

THE QUESTION

Was Moses the Author of the Pentateuch?

ANSWERED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE,

BY

HERMAN WITSIUS, S.S.T.D. ET P.

TRANSLATED, PREFACED, AND ANNOTATED

BY THE

REV. JOHN DONALDSON,

SENIOR MINISTER OF THE FREE CHURCH, GLENS.

BS1225
.8.W82

Library of the Theological Seminary,

PRINCETON, N. J.

Division ..

Section

ERRATA.

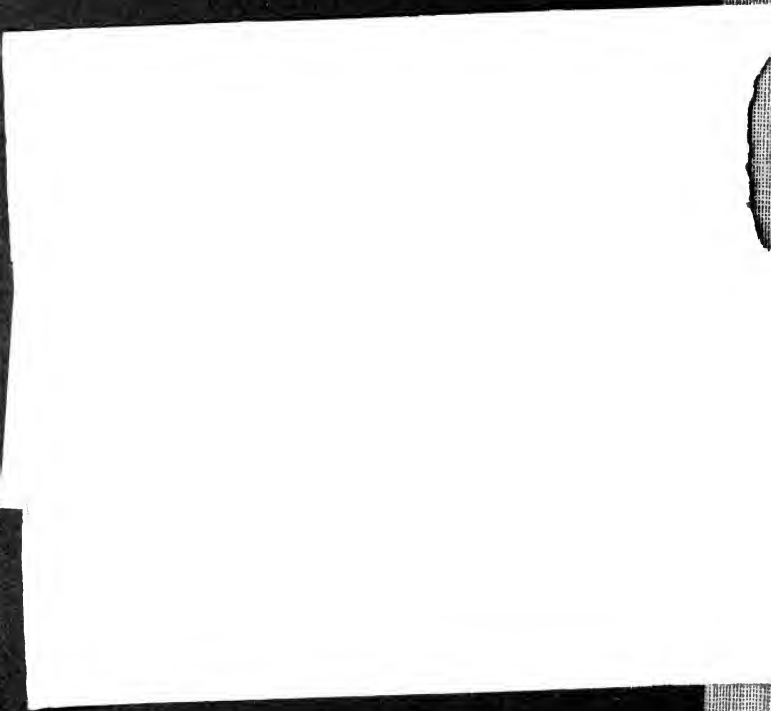


Page X of Preface, Note 2, after xxxiv., insert "folio."

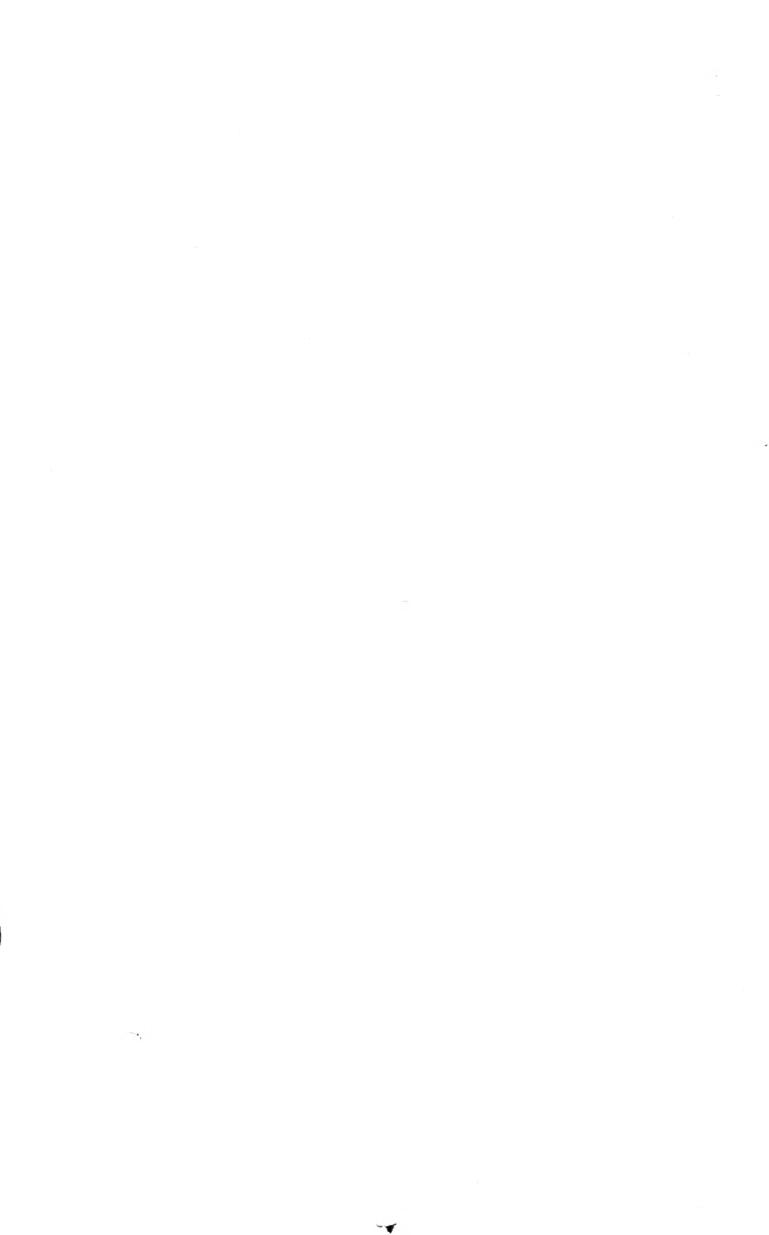
Page xvii of Preface, for first two sentences, top of page, substitute, "The College Committee of our Church—with whom it lies to institute processes for heresy or immorality against any of our Professors, when there may seem to be cause for such action—having had its attention called to the article *Bible*, and also the article *Angels*, in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," appointed a sub-committee to consider and report whether there was any ground, and if any, what, for the committee taking action in the matter. The sub-committee accordingly did so."

The writer fell into this merely formal error from his want of familiarity with the Church's conduct of her affairs during the last twenty years, and his being more concerned about the great issues at stake, than technical accuracy in the naming of a committee.

Page xxi of Preface, last line of quotation from Cowper, for "is" read "'tis."



Was Moses the Author of the Pentateuch?



THE QUESTION

Was Moses the Author of the Pentateuch?

ANSWERED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.

BY

HERMAN WITSIUS, S.S.T.D. ET P.

TRANSLATED, PREFACED, AND ANNOTATED

BY THE

REV. JOHN DONALDSON,

SENIOR MINISTER OF THE FREE CHURCH, GLENS.

EDINBURGH:

MACLAREN & MACNIVEN; AND ANDREW ELLIOT.

GLASGOW: D. BRYCE & SON. ABERDEEN: A. & R. MILNE.

LONDON: J. NISBET & CO.

MDCCCLXXVII.

“Witsius needs no recommendation from any one. He has been long regarded by all competent judges as presenting a very fine and remarkable combination of the highest qualities that go to constitute a ‘true’ and consummate theologian—talent, sound judgment, learning, orthodoxy, piety, and unction.”—PRINCIPAL CUNNINGHAM in his Prefatory Note to the translation of “Witsius de vero Theologo,” 1856.

CONTENTS.



- I. *That the Pentateuch was written by Moses, the belief of all Antiquity.*
- II. *This is now loudly contradicted by certain philosophers and critics.*
- III. *By Hobbes.*
- IV. *By the anonymous maintainer of the existence of a Pre-adamitic race and state.*
- V. *By Spinosa.*
- VI. *By Simon.*
- VII. *By Le Clerc, who would rather ascribe the authorship of the Pentateuch to some Samaritan Priest.*
- VIII. *Yet, beyond doubt, Moses was an illustrious writer ;*
- IX. *And wrote Laws given to him by God ;*
 - X. *Not those only, which constitute the rule of uprightness and of the Divine Government, and are extant in the book of Deuteronomy,*
 - XI. *But besides, Moses wrote those ceremonial Laws which are interspersed through the other books of the Pentateuch ;*
- XII. *Nay, prophecies too.*
- XIII.
- XIV.
- XV.
- XVI.
- XVII.
- XVIII. *Moses wrote also histories. . .*
- XIX. *Christ himself calls these books "MOSES ;"*
- XX. *He declares Exodus to be a book of Moses ;*
- XXI. *James and Paul put their seal upon the whole Pentateuch as his work, by terming it "MOSES."*
- XXII. *A recapitulation of the propositions already proved.*
- XXIII. *An exception of Le Clerc's,*
- XXIV. *Proved to be profane.*
- XXV. *Simon's opinion refuted.*
- XXVI.
- XXVII. *Spinosa's also.*
- XXVIII.

- XXXV. *And Le Clerc's.*
 XXX. *An address to all these parties.*
 XXXI. *It is not to be denied that a very few passages are extant in the Pentateuch by a writer of later date than the time of Moses.*
 XXXVII. *Le Clerc has collected many such (alleged) passages on his own authority.*
 XXXVIII. *Genesis ii. 11, 12 examined.*
 XXXVII. „ x. 8-11 „
 XXXVI. „ xi. 18-31 „
 XXXVI. „ xii. 6 „
 XXXVII. „ xiv. 14 „
 XXXVIII. „ xxxv. 21 „
 XXXIX. „ xxxvi. 31 „
 XL. „ xxxviii. 14 „
 XLI. „ xl. 15 „
 XLII. *Exodus vi. 26* „
 XLIII. *The word "Nabi," a "prophet," known before the time of Moses.*
 XLIV. *Exodus xvi. 35 examined.*
 XLV. „ xvi. 36 „
 XLVI. *Deuteronomy i. 1* „
 XLVII. „ iii. 14 „
 XLVIII. *The conclusion.*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

SOME friends to whom it was known that I had been engaged many years ago, under the auspices and encouragement of Principal Cunningham and Dr John Duncan, in translating for publication select portions of the writings of Witsius, requested me lately to translate and publish his dissertation on the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. It was also expected of me that I should write a preface, introducing it to notice, and connecting it with the present re-opening of the question, by the publication of the article *Bible* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Being, at the time of the application—though disabled by chronic disease—somewhat better than usual, I readily undertook the task. But it proved one greatly too hard for me; an increase of illness supervened, and, with the exception of two or three pages, the whole of this little work has been written on a sick bed, or dictated from it. I do not mention these circumstances to deprecate criticism, but merely to explain that the translation, and still more, the preface, are in point of execution, very far from satisfying myself. My plan was repeatedly altered, from the issue of the report of the committee appointed to deal with the author of the article *Bible*; and from the publication of an excellent pamphlet by the Rev. James Kennedy, B.D., superseding not a little I had previously written, as well as from other causes. From these circumstances large excisions have been made, and the re-union of the severed portions has not been altogether so successful, as to give the whole composition that unity of structure which, if I do not deceive myself, it would otherwise have exhibited.

Sequestered in obscurity for more than eighteen years, I would have kept silence, but for the requests alluded to, and the wish to contribute, though but a very little, to the adjustment of the awful issues confronting the superior courts of our Church; and, I must add, to exonerate my own conscience as a member and minister of the Free Church, from any participation in the sinful procedure which, under an alarming pressure, she is in danger of adopting.

J. D.

CURRIE, *February 1877.*

PREFACE.

THE latter part of the seventeenth century witnessed a series of attacks by men of learning, both at home and abroad, upon the authorship and inspiration of the Pentateuch; and consequently, upon its canonicity and authority. Various other questions, it is easy to see, would arise in connection with the general issue. Among the motley band of assailants, two English writers reached an evil pre-eminence. These were Sir John Marsham and Dr John Spencer.

In 1672 Sir John Marsham published his "*Canon Chronicus Ægyptiacus, Ebraicus, Graecus, et Disquisitiones.*"¹ This work is chiefly an attempt to reduce Egyptian Dynastic Chronology into order, probability, and harmony with that of the Scriptures. His method (which was excellent) we cannot here even epitomise; but unfortunately he entered into speculations as to the antiquity and origin of some Jewish rites. In this work, displaying much learning, and deep research into the obscurest recesses of antiquity, the writer made an attack upon the truth and authority of the Pentateuch. His position in regard to the rites and ceremonial matters of the Hebrews was substantially this,—that those which existed both before and after the time of Moses were derived from the Egyptians; that they preceded other nations in religious matters; and that their rites were transferred by the Hebrews for their own observance—not perchance, without some degree of purification. These views were evidently entirely incompatible with any conviction of the Divine origin and authority of the Jewish system of ritual and worship.

In 1669 John Spencer, D.D., while rector of Landbeach, Cam-

¹ Londini, folio.

bridgeshire, published a Latin dissertation, "De Urim et Thummim." In 1685 (by that time Dean of Ely) he published his largest work, "De legibus Hebraeorum Ritualibus, et earum Rationibus,"¹ &c. In so far as the works now named of these two writers touched upon the origin of the Jewish ritual, they had a good deal in common—Spencer going further than Marsham in his irreverent assumptions, and even receiving chastisement on that account from the less unscrupulous layman. Spencer maintained that the whole Jewish worship and ritual was a copy, more or less modified, of the religion and religious rites in use in Egypt; and that in some instances there was introduced into the Jewish ritual, the use of certain new and special symbols to supersede some of a nature too hideous to be mentioned.

Witsius published an answer to both Marsham and Spencer in one work, entitled "*Ægyptiaca*."² In this comprehensive treatise he admits of resemblances between some Egyptian and some Jewish rites; vindicates the substantial independence and originality of the Jewish system of worship; and puts the whole on its proper basis, as established and upheld by the most solemn Divine sanctions, and public manifestations of God's near presence, vouchsafed under the whole Old Testament economy. Spencer's work continued to call forth various replies both abroad and in England, to a comparatively recent date; one by the late Rev. William Jones, held in considerable repute, appeared in 1799.

But we have to do with Witsius. A second edition of his work, regarded by bibliographers as the best, appeared in 1696. Such was his earliest and most elaborate contribution to what would now be called the apologetics of the Pentateuch, or of a portion of its contents.

