israel victorious on the mountain barrier, which gave them and secured them the promised land. "Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of

kidneys of wheat," the finest of the wheat (as Ps. cxlvii. 14), "and thou didst drink of the pure blood of the grape." (2.) *Their corruption.* "But Jeshurun," the righteous people, under promise to be so, "waxed fat and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness: then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee." (3.) *Their punishment.* "And when the Lord saw it, He abhorred them, because of the provoking of His sons, and of His daughters. And He said, I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. . . . The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of grey hairs." (4.) *Their recovery.* "Is not this laid up in store with Me, and sealed up among My treasures? To me belongeth vengeance and recompence." God has decreed its period and the degree of its severity. "I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal. . . . Rejoice, O ye nations, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land and to His people." Under these four heads Moses set before Israel an epitome of their whole history; and it is to be noticed that the prophets in future times, as they discoursed to their brother Israelites, followed substantially the same topics in the same order. Moses gave them the key-note, and his Song echoes in all they uttered and wrote. For example, in the first chapter of Isaiah there are (1) the favoured children, (2) their rebellion, (3) their desolation, (4) their pardon. Thus not only the priestly element of Israel's religion, but the prophetic as well, started from the Law of Moses.

XXXVII. THE BLESSING ON ISRAEL (*Deut.* xxxiii.).—The final discourse of the Lawgiver in the presence of his people, when about to ascend to the heights of Nebo, was, like the last words of the departing Saviour, one of blessing. Reproofs and all words of unhappy omen are ended, as when a dying father looks upon his weeping children ; and upon the tribes marshalled before him for another testing of their faith, Moses now looked with graciousness only. He beheld them, not as in the Song, not as blessed, corrupted, chastised, restored, but in the first and last characters alone, altogether inheriting a blessing. He saw them, and he called them, Jeshurun, the Upright ; and as he looked upon the tribes one by one he saw what each might be, was bound to be, should aim to be, happy, prosperous members of a perfect body, all of them brethren in unity, children of God. So much seems clear. But in points of detail there are difficulties for which the commentator's aid must be sought, and yet not with too much confidence of a satisfactory result. The diction, as in all ancient poetry, is occasionally obscure ; the meaning of particular words and phrases uncertain. The Revisers leave the Authorised Version substantially as it was, with just a change here and there, as much as to tell us they have little further certain light to offer. We shall not cite any large portion of this chapter, confining ourselves to a few selected verses.

“The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them ; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came from (R.V.) ten thousands of saints ; from His right hand went a fiery law for them.” Here is the march from Sinai—in the first instance, led by the pillar of cloud and the ark ; and their second departure, from Kadesh-barnea, Seir, Mount Paran, after forty years' detention. The “saints,” or holy ones, would indicate the angelic ministry by which the Law of Sinai was promulgated. And of Benjamin he said, “The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and He shall dwell between his shoulders.” The last expression has been considered an allusion to the shepherd's care (*St. Luke* xv. 5.

Compare Deut. i. 31). The blessing of Asher is, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass ; and as thy days so shall thy strength be." "Shoes" might be "bars" (as R.V.), but it is not certain that the change is required. The closing words of the Lawgiver's blessing, addressed to the whole people, are easy to understand without further help from commentator or translator. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms ; and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone ; the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine ; also His heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel. Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency ! And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places."

XXXVIII. MOSES VIEWS THE LAND AND DIES (*Deut.* xxxiv).—That this concluding passage of the Pentateuch was written after the death of Moses, as well as after the conquest and division of Canaan, is obvious ; but how long afterwards, or by whom, it is not agreed. The last three verses, stating that a prophet like unto Moses had not arisen, could have been added at any time down to the end of the Old Testament period ; for though a certain fulfilment of the promise of such a prophet may be said to have begun with Samuel, no one of the prophetic order appeared in all the grandeur of Moses's personality as here described. The inspiration was there ; but not the mighty hand and the great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel. In the whole history of the chosen race, down to the appearance of Jesus Christ, Moses was the one commanding figure, without an equal and without a second. Coming now to the concluding scene, we observe that no one is said to have accompanied Moses to the summit of Nebo. It was different when Aaron died on Mount Hor ; but in that case there

was a successor to be solemnly invested with the high priest's robes of office. While, however, there was probably no witness of that venerable figure standing in strength unabated and with eye undimmed viewing the landscape o'er, any one at the foot of the mountain could have described it all in the main from what Moses himself had publicly stated, through divine revelation, as in store for him (xxxii. 48-52). The rest of the account was but a filling in of minor details, which, when the tribal allotments had been made a few years later, could have been taken for granted. We can think of no one so likely to have inscribed the bulk of this closing narrative (vers. 1-9) as Aaron's son, Eleazar the high priest, to whom, as the head of his order, this Book of the Law, on its completion by Moses, must have been specially entrusted (see xxxi. 9). That the spot from whence Moses viewed the land of Canaan has been at length discovered within these past few years of eager exploration, seems hardly open to doubt. It is one to which the name Nebo is found still attaching, and the prospect from it, of which more than one description has appeared in print, agrees. It does not indeed take in precisely each distant point named in our chapter, which are not perhaps to be read as having been literally seen. It is enough if they should express in general terms, as they do, the utmost extent of the land in every direction, more or less of it, here and there, falling into the actual view. We observe in conclusion that to a Christian the idea of Moses viewing the Land of Promise might suggest in matters spiritual a thought like this :—

“ The Lord of all the vast domain
Hath promised unto me
The length and breadth of all the plain,
As far as FAITH can see.”

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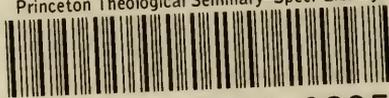
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