He resumed the defence of the Pentateuch in the following dissertation on its Mosaic authorship, forming the fourteenth chapter of his work on "Prophets and Prophecy," which again occupies

¹ Cantab., 2 vols., folio; best edition, edited by L. Chappelow, S.T.P., *ib.*, 1727, 2 vols., folio.

² Amstelodami, 1683, quarto. It received besides the high distinction of being included in the first volume of "Ugolini (Blasii) Thesaurus Antiquit. Sacrar." (Tom. xxxiv., Venet., 1744-69). A list of the contents of this enormous collection may be found in the catalogue of Dr Parr's library, London, 1827.

the first four hundred pages or so, of his "Miscellanea"¹ (Tom. i.). The chapter referred to, was called forth by the attacks of a number of writers upon the inspiration and authority of the Pentateuch; but who did not, like Marsham and Spencer, embody their sentiments in lengthy separate publications. Witsius' work on "Prophecy" is learned and full in the best sense, and is to a most unusual degree at once elaborate and readable. Traversing chronologically the whole heaven-lit track of prophecy, from Adam to St John the Divine, its plan is both natural and exhaustive, and admits easily of an occasional excursus, at once so fresh and pleasing, that both author and reader proceed in happiest accord. Instead of having the flesh wearied, they have the spirit refreshed, and are even better pleased with each other when the by-path rejoins, than when it left the highway. The largest and perhaps the most important of these digressions, is that here translated and presented to the reader's notice. Witsius selected a group of antagonists, all of considerable powers, extensive learning—too miscellaneous, perhaps—and applied too often to subjects of little or merely temporary importance; and in nothing so united as in an avowed antipathy to the Word of God as a record divinely inspired, and by the exercise of a Divine Providence of ineffable power and majesty, kept all along to this day substantially pure and incorrupt; while hostile empires and dynasties rose, fell, and were swept away as the chaff of the summer threshing-floors. The value of the dissertation is sufficiently attested by the effect its publication had on Le Clerc, against whose views the larger and more important portion of it is directed.

Statements calling in question the authorship of the Pentateuch, necessarily involve the great fundamental doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the sacred Scriptures. The orthodox doctrine of inspiration was never more clearly or succinctly defined than by Principal Cunningham, when he declared, during the great and most important Apocrypha controversy, "that inspiration must be

¹ The first edition of this volume was published at Amsterdam in 1691, quarto. The second edition, containing a new and very important preface, to which attention is called elsewhere, appeared at Lug. Bat. in 1695, quarto.

plenary to be inspiration; and that if it is plenary, it must be verbal.”¹

In fullest harmony with this aphorism were the well-matured self-coherent views of Dr Chalmers on the same subject.² Under him an ever-decreasing minority of our older ministers had the privilege—alas! too often inadequately valued at the time—to be reared. For all the irrelevant, and irreverent as irrelevant, discussions by many writers as to the *modes* of inspiration—if by suggestion or impulse, or by elevation, &c. &c.—he had no patience. To his so lofty and thoroughly Baconian mind they were utterly loathsome. To such *à priori* and unwarranted theorising, he would neither look nor listen. “Ours,” he would say, “neither the right nor power to penetrate that region of the unrevealed, and therefore unknowable.” Aware, as such a master of mental science could not fail to be, of the importance of lodging in young minds brief formulæ of the principles of great questions, he would proceed thus: After a bout of animated discussion from his notes of the question for the day—suddenly catching fire by collision with some hateful and ruinous error, or the brisk flippancy of some opponent—he would start to his feet, throwing his spectacles up on his forehead, and at the pitch of his voice, with his resistless torrent of force, hurl forth such formulæ (short forms of principles) as these:—“We have nothing to do as regards inspiration with the *modus operandi* (method of procedure) in the process, but exclusively with the *opus operatum*” (result produced). “Either a word was permitted *because* it was the best, or it was suggested, and *therefore* was the best, and in either way the optimism of Scripture was secured.” Or again: “Sufficient be it for us to know that *so* it is, without inquiring *how* it is.” This last brief summary of the mingled meekness and fear becoming the student of Scripture, was a frequent one; and so was another: “We ought,” he would say, “to aim to be wise *up* to what is written, without seeking to be wise *above* what is written.” Bacon’s aphorism, “*Homo non est magister sed interpres Nature*” (Man is not the master,

¹ Preface to “Sermons,” from 1828 to 1860.

² See Chalmers’ “Evidences,” Book IV., chap. II., vol. iv., of the edition of his works, in twenty-five volumes.

but the interpreter of Nature), he parodied thus:—“*Homo non est magister sed interpres Scripture*” (Man is not the master, but the interpreter of Scripture), emphasising the contrasting syllables—and this was a peculiar favourite. Calming down—handling his spectacles—while his features, so various in their expression, would subside into that resemblance they sometimes had to the calm penetrating look of another great man, in broad and shrewd common sense so like, in most other qualities so totally different—Benjamin Franklin—he would, with a quiet decisive firmness close, by remarking, in tones and pronunciation memorable to some till their hearts beat no more, “I have great vailie for that distinction, gentlemen.” Alongside Dr Chalmers’ peculiarities of thought, enveloping diction, and vehement delivery and action, which so arrested the attention of all ages, classes, or ranks, the style of Witsius is apt to appear too tame, calm, and softly eloquent.

The great Dutch divine handled some points connected with inspiration which Chalmers would not have taken up—at least did not; but not at all in that *à priori* method which was so peculiarly offensive to his humble and rigidly Baconian mind. But in substance, Chalmers and he, as writers, are in fullest concord, separate instruments—of different classes even—but attuned in sweetest unison by the one Spirit, who worketh all and in all.

It were foolish to attempt to conceal that this little work is published as a counteractive to views recently put forth in an influential work, and by a young man universally admitted to be profoundly and exceptionally versed in the languages in which the sacred Scriptures were originally written; and in particular, familiar with Hebrew and its various allied tongues. But here commendation must terminate. The article alluded to, while professing to be intended to meet and neutralise the conclusions of the so-called destructive school of criticism, is itself to a very great degree deserving of the same condemnation. It contains a multitude of profane and audacious assumptions, impugning the genuineness and canonicity of several books of Scripture, and numerous portions of others, and thus of necessity denying, not indeed in explicit terms, but practically, the inspiration and

binding authority over the conscience of the books, or portions assailed. The Pentateuch, particularly the last of its five books, is treated in a way the most presumptuously irreverent, and the living and true God, whose voice Scripture is, treated under a theory of having permitted an individual to personate Moses, and write part of Deuteronomy in his name several centuries after his day, as if He were a man who could lie; and He who challenges all flesh to return a negative reply to His question, "Is there anything too hard for Me?" virtually represented as reduced to adopt the petty shifts and chicane of literary imposition.

It is a very trite observation, or rather a familiar fact, that what have been often paraded as new truths in theology, or, as now, new and valuable results of the higher criticism, turn out on examination to be only newly vamped-up versions—whether known to their authors or not—of old errors, refuted once and again in times long past. In the present case, we have just old errors in a new dress, according to the reigning mode of the time. The following dissertation by Witsius, admirable in itself, derives an extrinsic value from the proof it affords that some of the views it refers to are not new; and that two hundred years ago they were refuted to the conviction of one who was no raw sciolist, but a man of skilled and extensive scholarship, wanting nothing but the fear of God to have approved himself an able and trustworthy critic. Not that we mean that the writer of the article *Bible* has brought forth nothing of his own, meriting, we dare not say the honour, but rather the shame, of originality. We suppose his denial of the Davidic authorship of the 51st Psalm, is incapable of being exceeded in the annals of errant and heaven-daring Rationalism itself. The article *Bible* has scarcely an ascertainable plan, and is as difficult to retain distinctly in the mind as a whole, as a catalogue of miscellaneous wares. The author's professions of belief in the Divine authority of the Scriptures, form a mystery we shrink from characterising. To reconcile them with his attacks on the same Scriptures is simply impossible.

So far as we have observed, the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, far less their plenary or verbal inspiration, is nowhere

maintained or implied either in the article itself or in its author's letter to the committee on his case.

"The Semitic genius does not at all lie," he tells us (p. 638, 1), "in the direction of organic structure. In architecture, in poetry, in history, the Hebrew adds part to part, instead of developing a single notion. The Temple was an aggregate of *small cells*" (the italics are ours); "the longest Psalm is an acrostic."

Can the writer have overlooked the description and dimensions of Solomon's Temple given in 1 Kings vi.? We could have understood him had he said that the Temple was a *multiple* of small cells. The central portion of the so-called Crystal Palace, erected for the great Exhibition of 1851, *was* a multiple of squares of a certain size, but was itself an area of enormous dimensions; but he says the Temple was an *aggregate* of small cells, and this expression, justly interpreted, excludes the idea of there being any apartment or hall in the Temple larger than one of these. Now the oracle, or most holy place, was a cube of twenty cubits; and taking the sacred cubit roughly as denoting a length of twenty-one inches and three-quarters, its dimension, in each of its three directions, was therefore thirty-six feet three inches; while "the house, that is, the Temple *before it* (the oracle), was forty cubits long" (1 Kings vi. 17), *i.e.*, seventy-two feet six inches long, and of course of the same breadth as the oracle. Such apartments certainly were not cells.

But it is inexpressibly painful that any one holding the position of a Professor of Hebrew, should overlook or disregard, we know not which, the all-important fact that the plan or pattern of Solomon's Temple was not of man, Semitic, or of any other extraction, but of God. Here we shall simply quote from Thomas Fuller's "Pisgah View of Palestine"¹:—"David prescribed the model which he gave to Solomon his son, 'The pattern of the porch and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit' (1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, 19). And

¹ Last edition, London, Tegg, 1869, p. 335.

it followeth not far after, ‘All this,’ said David, ‘the Lord made me to understand in writing, by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.’ Here David, for the more certainty, had a double direction—one by the Spirit, the other by writing—to stand on record *in perpetuam rei memoriam*. These two did not contradict, but confirm each other, because he who hath learned his lesson most perfectly by heart, may, notwithstanding, sometimes have need to have recourse unto, and make use of, his notes.

“However, herein the note of the Geneva translation is very considerable, thus glossing on the text:—‘For all this was left in writing in the book of the law’ (Exod. xxv. 40); ‘which book the king was bound to put in execution’ (Deut. xvii. 19); thus making David, not by prophetic revelation, but prudential collection, to arrive at the knowledge of the prototype of the Temple by a writing, being (no new or immediate manuscript from heaven, but) the ancient Scripture, delivering the model and dimensions of the Tabernacle to Moses. Yet so, that the dead letter in the Word was quickened and enlivened in David’s heart by God’s Spirit, teaching him to observe a general conformity betwixt the Tabernacle and Temple, yet with those due and necessary alterations as were requisite betwixt the one, a small and moveable fabric, and the other, a large and standing structure—an interpretation easier cavilled at than confuted, because such the analogy betwixt these two edifices—

Facies non una duabus,
Nec diversa tamen, qualis decet esse sororum.

Their faces neither diverse nor the same,
But such as sisters very well became.

The latter being none other than the imitation of the former, with proportionable addition; as indeed, what is the tabernacle of grace but the temple of glory contracted? or the temple of glory, but the tabernacle of grace dilated?”

There seems no reason to doubt, that, however the second and third Temples may have differed from Solomon’s in magnificence or in details, its proportions would be carefully followed.

Our Church could not, dared not, pass over such a production, and that not by a mere minister, but by one entrusted with the instruction and guidance of a number of the future pastors of her flocks. She appointed a large committee, embracing in its membership a majority of the most eminent and scholarly of her sons, to inquire into and report upon the article in question. But, alas! the committee decided—and, considering the thorough acquaintance with the law and practice of our Church possessed by such men as the Rev. Sir Henry Wellwood Moncreiff, Bart., and Dr William Wilson, probably decided justly, “that it does not lie with them to originate any proceedings, designed to lead merely to conference, advice, or admonition.” We abstain from making any remarks upon their finding that the article in question affords no ground “to support a proceeding for heresy against its author.” But of this we are sure, that the members of the Church, generally, will not be satisfied, that, whether from the limited powers of the committee, or the peculiar views of its members, a professor, holding the views expressed in the article under notice, should be allowed to teach his class a whole session without any effectual check; or, that a class of young men should be left for the same period, in the predicament of not being able to obey, in an orderly way, the injunction:—“Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.”

Of a surety, the next General Assembly will be grievously wanting in its duty to its Head and to its people, if it leave professors to such an extent beyond the reach of prompt and faithful dealing. While avowing the above opinion, we frankly admit the committee had a task of peculiar difficulty and delicacy to perform.

Turning from the consideration, alike of the article in question and the committee's procedure regarding it, we would very humbly beg the ministers and elders of our Church to consider, whether or not of late years our General Assemblies have erred in appointing to chairs, men, it may be, of sufficient acquirements, but at an age far too young for their safe elevation to such a position. Paul commands that even deacons—the lowest of all ecclesiastical functionaries in a Presbyterian Church—should first be proved; and that an elder—ruling or preaching—should “not be a novice, lest, being

lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil." The same Apostle also enjoins us "to lay hands suddenly on no man, neither to be partakers of other men's sins." We are also told, that "as the fining-pot for silver, and the furnace for gold, so is a man to his praise." It is not wise—it is not kind—it is only to expose to the dangers of a precipitate fall—for the Church to appoint to professorships men so young as some of those appointed of late years were, at the time of their election. It is comparatively a new thing for our Church to act on this wise. Dr Chalmers did not reach a chair of theology till his forty-ninth year, Dr Welsh not till at least his thirty-second, Principal Cunningham not till his thirty-eighth, Dr John Duncan not till his forty-sixth year, and so on.

We freely and gladly admit that several such appointments have proved satisfactory and beneficial; but, as a general rule, the apostolic injunctions above quoted ought not to be traversed. The unhappy individual, the cause of so much sorrow and dismay to many in our Church, while his errors ought to call forth the deepest censure, should be regarded by all with much pity; and no one should presume to canvass adversely his case, or to throw a stone at him, unless his closet witness that he bears him on his heart and prays Jehovah Rophi to deliver him from the snare into which he has fallen.

Dr Chalmers has well observed in the opening of his work on the "Evidences of Christianity," that its external and internal evidences shade off into each other without any narrow and sharply defined line of demarcation. The justice of this remark must have, in substance, occurred to many who have been reflecting on the questions recently raised. While admitting that in one view, questions raised by biblical critics ought to be settled in the first instance, on their own grounds, yet it is never to be allowed that biblical criticism and its supposed results, are entitled to stand between a plain man, who knows no language but his own, and his attaining an assured conviction, that the Bible he studies is a Divinely-inspired and authoritative book. Rome openly, and by no furtive procedure, denies the unfettered and unlicensed reading of the Scriptures to the laity. But criticism is now going such

lengths among us, as virtually to claim that no man can know what part of his Bible is inspired and authoritative, or what is of merely human origin, and therefore unreliable, until our critics have interposed their decision.

The Word of God addresses itself to *men* as such, calls them to seek salvation in its prayerful study, and promises them success in pursuing this path. It gives as little warrant for asserting the necessity of critical, as of priestly interference. No ! It is promised by Him who cannot lie, maugre tyrannising priest or pretentious critic, that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." And it is at the peril of incurring the wrath of the Most High God, to give any man an excuse for neglecting the great truth implied in all Scripture, and shortly stated by Principal Cunningham thus :— That "men (under the enjoyment of the light of revelation) are responsible before God, not only for *seeking*, but for *finding* the truth."

The centre of the present awful and momentous controversy appears to us to lie in the state of the Old Testament Scriptures at the time of our Lord's exercise of His ministry ; and the nature of His treatment of them. He came not to teach truth only, but to be the Truth. One with the Father in essence and in operation, it was impossible for Him to err, or even negatively to sanction, an error or a lie, in matters connected with His mission. Not only by quotations from almost every book of the Old Testament by our Lord or the Apostles, whom He promised to be with, is their inspiration affirmed, but on one most important occasion He rectified an error made by the Jews in their tripartite division of their scriptures into the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa (sacred writings). They had placed (from what cause we know not) Daniel, not among the prophets, but in the third or miscellaneous division. Our Lord, when predicting the final destruction of Jerusalem, and instructing His disciples in the course to be followed, when the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, should be seen, designates him "Daniel the prophet." In so naming him he did two things : He raised his servant to the eminent position belonging to him,—but He also did more. Able, from His Godhead, to exclude from His expressions every shade of error—knowing, what no man

does, how to shape His utterances, so that nothing contrary to, less or more than, His intentional meaning can be legitimately drawn from them—He stamped, by making this one emendation, the canon of the Old Testament as correct. (Small errors, as in numbers, lists of names, &c., things in which there is not a consecutive train of meaning, are on all hands allowed to have been made in the course of time by copyists.) The Rev. Adolphe Saphir, in his most valuable little work, “Christ and the Scriptures,” remarks that the importance of this single word “prophet” has been specially noted in recent criticism. But Surenhusius¹ writes as follows, page 276 :—“That Jesus might shew that Daniel was to be numbered among the prophets, he says, ‘by Daniel the prophet.’ For it is known that the Jews reckoned Daniel among the Hagio-graphoi (sacred writers), and not among either the earlier or later prophets. But in order to refute this opinion, Jesus does not only say, ‘by Daniel,’ or ‘by the prophet,’ but by ‘Daniel the prophet,’ in the same manner in which, in previous chapters, He had said, ‘by the prophet Isaiah,’ the proper name being conjoined with the appellative, so that to Daniel the same authority should be ascribed as to the other greater prophets.”

In conclusion, we subjoin a few brief considerations, fitted to minister matter of thought and of consolation to all who fear the Lord, and whose hearts are at this crisis—such as has never before occurred in the religious history of Scotland—trembling for the ark of God.

The writer of the article *Bible*, in his letter to the committee on his case, expresses himself thus :—“I do not gather that the sub-committee are disposed to deny that, if it could be proved that the Book of Deuteronomy is indubitably post-Mosaic, it would be possible to adjust this result in some such way as I have indicated, to that persuasion of the Divine authority of the Book, which rests on the witness of our Lord and the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti*.”

¹ *Biblos Katallagēs, in quo, secundum veterum Theologorum Hebræorum Formulas allegandi, et Modos interpretandi conciliantur loca ex V. in N. T. allegata, Auctore Gulielmo Surenhusio Hebraicarum & Græcarum Literarum in Illustri Amstelædamensium Athenæo Professore. Amstelædami, 1713.*

In reply, we would just say, if the method of the so-called “constructive school of criticism” be carried out in regard to one book of Scripture here, and another there—by critics in hundreds, each with his own favourite hypothesis, and his own selected point of attack—there is no guarantee for any portion of Scripture surviving, in regard to which any *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* could witness. The practical result would just be that which Cowper depicts with such genial and gentle humour in his little poem on “The Love of the World” :—

“ Thus says the prophet of the Turk ;
 Good Mussulman, abstain from pork !
 There is a part in every swine
 No follower or friend of mine
 May taste. . . .

“ These choose the back, the belly those ;
 By some 'tis confidently said
 He meant not to forbid the head,
 While others at that doctrine rail,
 And piously prefer the tail.
 Thus, conscience freed from every clog,
 Mahometans eat up the hog.

“ Thus bit by bit the world is swallowed :
 Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,
 Yet likes a slice as well as he ;
 With sophistry their sauce they sweeten,
 Till quite from tail to snout is eaten.”

Since our Lord has stamped his sanction on the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament Scriptures in numerous quotations and references, it is simply impossible to deny *their* plenary inspiration, and retain a belief in *His* proper deity.

The Bible, *as it is*, has changed the general character of all those parts of the world where it has had free course. It has abolished the slave trade, and even slavery all but entirely—keeping in mind how both once prevailed. Where its preserving salt has once been allowed to operate, and has been expelled, as in France at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the

country has only been rotting morally ever since. The gigantic and filthy system of idolatry in India, has within little more than fifty years been shaken to its base, and as long ago as 1830, was declared by Isaac Taylor, in his "Saturday Evening," to be one of "those things that were shaken, as of things that are made, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain." China, Japan even, the isles of the Pacific, Madagascar—with its noble army of martyrs—and numerous other countries and districts, which time would fail me even to enumerate, have attested its power by numbers of their inhabitants bringing forth its fruits. And all this, in addition to that roll of confessors and martyrs commemorated in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews—a chapter resorted to in all subsequent ages by the tried people of God when in extremities, as a cordial; and found sufficient when tried, as all the Word of the Lord has been, to uphold in joy and triumph, martyrs on their way to the stake, and our own unequalled Scottish Covenanters to the gallows; we say *unequalled* advisedly, for not, as in the case of some martyrs of England in Mary's time, did a single individual in Scotland, between 1660 and 1688, ever recant or flinch, even at the gallows foot. Missionaries too it has sent forth, of all churches, and of every complexional variety, with generic sameness of faith and love, from Augustine, who brought the Gospel to our shores, down through a genuine apostolic succession to the Moravian brethren,—the Schwartzes; the brethren of Serampore, and of the South Sea mission; the self-denying John Eliot, David Brainerd, and Henry Martyn; the Judsons, and Rheniuses; and that genuine missionary, of the great pioneering exploring stamp, breaking up the way for a host of followers, David Livingstone; the three true yoke-fellows, Anderson, Johnston, and John Braidwood; William Burns, and the martyred Williams; and our own revered and beloved Duff, acknowledged by all ungrudgingly as the prince of living missionaries; the originator of a new model of missionary labours, long, long since attested by its fruits as receiving the Divine blessing; and, perhaps above all that he has done, bearing present or *quasi*-present fruits, the *real originator* of Lord William Bentinck's Act introducing the English language into official, and thence by degrees, into general use, in

India—a measure which, we doubt not, is in part a fulfilment of the promise, “I will turn to the people a pure language,” &c. These—these are a part, and but an infinitesimally small part of what the Bible, *as it is*, has been and is still doing in a visible manner!

But its unseen and unrecorded triumphs! the day only shall declare them—in dungeons, on sick-beds of weariness or agony, in obscure life-long struggles to be patient, submissive, and cheerful under torturing disease, before unfeeling scoffers—in slaves cut to pieces by the lash, praying, while strength remained, for their fiendish masters,—and far, far beyond the very deepest merely human struggles and sufferings, Jesus, the Anointed Himself, from the first moment when in infancy His mind began to open, till He could cry on the Cross of Calvary, “It is finished,” directed, comforted, and upheld by those very Old Testament Scriptures which critics—constructive ones too, forsooth—would presumptuously mangle, or dismiss in whole books, or portions from the canon.—Verily “the heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked!”

When will the coming reconstructed Bible, the *textus ab omnibus criticis sublimioris cultiorisque sive fautoribus, sive professoribus, receptus*, appear? And when will *it* be able to show an array of triumphs so glorious as the Bible, *as it is*, has already achieved?

Lastly, let us call attention to that dread proclamation from the Throne of the Eternal, which occurs in Deuteronomy iv. 2, and xii. 32, and like the certification with which certain legal deeds terminate, closes the last book of Scripture:—“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev. xxii. 18, 19). Is it not implied in these words that He who received power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him, undertakes to watch over, and preserve, in substantial integrity, until the end of all things, the whole Scrip-

tures forming His revelation, as the Great Prophet of His Church of the will of God? And do not all history and all experience notwithstanding all the attacks of critics of every school, prove He has hitherto done so?

Let those then who fear the Lord, and to whom His Word is dearer than their own lives, stay themselves in such a conjuncture as the present, on the declaration—rising up as an iron wall between His Word and all such attacks—“*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*”

A TREATISE ON
PROPHETS AND PROPHECY,

BY

HERMAN WITSIUS, S.S.T.D. ET P., D.D.

BOOK I. CHAPTER XIV.

WAS MOSES THE AUTHOR OF THE PENTATEUCH?

IN the treatment of our general subject we have reached the point where there falls to be considered that impulse of the Holy Spirit by which prophets were moved to commit to writing the revelations they had received. Moses was the most eminent of them all, and the doctrine he delivered, forms the rule of all that is to be declared and received in the Church of God—and that for all time. It is of importance then to begin with him, and to treat his writings with special attention. This duty is at the present time peculiarly incumbent on us, as some men, renowned for their learning, and claiming to be signally skilled in sound philosophy and sacred criticism, have been forming and publishing opinions regarding the Mosaic writings, differing widely from those hitherto held by all antiquity. Up to this day, the received opinion at once of Jews and Christians has been that Moses, enjoined and moved by God, was the author of those books, which, honoured under the title of THE PENTATEUCH, circulate in his name—with the exception, mayhap, of a few passages which have been inserted by a later, yet still divinely-directed, and therefore, better-instructed writer.

II. Now, that this received opinion must be torn up by the roots,

has of late been arrogantly assumed by certain philosophers and critics—men of the keenest discernment—men whose chief glory lies here, that one will look for them in vain in that body of learned and pious men who are well content to walk in the common path.

III. HOBBS, in his *Leviathan* (Part iii. chap. 33), contends that the books of Moses were so called, *not from their authorship, but from their subject*; i. e., *not because they were written by him, but because they treat of him*. He confesses, nevertheless, THAT IT MIGHT HAPPEN THAT HE WAS THE AUTHOR OF THOSE PASSAGES WHICH ARE STATED IN THE BOOKS (*under discussion*) TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY HIM—the *Book of the Law*, doubtless, which is contained in *Deuteronomy*, Chapters xi.-xxvii.

IV. The notorious advocate of the existence of a *præ-adamitic race* will have it, that the books which Moses himself had really written, have perished. He is of opinion—(1.) That they contained, copiously and in detail, the *Fasti* of his own race—the Jews—from Adam, their progenitor, down to his own time; (2.) The history of the creation of all things anterior to Adam's being made; and (3.) That of all those records there survive nothing but some excerpts and confused off-hand scraps. (*System Præ-adam*, Lib. iv., cap. 1.)

V. SPINOSA, in his *Tractatus Historico-Politicus* (cap. viii.), admits that it had been a matter of all but universal belief that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. He states that Aben-Ezra, whom he extols as a man of extraordinary natural capacity, and of no mean learning, was the first writer (with whose works he was acquainted) who had animadverted upon this prejudging (as Spinosa regarded it) of the point at issue. Still, Spinosa did not dare on the one hand openly to declare his sentiments; while on the other he was not afraid to make it publicly known, that he cherished an opinion in regard to the authorship of the Pentateuch differing widely from that generally received. He contends, then, that the whole historical books which we find in the sacred volume, narrating transactions anterior to the age of Ezra, had but one author, and that that author he suspects to have been Ezra. He conjectures, indeed, that *Deuteronomy* was the first of the books written by Ezra; and does so partly because it contains laws for a country (the land of promise) of prime necessity to the people by whom it was to be inhabited;

partly because it is connected by no sort of tie with any preceding book, as all the rest are, but begins in an independent manner, thus—“*These are the words of Moses.*” Further, he believes that Ezra had applied himself zealously to delineate the history of the Hebrew nation, from the creation down to the final destruction of the city (of Jerusalem), and had inserted in this work, the book of Deuteronomy in its proper place. And Spinosa adds, “*Perhaps Ezra had denominated the first five books ‘of Moses,’ because in them chiefly is his life contained—their title being taken from their subject.*” Yet in chapter ix. of his work, he maintains that the last touch was not given to these histories by Ezra himself. I quote his words :—

“NOR DID HE AUGHT ELSE THAN COLLECT NARRATIVES FROM DIFFERENT WRITERS, AND OCCASIONALLY WRITE SOMEWHAT HIMSELF, IN AN ARTLESS STYLE. THESE COLLECTIONS, ALL UNTESTED AND WITHOUT ARRANGEMENT, HE LEFT TO THOSE WHO SHOULD SUCCEED HIM ;—ALL THESE PRODUCTIONS, IN SHORT, WERE INDISCRIMINATELY HUDDLED TOGETHER, WITH A VIEW TO THEIR FUTURE EXAMINATION AND ORDERLY ARRANGEMENT.”

He confesses he is incapable of conjecturing what cause—*unless, perchance, an untimely death—could have prevented Ezra’s leaving his work in all respects complete.* In short, he is of opinion that these rough drafts or scrolls of Ezra’s, of whatever description, have reached us not otherwise than in a defective mutilated condition, and foul with blemishes ; and that we are in possession of nothing relating to ancient history in an incorrupt state—nothing which does not stand in need of much emendation. All these topics Spinosa treats at great length ; and endeavours, in his characteristic manner, to support his opinions by arguments and examples.

VI. Richard Simon pursues a somewhat different course in his *Crit. Test. Vet.* (Lib. i., cap. 2). He demands that all should believe that, from the time of Moses downwards, there were among the Israelitic people certain public official writers, in long and short-hand, appointed to their office by Moses himself, in accordance with a praiseworthy Egyptian practice, with which he had become acquainted when a resident at the court of Pharaoh. Further, that these writers, under the shelter and sanction of public authority, put on record, with the utmost diligence and fidelity, the acts of the

commonwealth. That the Scriptures, as we possess them, were successively compiled, as occasion demanded, out of the prolix rough drafts and huge rolls of these registrars. Since the work was done by sundry writers, and each had his own individuality of method, it is maintained by Simon that the junction of the separate narratives was often awkwardly effected, and that hence repetitions, at once idle and offensive, are frequent. Nor is this all. In *chapter v.* he contends at great length that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch, and brings together numerous examples of repetition, which could only occur, in *his* opinion, from there having been several persons engaged in the work of compilation. He maintains that the repetitions arose thus: that one compiler had selected from the mass of scrolls one section; that a second, resorting to the same quarter, selected the same section; and that both copies were inserted in the sacred Scriptures. Next, that these sections, however clumsily connected, were thus (the design unknown) received by the Jewish Church, and by it left to posterity. While such was the condition of matters, lo! another calamity befell the sacred record. In ancient times books were in the form of rolls, whose separate parts were connected neither by glue nor by sewing, but rolled round a cylinder, and unrolled when there was occasion to consult them. That so it might happen—and in fact did—that portions of the roll being thrown out of their proper sequence, and not afterwards replaced, these portions were transposed in such a manner as to move, now wonder, anon pity. That it follows, in consequence that the most ancient history of the old world, and the people Israel, is not from the hand of Moses, but is a mere compilation—a compilation from scrolls by sundry registrars (men of whom we know nothing whatever), of uncertain number, and possessed little sound judgment, but, to whom, as if by way of jest, the guidance of the Holy Spirit is ascribed! Nay, that not even *this* compilation come down to us intact! On the contrary, that has been thrown into such confusion by the transposition of separate parts, that had not the Goddess of Criticism come to their rescue with her healing hand, scarcely would there be found in the ancient history any wisdom worthy of God. For really to this respect the views of Simon tend, if, freely, and without circumlocution,

would declare the thing as it is. Meanwhile, lest Moses should have nothing left to him here of his own at all, the writing of the law is, with ingenuous liberality, forsooth, ascribed to him as Legislator!

VII. JOHN LE CLERC, wishing to be regarded as presenting the opinions of certain Dutch Theologians respecting Simon's Critical History, advances, by a different path, indeed, but in the same direction. Laugh he does at Simon's registrars, to be sure; yet all the same conspires with him to deprive Moses of the authorship of the Pentateuch. For whom then does he lay claim for it? Hear, or rather read a thing, astounding and incredible,—scarcely to find credit, unless one refuse to believe his own eyes. Thus then he, page 128, and onward:—

“It is probable that the Pentateuch was composed at the time when the old alphabetic characters, in use among the Jews, and in which it was originally written, were better known than the new forms, which they had adopted after the Babylonish captivity; and that it was written by an individual, held in respect alike by Jews and Samaritans, and from whose hands it would, therefore, be gladly received by both parties. All these pre-requisites meet in that Israelitic priest, sent from Babylon that he might teach the new inhabitants of Samaria ‘*the manner of the God of the land*’ (2 Kings xvii. 27). It is meet to believe that this priest, either alone or aided by others, strenuously endeavoured to lead back that ignorant people from their insane belief in Polytheism, by drawing up a history of the world as created by the power of one God; and an epitome of Jewish history to the giving of the law; that it might be publicly known that there is one God only—even He indisputably—whom the Jews worship. He wrote this history in Hebrew, in the ancient alphabetic characters, either because he was not yet sufficiently skilled in Chaldee, or from some other cause to us unknown. It is difficult to determine the year in which these transactions took place. They seem, however, to have happened after the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah. For in that year was the Book of the Law found, without which the priest referred to, could not put the finishing touch to his work, inasmuch as it formed the chief part of Hebrew history, and was, above all else, necessary for the instruction of the new (or spurious) Samaritans. If things were

done in the manner now described, it is easy to believe that the priests then at Jerusalem, tested by their own standard, and approved, the history of this Bethel-like priest (1 Kings xiii. 11) on finding in it nothing but what was pious, in harmony with the Divine law, and in accord with truth, in regard to the transactions it recorded. In this manner, every critical difficulty about the authorship of the Pentateuch is removed. For in order that the Samaritans should receive it, it was necessary—(1) that it should be written by one possessing their confidence; (2) that they should have it written in Hebrew characters of the ancient form; (3) that it should be written before the Jews had exchanged the ancient form of letter for the newer; (4) lest the Jews should disdain to give a place to the new production among their sacred books, that its author should be a person to whom their minds should not be so hostile as they were to the Samaritans, after their own return from the Babylonish captivity; (5) and lastly, it was necessary, since passages occur in the history of Genesis proving that its author had had a greater amount of acquaintance with the Babylonish empire than the Jews had before the era of the captivity, that he should have lived before the date of the deportation of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser into Assyria. All these pre-requisites meet in happiest harmony in that Israelitic priest, who was sent to the Samaritans to impart to them religious instruction, providing they themselves took pains of kindred character.”

Thus far the learned Le Clerc. His own statement I have purposely given verbatim and at length, that I might not appear to have transformed a startling and unexpected opinion either into matter for jest, or into a semblance of blasphemy.

VIII. The conclusion in regard to the whole subject before us which we should adopt, cannot, we are persuaded, be better, or with greater certainty, ascertained from any quarter, other than the sacred Scriptures themselves. It gives me joy to proceed now to bring together a considerable number of passages from the Scriptures, which, when arranged in due order, will gradually conduct us to a conclusion, of such a kind, that there will be no difficulty in deciding the question of the authorship of the Pentateuch. Viewing the matter generally, this much is manifest: Moses was a writer

illustrious, not in his own day only, but one whose historical writings, comprised in a book, were in the hands of the Israelites many ages after his death. And the things which he wrote by command of God, were characterised by a manifold variety.

IX. This much is almost universally granted—that Moses wrote those things which pertain to the LAW. For this is related so expressly that, unless there be a resolute denial of the authority of the Scriptures, it cannot be called in question. After the Israelites had entered into a covenant with God at Mount Sinai, and had heard the Law, partly from the mouth of GOD himself, partly from Moses as it was delivered to him in the darkness—“*Moses wrote all the words of the Lord*” (Exod. xxiv. 4, first clause), and also, “*took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of all the people*” (*ibid.*, ver. 7, first clause). When to these commands many others had been added by God, then Moses was again enjoined to commit them to writing. Exod. xxxiv. 27, “*And the Lord said to Moses: Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.*” In fine, when Moses had set forth before the people all the Divine commands, these also committed to writing, he formed into a roll or volume, to be preserved in the side of the ark of the covenant as a testimony against Israel. For so runs Deut. xxxi. 24–26:—“*And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.*” Further, this autographic volume was found in the Temple in the last times of the Jewish Republic, during the reign of Josiah (2 Kings xxii., and 2 Chron. xxxiv.).

X. It is worthy of observation that this BOOK not only embraced those things which are contained in some chapters of the law when it was repeated, but a *universal system of Divine laws*, by whose observance the Israelites were bound to approve their fidelity to God. His address to Joshua teaches this (Josh. i. 7, 8):—“*Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper*

whithersoever thou goest." But where is all this law to be found? In the book which Joshua then had in his hands. "*This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.*" Hence it happened that the Levites who were sent by Jehoshaphat to instruct the people, did so, from no other manual than the Book of the Law, which therefore behoved to comprise everything, of any kind, which was requisite for the interests of piety and religion. (2 Chron. xvii. 9), "*And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.*"

XI. In this same BOOK were contained the precepts concerning whole burnt-offerings, and the duties of the priests in connection with them, and which are found not only in Deuteronomy, but in the books, as well, of Leviticus and Numbers. These precepts too, are so precise, and do so accurately define the duties of the priests and the people respectively in regard to every kind of sacrifices, even to the very least minutiae—if it be lawful so to express ourselves—that no human memory could have retained them unless committed to writing. And by whom could these precepts have been better written, than by him who at once himself received the law from God, delivered it to the people, and urged home upon them their most exact observance? Nor is there any reason for entertaining a doubt on this point. For thus runs the sacred narrative (2 Chron. xxiii. 18):—"Also Jehoida appointed the offices of the house of the Lord by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the Lord to offer the burnt-offerings of the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses." Add also Ezra vi. 18, "*And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF MOSES.*" Now "the writing" thus referred to, concerning the divisions of the priests and the courses of the Levites, is extant in Numb. iii. and viii. Hence it follows, by inevitable consequence, that the precepts regarding burnt-offerings, priests, Levites, and their divisions, which are set forth in the Books of Leviticus and Numbers, are contained in the BOOK OF MOSES. Neither, in the same manner, is there any Divine injunction relative

to the Israelitic religion of that time, which Moses has not comprehended in that book of his, since he is stated to have written the words of this law till they were finished (Deut. xxxi. 24).

XII. But in addition to precepts, Moses wrote also PROPHECIES, or predictions of future events, which are extant in Deuteronomy, chaps. xxvii., xxix., xxx., and xxxi. Of these a certain portion is expressly lauded, in NEHEMIAH I. 8, as of Mosaic authorship; and the sum of them is to be found in that sacred song, of which it is said (Deut. xxxi. 19), "*Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.*" And Moses obeyed this command (ver. 22): "*Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.*"

XIII. Lastly, Moses wrote HISTORIES, or accounts of transactions; and beyond question the account of the victories which the Israelites, in answer to his prayers, obtained over the Amalekites. (Exod. xvii. 14), "*And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua.*"

XIV. This command is extremely stringent. Duly regarded, it will lead us to the consideration of many other matters. Here, first, I would that it be observed, that the narrative of the battle against the Amalekites was not more worthy of being held in memory than those other ever-to-be admired deliverances which God wrought for His people in Egypt, as well as in the desert. If then, God willed that this memorial should for all time be committed to writing in a book, and that Moses in putting it on record should consecrate it to all eternity, what reason can be alleged why the same measure should not be adopted in regard to other operations of the Lord's hand, far surpassing even this in their marvellousness? Of such it is written (Psalm lxxviii. 5-7), "*For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God.*" Since, therefore, God willed that the people of Israel should preserve in their memory His marvellous works and the wonders He had done; and had

Himself sanctioned the practice of recording events in a book as the best means for aiding the memory,—by whom could such a record be drawn up with greater claims to credit, with greater dignity and authority, than by Moses, who was himself both the chief actor in the events themselves, and had been so frequently stirred up, by an express injunction from the Most High, to put them on record?

XV. Let this consideration be added, that scarcely could the history of the war with Amalek be more seasonably narrated, than in immediate relation with, and on the occasion of, Israel's reaching the desert and approaching the Amalekite frontier. It was these occurrences which were the cause of the wrath which incensed the Amalekites to fight the battle in which they were discomfited. So, likewise, it was the most suitable place to declare who these Amalekites were, with whom Israel was compelled to join battle. These circumstances constitute a portion of the sacred narrative not to be despised.

XVI. Nor is there any need here of any kind of silly assumption in the face of that luminous testimony (Numb. xxxiii. 2), "*And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys, by the commandment of the Lord.*" It is absolutely incredible that Moses, in thus writing the journeys of the Israelites in the desert, should not also at the same time record those things which were surpassingly more worthy of being known than mere bald itineraries, which, whether known or unknown, conduce little either to wisdom or morals.

XVII. Again, the history of Israel is so interwoven with the giving of the Law, and God's entering into a covenant with them, that the one cannot be laid open without the other. Since it is, therefore, certain that the giving of the Law, and the entering into a covenant with God were related by Moses; and that apart from the history of Israel, these transactions would be unintelligible; what insensate jealousy is it to deny Moses to be the historian of these events, without whose history the portions which, beyond doubt, he *did* write, must necessarily be mutilated and imperfect?

XVIII. Nor, lastly, must we omit to note that the foundations of that covenant into which—Moses acting as mediator—God entered with Israel, are laid in those particulars which are recorded

regarding Abraham and God's covenant with him ; and, in short, the whole history of the patriarchs, according as it is narrated in the Book of Genesis. As all these writings form a series of things, one and continuous, how probable is it that they are also from one hand, since they are all written with one design, and all aim at one mark ! And from whose hand could they have better proceeded than from that of Moses?—that Moses who, with such insight, embraced in his lofty mind those mighty works of God, and the inter-connection of so many Divine decrees ?

XIX. But why toil myself to determine these questions by arguments, when the authority of the Lord Jesus alone suffices for their adjustment ? Not on one occasion alone did He ascribe to Moses the authorship of the books which are known under his name. In John v. 46, 47, He thus addresses the Pharisees :—“ *For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me : FOR HE WROTE OF ME. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words ?* ” Here it is made manifest that the Books of Moses are not so denominated from their subject, as are the Books of Judges, Ruth, Esther, according to the silly prating of Hobbes and Spinosa, but from their author—MOSES WROTE. Next, when we hear that Moses wrote of Christ, we must inquire where the things written are to be found. They occur, in the promise regarding the seed of the woman, of the seed of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, in the prophecy respecting Shiloh—to omit other passages scattered throughout the Book of GENESIS. They occur, in the description of the Angel in whom is the name of Jehovah ; and who possessed the power of pardoning or not pardoning sins (Exod. xxiii. 21). They occur, in the types of the priests, and pre-eminently in those of the High Priest ; the types of the sacrifices ; in particular, in that expiatory sacrifice which was to be offered once a year, treated of in Leviticus, chap. xvi., and explained and applied by Paul, Heb. xiii. 12, 13. They occur, in the prophecy of Balaam, recorded in Numb. xxiv. 17. They occur, in the promise of a prophet who was to speak the words of God (Deut. xviii. 15–18, compared with Acts iii. 22). Similarly, testimonies of Moses to Christ are extant in all the books of the Pentateuch. And hence it is that Christ, “ *beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he*

expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself;" and also said, "*that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Psalms, concerning me*" (Luke xxiv. 27, 44). In making these references, our Lord followed the practice in common use among the Jews, of dividing the whole books of the Old Testament into the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa—understanding by the Law, the Pentateuch, which Jesus affirms to be by *Moses*.

XX. What Mark relates (xii. 19) is worthy of note, viz., that the *Saducees* came to the Lord Jesus, saying, "*Master, MOSES WROTE UNTO US, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him,*" &c. Mark, it was *Saducees* who put this question. They were not of the Pharisees, who, putting a cheat upon the men of that age, cried up writings of a very recent date as being the ancient writings of Moses—a calumny of Spinosa's. For the *Saducees* would not readily have conceded that point to the Pharisees. But the principal thing to be remarked is the answer which they received from Christ (*ibid.*, ver. 26), "*And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the BOOK OF MOSES, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?*" These words are extant (Exod. iii. 6). Wherefore, Christ does here declare, in the most express manner, that *the Book of Exodus is a book of Moses*. The same averment Paul makes regarding THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS (Rom. x. 5), "*For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth these things shall live by them.*" This statement by Moses is extant (Lev. xviii. 5).

XXI. Finally, the *Pentateuch as a whole* comes to us under the name of "*Moses.*" For thus does the apostle James express himself (Acts xv. 21), "*For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day.*" What then was it which, as of Mosaic authorship, was so read? It was the whole Pentateuch, divided into *fifty-four sections*, that it might be read through annually, year by year. Paul follows James in the same path (2 Cor. iii. 14, 15), "*But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.*" Here it is plain that books containing the history of the Old Covenant

or Testament, read at that time by the Jews, are ascribed to *Moses*.

XXII. Let us now bring into one view what has been laid down. We have proved by distinct testimonies from the sacred Scriptures— (1.) That Moses, under the Divine command, was the most illustrious writer of his age among the people of God. (2.) That he wrote those laws which were to the people of Israel the rule of all religion and of all morality. (3.) That he wrote not only those laws which are contained in certain chapters of Deuteronomy; but those also which are to be found in the Books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. (4.) That all these were comprised in one book, to be kept in the side of the ark of the covenant. (5.) That he wrote prophecies also, in which the destinies of the people of Israel are foretold. (6.) Histories also, of the transactions in the desert, and of other things, without which the giving of the Law and the covenant-making between God and the people of Israel cannot be understood. (7.) That he wrote many testimonies regarding Christ, numbers of which are found in the Book of Genesis. (8.) That the Book of Exodus is termed by Christ the *Book of Moses*. (9.) Nay, that the whole Pentateuch, as undoubtedly read aloud in the synagogues in the days of Christ and the Apostles, is termed by James and Paul “*Moses*.” (10.) And that the whole Pentateuch was termed *Moses*, not because he was its subject, but its author. If this series of established propositions do not prove that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, we ask, by what method of procedure could its proper author be ascribed to any ancient book? I may dare to call to witness the consciences of all those with whom I am now maintaining the present controversy, whether they are able to produce for any ancient work, I will not say stronger proofs, but any having even a semblance of strength, similar to those in favour of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, which they themselves do with such facility gulp over as of no weight?

XXIII. Unless my own mind deceives me, so great is the strength of the proofs I have brought forward, that there remains not a chink through which an opponent can slip—unless, indeed, he presume to hold in suspicion the authority of Christ and his Apostles in questions of the kind under discussion. This, John Le Clerc has not

feared to do (p. 126). His own very words, as before, I shall here subjoin:—"Some," says he, "*perchance, may say that Jesus Christ and His Apostles frequently quote the Pentateuch under the name of Moses, and that their authority is to be regarded as possessing more weight than all our conjectures.*" Yes, indeed, O Le Clerc, that is what we do say. What reply have you to give? I reply, says he, that, "SINCE CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES DID NOT COME INTO THIS WORLD TO TEACH THE JEWS THE KNOWLEDGE OF CRITICISM, THERE IS NO WONDER IF THEY EXPRESS THEMSELVES IN ACCORDANCE WITH VULGAR OPINION. THEY (CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES) BELIEVED IT WAS OF LITTLE MOMENT WHETHER MOSES OR SOME ONE ELSE WAS THE AUTHOR OF THE PENTATEUCH, PROVIDED ONLY THE HISTORY WERE ACKNOWLEDGED AS TRUE; AND SINCE THE VULGAR ERRORS REFERRED TO DID NO INJURY TO PIETY, THEY DID NOT THINK THAT THE WORK WAS ASSIGNED TO THEM OF RECLAIMING THE JEWS FROM THEM." Thus far Le Clerc.

XXIV. Ill betide that audacious and reckless criticism whose religion it is to prefer—as it admits—its own conjectures to the authority of Christ himself and His Apostles! Yes, indeed! Christ and His Apostles were not teachers of the science of criticism such as these opponents of ours demand to be esteemed,—claiming a kind of literary sovereignty in every branch of knowledge whatever. Teachers of TRUTH they nevertheless were; nor did they suffer themselves to be imposed upon either by the ignorance of the mean, or the craft of the great men of the time. Of a surety, they did not come into the world to cherish common errors, and by their authority to protect them; nor did they scatter broadcast the seed of truth far and wide among the Jews alone, but also among the peoples peculiarly dependent upon them. To finish by one parting statement, I maintain that that man, in whose heart the religion of Christ is, with whom the authority of Christ and His Apostles is sacred, will far more joyfully bind his faith to them in their references to Moses as the author of the Pentateuch, than to any mob what, or where-soever, of Hobbists, Spinosists, Simonists, and Le Clercs, and the whole rabble of profane critics, with their audacious and reckless conjectures.

XXV. Hitherto we have been bringing forward those arguments

which go to prove the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch; we now add that if Moses be given up as the writer of it, no individual can possibly be pointed out who can be proved, with any degree of likelihood, far less certainty, to be its author. As to Simon's prolix disputations about *an order of public writers*, entering in daily minutes all transactions, and his contention that they existed from the beginning of the Hebrew Commonwealth, and thereafter even in the very desert itself, they have been recently demonstrated by learned men to be things to be classed among dreams.

Nor has Simon yet been able to clear his theory from the objections of Le Clerc and others. But to maintain that our sacred books were compiled with such a disregard to order, and such a want of judgment, from public rough drafts of the nature already described—as Simon will have it they were—differs little from blasphemy; and whatever veil may be drawn over it, is stated in mere mockery of the Scriptures.

XXVI. Neither yet was the Pentateuch written by *Ezra*, after the Babylonish captivity. For it already existed in the time of *Amaziah*, who did "AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW IN THE BOOK OF MOSES" (2 Chron. xxv. 4). In the time of David, for he admonished his son Solomon to "*keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW OF MOSES*" (1 Kings ii. 3). In the time of Joshua—who "*read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, ACCORDING TO ALL THAT IS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded which Joshua read not,*" &c. And immediately after the captivity the same book is magnified as the ancient rule of religion, "IT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW OF MOSES, THE MAN OF GOD" (Ezra iii. 2, last clause); also (vi. 18), "ACCORDING AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF MOSES." It is repeatedly asserted by some critics that the above statements are to be understood as referring not to the Pentateuch, but to some other book—I know not what—by Moses. Assert, I say, they do; prove they do not. And certainly all the things which are recounted in the above favourable proof-passages, are even now extant in the Pentateuch. What, therefore, forbids us to think,

as hitherto, of the book in which all the things mentioned are found? What compels us to feign another different from it?

XXVII. *The Samaritan Version* of the Pentateuch is assuredly a strong argument for its antiquity, especially if it be believed, as many critics will now have it, that the sacred books were at first written in Samaritan characters, for which Ezra substituted those more recent and more elegant characters now in use. The former are termed Samaritan, not because they had been employed by either the immediate or remoter ancestors of the new colonists settled in the country of Israel, but because they are the most ancient Hebrew characters, retained by the Samaritans. It is well known that a hatred so murderous broke out between the Jews who had returned from the Babylonish captivity, and the Samaritans—a hatred so bitter, that both parties refused to receive aught of a sacred kind, the one from the other. But if the Pentateuch were written by Ezra, or any of his contemporaries, how came it about that this volume, from the pen of an enemy the most dangerous, was received by the Samaritans with such veneration, as of Divine authority? Moreover, how could they suffer a work fresh from the hands of a man of their own time, to be palmed upon them as of Mosaic origin? How came it about, again, that the Samaritans were in possession of the Pentateuch written not in the characters then in use amongst themselves, but in the ancient Hebrew characters; while the Hebrews themselves had it from that time downwards, not in Hebrew, but in Assyrian or Chaldaic characters? These things do not hang together.

XXVIII. But, ridiculous beyond all the rest of the theories we are handling (if it be lawful to smile at all in regard to a subject so grave), is *John Le Clerc's* silly stuff about a Samaritan priest. What pitch of madness is this, suddenly to set up as the author of a work so great as is the Pentateuch, a *Samaritan priest*,—a man of no name, in no repute for aught whatever? No doubt, to be sure, the greatest prophets who were the property, so to speak, of the Jews—of the ten tribes, too—had been so wanting in zeal that that Samaritan fellow, that schismatic, who, contrary to a Divine command, had served the altar at Bethel, had to take in hand to relate in records destined to survive to all time, the history of the people of God from the creation of the world to the death of Moses!

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God” (Romans iii. 1, 2). But now, hear a critic of our own time elevating to such a pitch of honour, a rabble of creatures from Cuthah, from Ava, and from Hamath—the off-scourings of the vilest of nations, that for *their* sake chiefly that book so venerable should be written,—that book which, not by the Jews alone, but by Christ and His Apostles was valued at a rate so high! Did, O Le Clerc, that same Samaritan priestling really seem to thee more worthy of having the authorship of the Pentateuch ascribed to him than to Moses?—and these wretched outcasts from Cutha, &c., more worthy of having the Pentateuch written for their sake, than those *“to whom pertaineth the adoption, the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises”* (Romans iii. 1, 2)? On whose authority dost thou bring forward figments such as these? Where thine attesting witnesses? Universal antiquity arrays itself on the side of Moses. This thou confessest. It pleases thee, nevertheless, to pursue a capricious course of thine own! Of that Samaritan hireling priest probably no mortal man before thee ever so much as dreamt. Yet him,—*him*, thou puttest in the place of Moses! Is it indeed allowable thus in matters of fact to form figments at our pleasure, and to adopt all that a cogging Greek would foist into history?

XXIX. However, I dismiss the question of authority. Rather I ask, what kind of reasonableness is there in this whole treatise of Le Clerc’s? Nay, more, what is there that is not repugnant to all reason and all verisimilitude? Whence did this Samaritan fellow derive a knowledge of events so accurate, of an antiquity so distant, remote beyond all human memory, or rather before men existed at all? Knowledge, too, such as one would scarcely expect from a Samuel, a Nathan, or an Ezra. Was that knowledge imparted to him by the priests who were at Jerusalem? But then again, whence this so familiar intercourse between an Assyrian stranger and dwellers in Jerusalem? And by what a degree of sloth were they of Jerusalem beset, that when they became aware that a design of writing the history of their nation was on foot, they did not rather themselves undertake the task, than permit it to be left in the hands of that

Samaritan priest? If the sacred history in question was, as is alleged, written with the design of reclaiming the new colonists of the land of Israel from the Polytheistic worship on which they were so madly bent, for what feasible purpose came there to be inserted in it so definite a system of Levitical duties, having no kind of relation whatever to the people from Cutha, &c.? Why were they not rather furnished with an epitome of religious truth, which would have been greatly better fitted to meet their wants? Why not, too, in their own alphabetic characters—in their own language, at least? But the priest was ignorant of it! Oh, peerless teacher for an ignorant multitude! What then? Did he teach them through means of an interpreter? Did he write what an interpreter should read to his pupils? And were they better skilled in languages than their teacher? And *they* understood Hebrew, while *he* was ignorant of the Assyrian tongue! Bah! such silly babble! And stuff of this kind thou believest, O most acute and judicious Le Clerc? Or is it put forth by way of jest? But—GOD DOES NOT PERMIT HIMSELF TO BE MADE GAME OF.

XXX. If permitted, however, to have these learned men, whose views I have been combatting, present before me, it would have gratified me to address them in the following or similar terms.

If thou, Hobbes—thou, Spinoza—thou, Simon—thou, Le Clerc, dost acknowledge that there is aught Divine in the composition of the Pentateuch, why do you so speak of it, as no critic whatever would speak of the histories of Xenophon or Thucydides, of Polybius or Livy? On the works of these writers you expend ten times more pains than on this sacred volume. If, on the contrary, you recognise nothing divine in it, why do you not lay aside your masks? Why do you not make a public and vigorous effort to clear away the untutored ignorance of the age? Why not openly put down a work merely human, exhibiting no skill, no care, no judgment, and connected by no tie of a nature higher than the skill of the bookbinder furnishes? Why do you not expose the fraud by which—not to speak now of the Jews—the minds of wretched Christians have to this day been deluded? Why not publicly throw free to the winds the banner of a loftier and more highly-cultured wisdom, inviting by an artless address your whole fellow-citizens, nay, all mankind,

to marshal their ranks and flock to your standard? Why do you wish to appear as worshippers, adhering to that religion whose every foundation is in those writings, which you cannot, care not, to conceal, are in your eyes of so little value? Pardon my addressing you in such a strain. I have believed, and therefore have I spoken. You, if you did believe, would not speak as you now do.

XXXI. In expressing these views, I am not to be understood, as if of opinion, that there is extant in the Pentateuch nothing which did not proceed from the pen of Moses himself. I readily agree with those who believe that in some places, some word or sentence, more in harmony (with the knowledge) of later times, was added or modified by Ezra, or some other divinely-inspired writer, during the process of collecting the sacred writings. And I hold it absolutely certain, that the narrative of the death and burial of Moses occurring at the end of Deuteronomy is by another writer. To me it is no pleasure to assume that such a passage is prophetic, without any necessity or verisimilitude. My determination stands immovable that in all things we are bound to act with candour; and in any controversy whatever, we are not to make a point of taking up a position as distant as possible from that of our opponents, but, on the contrary, to seek to approach, in a friendly and artless manner, as nearly as possible to the truth that may be in question. And further, that we ought carefully to consider not so much what *can* in any kind of way be laid down against parties taking the opposite side, but what will satisfy conscience—our own consciences first, next those of others. I would have it as my desire calmly to weigh individual points, just as if no controversy were on foot at all. And further, when some subject comes up demanding examination, I would that my mind were withdrawn from the various theories regarding it, in order that, by the exercise of a nice skill, it should be handled in the manner most in harmony with its character; and not only so, but that it should be considered by itself as it actually is, and as it spontaneously presents itself to a mind devoid of any preconceived opinion, derived from any quarter whatever. To this method of procedure I accustom myself, entertaining no fear but that truth cannot but be, self-consistent. Such being my views, I admit that there are some things in the Pentateuch which seem

incapable of being ascribed to Moses; but these, I maintain, are few in number, and so minute, that they do not stand in the way of our determining that of that book, Moses is the author.

XXXII. In inquiring into this subject, John Le Clerc has, if I mistake not, surpassed in diligence all other writers whatever. He observes that in the Pentateuch are found narrated:—(1.) Some events subsequent in their date to the times of Moses; (2.) some which must have been written in the time of Moses; (3.) and lastly, some which must have been written before his time. The things which range under the last two classes do not fall under the present controversy: for it is out of question that transactions, either of earlier date, or during the times of Moses, could have been written by him. Those of the first class alone call for our consideration. In treating these, we shall follow Le Clerc in his own track, subjoining to his arguments, *seriatim*, such answers as the subject itself suggests.

XXXIII. He begins, then, with Genesis ii. 11, 12:—“*The name of the first (river) is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good.*” “These remarks,” he says, “seem to have proceeded from an author, who, when he wrote, was in Chaldea. For the Pison is a branch of the Euphrates, which falls into the Persian Gulf, and washes the shores of those regions formerly called Chaldea, now Ormuz.

“It is not credible that Moses, who scarcely ever passed beyond the Egyptian frontiers, possessed so intimate an acquaintance with foreign countries. Still more incredible is it that God revealed to him that the gold of that land was good.”

I reply:—(1.) That this whole remark rests on a theory, which, to me at least, to speak plainly, seems to be impious, and utterly subversive of the Divine authority of the sacred Scriptures. It takes for granted that the Spirit of God could not teach the sacred writers aught, of which otherwise they were themselves ignorant. If this were the case—if the sacred historians wrote nothing except what they had, by their own personal diligence, searched out—pray, what difference is there between the book of Genesis and the commentaries of Diodorus Siculus? It is my wish to reply without

any subterfuge. Moses was not so ignorant, senseless, and stolid, as in our critic's eyes he seems to be. If Le Clerc, living with his friends at Amsterdam, knew so accurately that the Pison is a branch of the Euphrates falling into the Persian Gulf near Ormuz, what was there to hinder Moses knowing this also, educated as he was at the much-frequented court of the monarch of an adjacent country, and well-grounded in all Egyptian science, in which geography had a place of its own?

(3.) Is it credible that an obscure Samaritan priest, a wretched captive, of no renown for wisdom of any kind, and precluded by poverty and captivity from undertaking foreign journeys for the acquisition of knowledge,—is it, we ask, credible that such an one was better acquainted with these facts than Moses?

(4.) Suppose it be granted that a man living in Chaldea could know what the Pison was, better than a man who had spent his life in Egypt; whence could either, Chaldean or Egyptian, learn that it was that river which went out of Eden to water the Garden of Paradise? This fact assuredly could not be known but in one of two ways, viz., either by Divine revelation, or by traditions handed down from our first parents; and one would far more readily look up to Moses as the recipient of such knowledge, than to any other person whatever.

XXXIV. Le Clerc next takes up Gen. x. 8—11:—“*And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah.*” On this passage the critic remarks two things:—

1. “That the exactness displayed in the above passage in describing the cities of Mesopotamia and Assyria, seems to point out as its author one who himself dwelt in these regions. That, further, it is improbable that any sacred writer, whoever he was, would speak in terms so general about other nations, including the Canaanites themselves; and yet descend to a description so special of this region, if he lived many ages before any intercourse had take

place between the Israelites and the nations dwelling beyond the Euphrates.

2. "That Nimrod is said to have built Nineveh, *i.e.*, to have erected a city at the spot where Nineveh, so called, after Ninus the son of Belus, was afterwards built in the days of the prophetess Deborah, who flourished two hundred years after the time of Moses."

These points are handled in a way too lengthy and prolix to permit us to treat them in detail.

(1.) I reply briefly : The first remark is a mere conjecture, on the confession of the critic himself. There is here nothing of that exactness which he deemed it unwarrantable to take for granted, as exemplified on the part of Moses.

(2.) For myself, the duty of inflicting no violence, in the work of translation, upon expressions clear and exact in their nature, possesses all the binding force of a religious sanction. Why should we be less ready to believe that Nimrod built Nineveh, than the other cities enumerated?

(3.) The learned critic knows right well that the rationale of nomenclature is dubious. If in truth there did exist a certain King Ninus, there is nothing to hinder his having been a son of Nimrod, who denominated a city after his own name, as Cain also did (Gen. iv. 17).

(4.) The fabulous history of Ninus ought not to be allowed to create a prejudice against the sacred Scriptures. From the latter it is easy to prove that there did not exist in the time of the Judges, nor long after, an Assyrian monarchy so puissant as profane history pretends there did. We shall not find a more convenient occasion than the present for dealing with this subject.

XXXV. Under Gen. xi. 28-31, Le Clerc notes that a certain city of Mesopotamia was called *Ur of the Chaldees*; but remarks "that in the time of Abraham, that region could not be so named, because the Chasdim (Chaldees) were named after Chesed, a nephew of Abraham, and son of his brother Nahor (Gen. xxii. 22)." He observes, "that, in the time of Moses, that region was invariably named Padan Aram. The later Scripture writers, about the times of the captivity, termed it the land of the Chaldec (Ezek. i. 3, and xi. 24)."

I reply, the critic himself, with his characteristic frankness, removes the difficulty he had himself raised. For he confesses that it is uncertain whether or not the name of the Chaldeans be derived from Chesed or not, for the region properly called Chaldea, is at a considerable distance from that in which Ur was situated. The true position of that city lay between the Tigris and the Nisibis, in Upper Mesopotamia; but by geographers, Chaldea is placed in the lowest part of Mesopotamia, at the Persian Gulf. In Job i. 17 it is related that the Chaldeans carried off his camels. Now Job dwelt in the land of Uz, in Arabia Petrea, near to the Euphrates; and the position we have above assigned to Chaldea is more nearly in harmony with the statement quoted from Job. If these considerations be true, there remains no further kind of difficulty. What then moved the critic to make the remarks quoted?—what else but a perverse itching for captious detraction? This is the real source of the indictment which he subjoins to his observations:—“*The sacred writers,*” says he, “*are not particularly accurate in regard to names.*”

XXXVI. Next he quotes Gen. xii. 6 (last clause): “*And the Canaanite was then in the land;*” and Gen. xiii. 7 (last clause): “*And the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land.*” “Whence it follows,” says Le Clerc, “that they did not dwell there at the time when this history was written. But they did dwell there as long as Moses lived: therefore he is not the author of this book.”

I reply, It does not follow from the passages above referred to, that the Canaanites had already been expelled from their seats by the time when the history under discussion was written; nor was it from regard to them, that their dwelling in that land was recorded by the sacred historian. On the contrary, what Moses wished to teach was that there were dealings between Abraham and the Canaanites; and that they, even then, inhabited that land, from which they were to be driven out by, and for the sake of, Abraham's descendants. And Moses put this upon record, in order to display the faith of Abraham, who, following God as his guide, dared to sojourn in a strange country occupied by powerful

and hostile tribes. The passage from Gen. xiii. 7 supplies the reason why the land referred to was not able to bear the cattle of Abraham and Lot; and it extols the prudence of Abraham in deciding that the strife which had broken out between his herdsmen and those of Lot, must be promptly put an end to, on account of the close vicinity of savage tribes. What now is there here which could not have been told by Moses?

XXXVII. A greater difficulty presents itself in Gen. xiv. 14, where Abraham is said to have pursued his enemies *unto Dan*. But, remarks the critic, "Dan received its name from the Danites long after the time of Abraham, nay, after that of Moses, when its name was Laish (Judges xviii. 29)."

I reply, I am aware of the considerations which have been canvassed by learned men in order to remove this difficulty; but to be candid, I confess I do not find in any of them what is satisfactory to my own mind. I allow, therefore, that this passage must be numbered among those which are from the pen of a later writer. It might happen that in place of the ancient name—become unknown to the Israelites—there was substituted that, which was more recent indeed, but better known, and of greater celebrity, by Samuel, or Ezra, or some inspired writer. The illustrious Cocceius seems to go further than is necessary in vindication of the passage—further than I would choose to go. I quote his words:—"This difficulty may be removed by our holding that the history of the Patriarch was known in the time of Moses, and was by him—in the Spirit of God—committed to writing; that in this history was afterwards inserted the Law written by Moses; and especially if we hold that Samuel, termed the first of the prophets after Moses, undertook the work of completing the Book of God, in other words, of giving a history of the Patriarchs, of the giving of the Law, and of the occupation of the land of Canaan, down even to his own times."

XXXVIII. It is a simpler matter to meet the difficulty arising from the tenor of Gen. xxxv. 21: "*And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.*" But this was also the name of a tower upon one of the gates of Jerusalem. Micah iv. 8, "*And thou, O tower of the flock*" (marginal rendering, tower of

Edar). Neh. iii. 1, "*Then Eliashib the high priest rose up, with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep-gate.*" "The author of the history," the critic remarks, "wished to inform us that Jacob had extended his tents as far as that spot, where, at the time when the passage in question was written, there had been erected the tower of the flock at Jerusalem—for Edar signifies a flock." Thence he infers, "that the words in Genesis xxxv. 21 cannot be ascribed to Moses, since in his time the towers of Jerusalem had not yet been erected."

I reply, There is nothing to forbid our believing, that in the time of Jacob there was in that part of the country some tower or other, which derived its name from sheep-flocks. There is nothing which enjoins us to believe that that tower was indicated which was afterwards built at Jerusalem. There is nothing repugnant to reason in our believing that the ancient name of a tower, existing either at or near the same spot, was revived in the erection of the more modern tower, as a memorial of times remote.

XXXIX. Le Clerc believes that he finds a much stronger argument in support of his theory in Gen. xxxvi. 31, where occur the following words, which (he thinks) "could not proceed but from a writer who lived after the appointment of kings to reign over the Hebrew Commonwealth":—"And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." "The difficulty," he alleges, "is increased by the number of the generations of the sons of Edom, which very greatly surpasses that of the generations of the sons of Jacob, down even to the times of Moses."

I reply, There is nothing here which could not be told by Moses. To Jacob, was a promise made that kings should come out of his loins (Gen. xxxv. 11); to Esau, no such promise. Justly, therefore, does Moses remark, as a thing worthy of being recorded,—as one which called for such a mighty exercise of faith, that before the promise of a royal progeny was fulfilled in the posterity of Jacob, the Edomites had already had so many kings. No need is there here to invent something of a prophetic character; all is historical. Nor is another difficulty incapable of solution. From Isaac's death—after Esau had occupied Edom—

to the appointment of Moses as the leader of Israel, there elapsed two hundred and thirty-six years. Within that period there might easily have reigned in Edom, seven kings and more.

XL. Lo! another of the critic's difficulties occurs in Gen. xxxvii. 14, where *Hebron* is mentioned; as also chaps. xiii. 18; xxiii. 19; xxxv. 27. "But," he remarks, "that that city was so named by Caleb after the conquest of Canaan, in memory of his father; while previously it had been called *Kirjath-riba* (Josh. xiv. 13, 15)."

I reply: It is to be explicitly admitted that this passage is by a later writer.

XLI. Lastly, Le Clerc animadverts on Genesis xl. 15, thus: "Joseph we find stating, that he was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, under which name he could not so designate the country, inasmuch as his father, Jacob—beyond the burying-place which Abraham had purchased,—was proprietor of no portion whatever of the land, and did himself sojourn in it as a stranger."

I reply: Joseph employed that method of naming the country from which he was stolen, most appositely, in order to mark out that portion of it which is near Hebron. There Abraham, the first to be called an Hebrew, dwelt with his numerous family, after he had entered Canaan, and there was the place of his possessions, (Gen. xiii. 18). There too Isaac and Jacob dwelt for a lengthened period. They dwelt as strangers indeed—but strangers of renown, regarded as princes (Gen. xxvii. 6), living under laws of their own, subject to none, making covenants, not with private persons only, but even with kings and states (Gen. xxi. 22, xxvi. 26, xxxiv.). Moreover, the fame of these same Hebrews was great, arising as well from the war which Abraham the Hebrew waged with Chedorlaomer and his confederates, and the battle which he won over them, as from the spoiling of the Shechemites by the sons of Jacob—a deed which so filled with fear the minds of the neighbouring peoples, that they did not dare to adopt any measures of retaliation. Joseph then, wished to intimate that he was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews, *i.e.*, from that part of Canaan which was around Hebron (Gen. xxxvii. 14),—where the Hebrews had already had a settlement for many years, and that too under a covenant with the natives (Gen. xiv. 13). These learned remarks are derived from

the works of James Altingius. Up to this point we have been discussing those objections which, with such pomp, have been drawn from the Book of Genesis; and, unless I deceive myself, have clearly shewn that in all the numerous passages brought forward, two only are to be found in which the hand of any writer later than Moses can be detected; and that in these two, there is no change but of two proper names. Than this, what could there have been specified more trifling?

XLII. From the Book of EXODUS the critic has selected, and remarked upon, several passages to be dealt with in succession. (Exod. vi. 25). The sacred writer, after recording the genealogy of Moses and Aaron, proceeds as follows:—"These are that Moses and Aaron to whom the Lord said," &c. ; and again: "*These are that Moses and Aaron.*" "Can any one," asks the critic, "believe that any man could so speak of persons still alive? As regards myself," says he, "I cannot bring myself to believe that any one would so speak of Moses, unless after many years had elapsed after his death."

I reply, That there was no incongruity in Moses annexing such a virtual eulogy on himself to his genealogy, if we keep in view the ingenuousness and candour characteristic of these early days. In sooth, the actions of Moses and his brother Aaron were about to fill almost every page of the subsequent history—a history written not for the men of his own age only, but also for a remote posterity. How very little does John differ from this mode of speaking in the Gospel of which no one doubts he was the author? John xxi. 24, "*This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.*" Neither is there in the passage under notice aught repugnant to the modesty of Moses: Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah narrate matters of lesser moment regarding themselves, and in language of no less magnificence.

XLIII. But again, pleads the critic, behold another argument by which it may be more strongly proved that the Book of Exodus was not written by Moses any more than that of Genesis—I refer to the occurrence in it of the word "*Nabi*," a prophet,—a word which did not come into use, as we learn from 1 Sam. ix. 9, for many

years,—in fact after the times of Moses.” My sentiments on this point I have already partially indicated in chap. 1, sect. 17 of this treatise.

But I now reply to the objection somewhat more expressly. The allegation regarding the use of the word *Nabi*, is altogether unfounded; for it was in the most familiar use, and perfectly well known, in the time of Moses. Not only does the historian bestow it as a name on certain persons, but when God, the Patriarchs, Moses himself, are introduced as speakers, it frequently occurs. The name or title was bestowed not by the historian, but by God himself upon Abraham, when he said to Abimelech in a dream: “*Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is ‘Nabi,’ a prophet*” (Gen. xx. 7). In like manner God spoke to Moses (Exod. vii. 1), “*See I have made thee a God to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy (Nabi) prophet.*” And Moses, when addressing the people of Israel uses the same term (Num. xi. 29). So also, the young man who addressed Moses (ver. 27). Compare also Deut. xiii. 1–3 with xviii. 18. Is it not reckless to affirm that the historian painstakingly devised words as used by God and by Moses, other than those which were in fact in use at the time? And if one withdraw his confidence from the word “*Nabi*,” what word, in fine, will he believe they employed? For neither the word “*chozeh*” nor “*röeh*” would have been proper or fitting in such an address; nor is there any other known to me in the Hebrew language which can express the force of “*Nabi*.” And what is taught in 1 Sam. ix. 9, is not that the word “*Nabi*” then at length came into use, but only that its signification was in a slight degree changed. In previous times “*Nabi*” denoted an intercessor before God, and an interpreter of His will; and in these senses it is applied to the patriarchs, who, wherever they dwelt, observed the worship of God, instructed others, and offered prayer to the Most High. It did not exactly denote the foreteller of future events, and it is *this* special signification which began to be its predominant one, about the time of Samuel.

XLIV. “The author of the Pentateuch,” the critic proceeds to say, “narrates (Exod. xvi. 35) circumstances which did not occur till after the death of Moses, as appears from Josh. v. 11; “*And*

the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited: they did eat manna, until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan."

I reply: I dare not, as some, wrest plain historical narratives to support the cause I espouse. I admit that this passage also is by a later writer.

XLV. But I do not see that the same admission should be made regarding the subsequent verse: "*Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.*" I hear the critic indeed, remarking that while a particular measure of capacity is in familiar use in a community, there can scarcely be any necessity for defining in words the quantity it contains; and that the time for statements of that kind is when the use of the measure in question has become obsolete. On the contrary, I hold that it is frequently necessary to record things known at present in order that they may be known to posterity. And, indeed, I remember that our critic has in another part of his works made a complaint—and not unreasonably either—that historians pass over, to the great loss of posterity, matters supposed to be now familiarly known to all. But whence, we ask, has the critic derived the knowledge that the same measures were not commonly employed in the later as well as in the earlier days of the Israelitic commonwealth? or that in these latter days the capacity of an ephah was better known than that of an omer? With this passage as to the relative capacity of an omer and an ephah, that, which the sacred history relates, God said to Moses regarding the value of a shekel deserves to be compared. Num. iii. 47, "*Thou shalt even take five shekels apiece by the poll; after the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take them: (the shekel is twenty gerahs).*" Observe, that God himself explains to Moses the value of a shekel in gerahs. To assert that this parenthesis defining the value of a shekel was inserted by some later writer, is a task for him alone who is furnished with arguments of pith in proof of his averment.

XLVI. We have now reviewed the passages in Exodus, commented on by the critic. He raises no questions in regard to LEVITICUS or NUMBERS, and but to a very few in DEUTERONOMY. He begins with chap. i. 1, "*These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel*

on this side Jordan" (*beḥber hay Jordan*). From these words he infers that this book was written in Palestine; because when contrasted with it the desert is beyond or across the Jordan.

I reply, that *beḥber*, the term used in Hebrew, properly denotes "in passing," or, in order "to passing;" and the term "*ḥber*," a spot or place in juxtaposition, which may be translated either by "on this side" or "beyond" (*tam cis, quam ultra*), according as the exigency of the passage in which it occurs demands. In 1 Sam. xiv. 40, Saul thus expresses himself: "Be ye, '*beḥber eh-ghadh*,' on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be '*beḥber eh-ghadh*,' on the other side." From this passage it is plain that the word "*ḥber*" denotes any side, while, which side is meant, is to be gathered from the nature of the matter in question. There are passages where it has the force of (*citerior*) the hither side, as in 1 Kings iv. 24, where it is said of Solomon: "*For he had dominion over 'bekol ḥber hannahar*,'" which Junius has well translated: "*All the region on this side the river, from Tiphseh even to Azzah, over all the kings, 'ḥber hannahar*,' on this side the river." The river referred to is the Euphrates—using the appellative, as a comparison of verses 21 and 24 proves. The river Euphrates was on the east boundary of Solomon's empire, which in truth did not extend to all the places or kings which were beyond the that river. From this fact it is logically deducible that *ḥber hannahar* denotes the hither side of a river. With the same meaning it occurs in Deut. iii. 8, where Moses speaks, not as a historian, but in his own person: "*And we took at that time, out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites, the land, 'asher ba-ahhor hay Jordan*,'" the land that was in the passing of Jordan, that is, on this side Jordan. If "*beḥber*" signifies beyond (*trans*), and the writer, dwelling in Palestine, referred to it, he unwisely corrupts the words of Moses, falsely ascribing to him an address destitute of consistency when viewed in connection with the place where it was delivered. Consult, besides, Josh. v. 1, and ix. 1. It is apparent that the Book of Joshua was written after the Israelites had crossed the Jordan. It is, in like manner, apparent that the kings commemorated in it, reigned over the region bordering upon the Jordan where the Israelites were then dwelling. And yet these

same kings are said to have been "*beëbher Jordan.*" These words must of necessity be translated on this side of Jordan (*cis Jordanum*). Huet has judiciously retorted the arguments of these cavillers upon themselves. In Gen. I. 10, we read these words: "*And they (Joseph and his brethren) came to the thrashing-floor of Atad, which is, 'beëbher Jordan,'—beyond Jordan; and then, ver. 11: "Wherefore the name of it (the place) was called Abel-mizraim, which is, 'beëbher hay Jordan,'—beyond Jordan.*" Under the hypothesis of the critics, the phrase under discussion ought to be explained with reference to Canaan, where they will have it, that the writer of the Pentateuch lived. But now, if Ezra, or any other person whatever living to the west of the Jordan, wrote the Pentateuch, and "*ëbher*" signifies "beyond," then it is plain that those places will have to be sought on the east of the Jordan, which yet are situated on its west. But on the other hand, if we pronounce Moses to be the author of the book, and believe that he wrote it before the Israelites had crossed the Jordan, he, in describing these places as lying on the west of the Jordan, did just what he ought. From all this it follows that the word "*beëbher*" is ambiguous in its signification, and may be employed to denote at one time—places farther remote, at another nearer, in respect of some other point. The force of this argument Le Clerc cannot elude but by changing his theory, and asserting that the writer did not employ the word "*beëbher*" with respect to himself, but with respect to the Egyptians, and persons proceeding from Egypt by the way of the desert. But Huetius argued from Le Clerc's original hypothesis, as he ought to have done.

XLVII. "There occurs also in Deut. iii. 14, somewhat which might raise a difficulty: "*Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of Argob, . . . and called them after his own name, Bashan-havoth-jair, unto this day.*" This statement seems scarcely capable of having been made in the time of Moses, since the events here narrated occurred a few months only before his death."

I reply: I confess that this parenthesis had been inserted at a later date, to explain the address of Moses to the children of Israel.

XLVIII. And these are the passages on which it has pleased Le Clerc to comment, with the view of proving that the Pentateuch

was not written by Moses! The whole of them put together, if, as is meet, they be examined with candour, will leave only *four* passages out of the whole volume in which any interpolation is to be detected—an amount of interpolation, in truth, so trifling, as to consist, either in the change of one small word, or in the addition of some exceedingly short narrative, for whose insertion an occasion was afforded by the very words of the ancient record. But things so slender as these, do not so bear up the huge mass of monstrous demands which the critic brings forward, as to prove that—contrary to the faith of all antiquity, contrary to the authority of Christ and His Apostles—Moses should be robbed of the authorship of the Pentateuch.

The effect produced upon the mind of Le Clerc by the preceding calm, and candid, yet able disquisition, was so remarkable, and so honourable to both controversialists, that it would be a piece of gross historical injustice, did we not present to our readers the account of it given by Witsius in the prolegomena to the second edition of his “Miscellanea,” Tom. i. He prefixed to that edition a preface, containing many illustrations and some corrections of his “Treatise on Prophets and Prophecy,” which had occurred to him after its first publication, on further reflection, or in the course of his reading. In accordance with the impression of the kindness and unselfishness of Witsius’ character, which the study of his works leaves upon the reader’s mind, he could not endure that purchasers of his works should incur any loss from which he could save them. He secured therefore, he tells us in the first section of the preface, that it should be printed with a separate paging, so as to be capable of being acquired by possessors of the first edition, in order to render their copies of it as complete as those of the second. This circumstance led to the insertion of the preface at random, as bookbinders might choose. In my copy, for instance, it is quite misplaced—coming in between the dedication of the volume, and John Marck’s Funeral Oration on Witsius. From such like blunders it has been for the most part overlooked, and Le Clerc’s recantation has remained almost entirely unknown. Doubtless the gentle Witsius had himself experienced feelings, not yet altogether unknown to poor scholars, when, having extracted the price of some goodly book from purses sorely extenuated,

they ere long find it rendered incomplete by the flagrant announcement of "A new and greatly enlarged edition!"

The preface referred to, contains two sections devoted to Le Clerc. I subjoin a translation of one of them (sect. viii.), being that in which the change in the critic's sentiments is related.

"There is also another matter connected with the discussion of the question, 'Was Moses the Author of the Pentateuch?' which it appears to concern my ingenuousness and candour not to conceal. In the chapter referred to, besides handling the opinions and arguments of Hobbes, Spinosa, and Father Simon, I have brought forward and carefully weighed, an opinion of a kind entirely novel and unique, by which the authorship of the Pentateuch is reft from Moses, and ascribed to a Samaritan priest, of whom nothing whatever is known. I had read about him in a French work, in which are set forth the judgments of some Dutch divines in regard to Father Simon's 'Critical History.' The authorship of this volume public report ascribes to a very learned man, John Le Clerc; but I have not to this day heard that it has ever been acknowledged by himself as a fruit of his genius. The work itself is written in an epistolary form,—the author now speaking in his own name, and anon in that of some friend. For myself, in referring to the work elsewhere—without any nice regard to these questions of authorship, but solely for the sake of brevity—I have simply spoken of Le Clerc as the author.

"Since the date of the publication of that volume, there has appeared a 'Philological Commentary upon the First Book of the Prophet Moses,' by John Le Clerc, with three preliminary dissertations. Of the third of these, the title is, 'Moses the Writer of the Pentateuch.' In this production the author faces right-about, stoutly defends an opinion almost exactly the same as that which we have supported in the preceding dissertation, and extricates it from some difficulties by which it is ordinarily encumbered. I have judged that this change of opinion ought to be here commemorated, not only in vindication of the honesty with which I have treated the subject of discussion, but also to the commendation of my antagonist himself."

NOTES.

A.—WITSIUS.

HERMAN WITSIUS was born of parents in the middle rank of life, at Enckhuysen in 1636. After passing through a very full course of study, he was licensed, and ordained to the ministry at Westwoud in 1657. He subsequently and in succession held three other charges. In 1675 he was appointed Professor of Theology at Franeker; in 1680 he was preferred to the same function at Utrecht; and in 1698, by the wish of William the III., was appointed to succeed the second Frederick Spanheim, in the chair of theology at Leyden; and was soon after created Regent also, of the Theological College. Although afflicted throughout his whole life with very serious and painful diseases of a nephritic character, he continued to hold his offices till early in the year 1707, when, contrary to the earnest remonstrances of the University authorities, he resigned his offices, together with their emoluments.

On the 17th October 1708, he had a paralytic seizure, which cut him off, in the seventy-third year of his age, on the 22d day of the same month; but not before he had given such proofs as his disabled condition would permit, that he was enjoying a blessed hope of eternal life, and earnestly longing after the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Beyond the above abstract of the more outstanding events in his life, we do not intend to give anything of the nature of a biography of Witsius, which is supplied to scholars in the "Oratio Funeris" of John Marck, and to merely English readers, in an excellent abridgement of it by the late Rev. Donald Fraser of Kennoway, prefixed to his scholarly translation of our author's work on the Apostles' Creed.

We rather propose to ourselves to give a few notanda of his character and disposition not to be found in John Marck's oration, which have occurred to us in the course of nearly forty years, during which we have been more or less acquainted with the works of Witsius. The substratum of his character as a man and a theologian, was a loyal and loving submission to revealed truth. This fundamental and indispensable qualification for an instructor of others in Divine things, whether from the pulpit or a professor's chair, was accompanied by a numerous subsidiary array of mental qualities and scholarly acquirements. He possessed a sound and penetrating judgment, great tenacity of memory, giving him ready command over his vast learning and extensive acquaintance with theological writings of all ages and of every school; while all these qualities were greatly enhanced in value and usefulness by a very high degree of "that sweetness of the lips," which, saith the wise man, "increaseth learning"—an eloquence which

varied with the nature of his subject, and was as remarkable in Dutch as in I tin, and which still impresses the solitary student in his closet as powerfully as it did congregations and classes of living men over two hundred years ago. His gentleness and fairness may be seen in his impassioned address to his opponents, Le Clerc, &c. There is nothing unnecessarily harsh,—no push delivered that can be even suspected as given with the lounge of a practised gladiator. He addresses them in the tone of a man who has long since been divinely taught that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Every one may see he is strongly moved—cannot, dares not, suppress his convictions of the guilt and danger of his opponents, but yet in such a manner as to suggest to each the reflection, “This man is not our enemy, though he tells us the truth—evidently really dear to him, though offensive to us.”

Candour, Witsius had in a peculiar degree sought to cultivate and exercise all his life long; and of course most carefully where its need and value were greatest. Several allusions to this characteristic occur here and there throughout his works. We may quote one from his dissertation, “De Uxore Loti.” Le Clerc had brought forward a theory, in which he alleges that Lot’s wife was not really turned into a pillar of salt, but simply became rigid from fear, and perished from not taking pains in time to save her life. This presumptuous hypothesis he proceeds to prop up by the story of Niobe, as told by Ovid, and alluded to by Cicero, &c. &c. Thus writes Witsius in reply:—“The learned Le Clerc will not, I hope, be displeased if, *with my accustomed candour (si quo solvo candore)*, and with the zeal which a subject of such moment demands, I here fully lay open my opinion regarding this paradoxical interpretation of the passage under discussion.” (Witsii “Miscellanea,” Tom. ii; “De Uxore Loti,” sect. xix.).

In John Marck’s Funeral Oration pronounced on Witsius after his death, there occurs towards the close of the discourse the following eulogistic passage:—“Witsius exhibited a wonderful degree of prudence both in civil and Christian affairs, perfected and confirmed by long experience in its application to practice, and apparent in his whole actions and intercourse with others. In him, prudence was found in wondrous union with candour unfeigned—a disposition whose value is often partially forgotten by some men, who may be described as cunning rather than prudent.” The surname, *Witsius*, when dis clothed of its Latin dress, is just Witt or De Witt, *i.e.*, our White or Whyte. To the exercise of candour (literally whiteness) Witsius deemed himself called by his very name, and in joint allusion to it, and to the candour so lovely in his eyes, he had “CANDIDE” (candidly) engraven on his seal. Blessed blazonry! sanctioned, doubtless, by the Spirit witnessing with his spirit that it was a truth and no lie, and helping him to anticipate by faith the reward of grace; when, having overcome, he should receive from the first and the last, which was dead and is alive, a white stone, and in the stone a new name written (which even in this life he might humbly guess at) which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.

Early in 1687, when the clouds of Divine wrath were closing round the bloody and arbitrary house of Stuart, John Dykvelt was sent by the United Provinces on a special mission to England; but in truth, rather to the Protestant constitutional Opposition than to the Government. Among the Dutch diplomatists he had not a superior; in knowledge of English affairs, no equal. His instructions, which were private, were drawn by Burnet and approved by William of Orange. Early in June 1687, Dykvelt returned to Holland. Witsius, as we learn from the dedication of his “Miscellanea” (Tom. i.) to Dykvelt, had accompanied him to England,

having been appointed chaplain (*à sacrés*) to the embassy. He speaks in the dedication in the highest terms of Dykvelt, and mentions having spent in England in the closest intimacy and intercourse with him a period of four months. Macaulay's account of the time the embassy spent in England, and of the high character of its head, is confirmed by the independent testimony of Witsius; with this important difference, that the historian speaks only of the great abilities of the ambassador, and admires his exercise of them as a diplomatist—Witsius loved and revered him as a man of God, records his affability, his love of God's Word, his concern for the purity of the Church, his acceptance of his ministry, his approval of his candour, and in short, leaves on one's mind the impression that they were indeed united in happiest Christian fellowship.

Some twenty years ago, I inquired of David Laing, Esq., if he had met with any reference in any English book to Witsius as Dykvelt's chaplain. His reply was, "he thought he had, but could not then recall where." Those even whose notions are of the dimmest regarding Mr Laing's knowledge of English literature, will not wonder that my hopes collapsed beyond recovery. I recently searched through "Burnet's History of his own Time," but found no mention of Witsius, though they must often have met. He became acquainted with many English divines, both within and without the pale of the Establishment; among the former, the then Primate of all England, Archbishop Sancroft, and Tillotson, Bishop of London. The most important incident, perhaps, in Witsius' long career of usefulness, resulted from his visit to England.

A controversy was then raging among Nonconformists of different sects in England, "which turned chiefly on the question, whether the Gospel is a new law promising salvation upon a certain condition?—some making that condition to be faith, others making it faith and repentance, to which others added sincere obedience."¹ Those holding such views were termed Neonomians by their opponents, who in their turn were charged with Antinomianism. This controversy was the analogue in England of the Marrow Controversy in Scotland.

The disputants in England adopted a course—in so far as my memory of Church history serves me—altogether unprecedented. They resolved to refer the subjects on which they differed to the sole arbitrament of Witsius. Though imperfectly acquainted with the English language, he undertook the task, and in 1696 published at Utrecht, in octavo, his "*Animadversiones Irenicæ ad Controversias, quæ sub infaustis Antinomorum, et Neonomorum nominibus, in Britannia nunc agitantur.*" This work was reprinted in his "*Miscellanea*" (Tom. ii.). It reconciled the disputants for a time, and will for ever form an unmatched specimen of theological acquirements, of Christian charity, wisdom, and tact. It was translated and published by the Rev. Thomas Bell of Glasgow about 1807. The translation is too literal, but faithful; and by one, whom Dr Duncan, in the last conversation I ever held with him, agreed with me in holding to have been the greatest theologian who ever flourished in the Relief Church. Bell was occasionally employed by Dr John Erskine, of Edinburgh, to translate works from the Dutch and other languages, fitted to promote the cause of their common Lord. All Bell's works well repay study.

I am the possessor of a copy of "Witsii Dissert. in Symbol. Apostol." presented by the author to Bishop Burnet, with an autograph inscription on the title page.

¹ See a series of articles by Dr M'Crie, primus, in the "Edinburgh Christian Instructor," 1831-32.

I acquired it at the *first sale* of a portion of the late Principal Lee's library in 1842. The same volume appears in William Blackwood's valuable catalogue, of 1812, No. 6950—probably Dr Lee had then become the purchaser.

I have caused a few copies of this pamphlet to be thrown off on a fine thick paper, with photographs of the best engraved portrait of Witsius known to me, and of the specimen of his handwriting above mentioned (*see* Cover).

By far the most complete list of the works published by Witsius, in Dutch or Latin, is to be found at the end of the account of his life in a very interesting and rare book, "*Emonis Lucii Vriemoot, S. Th. D. Ling. Or, et Antiq. Hebr. Prof. P. Athenarum Frisiacarum, Libri duo.*" Leovaradiæ, 1758, quarto.

B.

The author and assertor of a "Præ-adamitic State and Race" (sect. iv.), of whose name Witsius would almost seem to have been ignorant, was "Isaac la Pereyra," better known by the Latinised form of his name, "Isaacus Pereyrius." He maintained, in two small treatises, published in 1655, that the Mosaic writings contain rather a history of the origin of the Jewish race from Adam, than of the world; and that it was inhabited by many nations before Adam's creation. A Protestant when he published these views, he was yet arrested and thrown into prison by some doctors of the Romish Church at Brussels; and in order to save his life, repudiated his notions, and entered the Church of Rome. He was born about 1628, and died in 1677.—(*Vûle* "Walchii Bibliotheca," Tom. i., p. 755).

C.

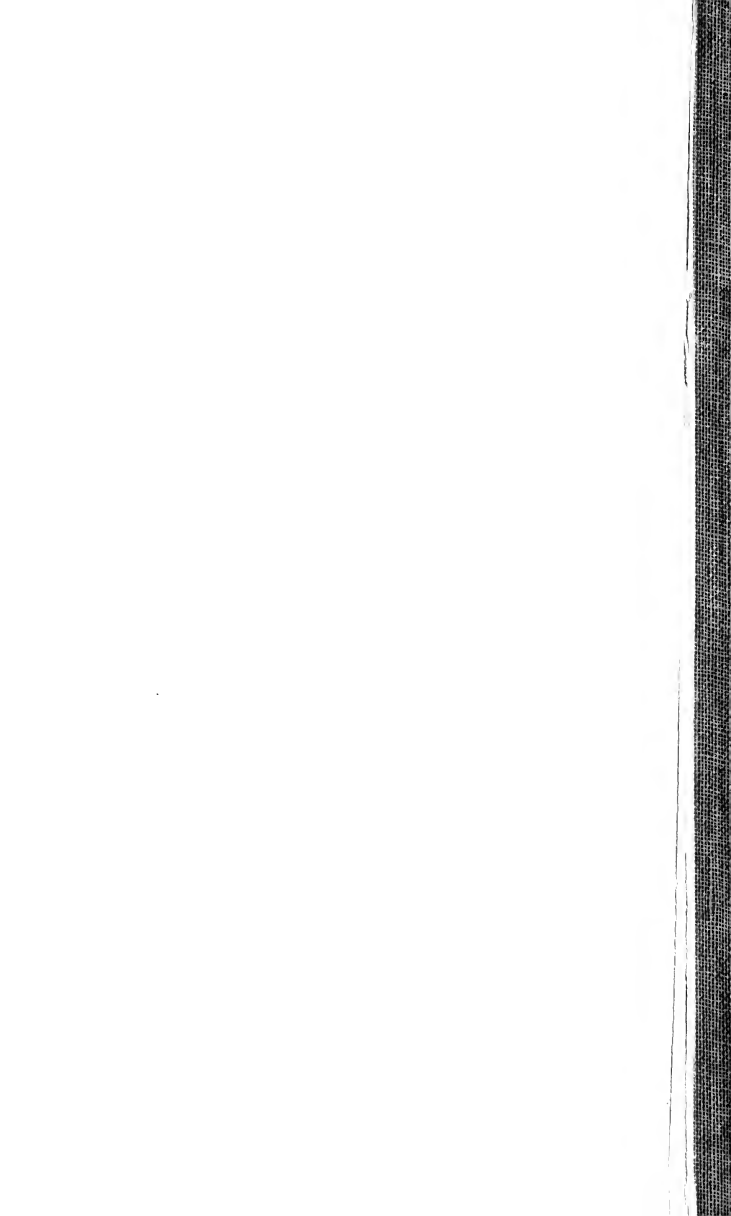
We cannot refrain from subjoining the following extract from the author of "*The Eclipse of Faith*" (Henry Rogers') ironical defence of Bishop Colenso on the Pentateuch, written in the style of Archbishop Whately's "Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon (I.);" (A. & C. Black, Edinburgh, 1863):—

"Bolingbroke, in his 'Letters on History,' and in his 'Philosophical Works,' wrote against the credibility of the Bible, but especially of the Pentateuch, with a genius and eloquence with which it would be absurd to compare the miserable carping of a writer like this. He has been, no doubt, extensively read, but, spite both of genius and eloquence, he has been long since consigned to the 'dust and darkness of the upper shelf;' while the Pentateuch still remains, and speaks to the world in one hundred and fifty dialects.

"The present book, I fancy, will go where Bolingbroke and a host more since have already gone. A few years will shew; perhaps indeed a few months: for I see the author has announced Part II., and if he fulfils his promise, of telling us *how* and *when* the Pentateuch was composed, I predict that he will lose himself. He will sink into that huge 'Serbonian bog, where armies whole have sunk'—the Documentary Hypothesis; and flounder in the deep mud of *earlier* Elohist and Jehovist, and *later* Elohist fragments. I know no reason why, if Moses be the author of the Pentateuch, he should not (especially in Genesis, where he had to do with events that occurred long before his time) have incorporated, under Divine superintendence, some fragments of previous documents. But when, with a view to discredit his authorship, or that of any one else in particular, critics attempt to sever completely the elements thus fused together, to give a chemical analysis of the whole, to shew precisely how many of these documents there are, and where each begins or ends, or rather where each bit of each begins and ends, arriving at the conclusion that said documents may be either two, or four, or six, or even ten or twelve, that they have been put together like a patchwork quilt, and at some

unknown epoch between the time of the Judges and that of the Babylonish captivity, then loud is the din of controversy, and infinite are the varieties of opinion. 'I have found a fresh bit of the Elohist document,' cries one great critic; 'though the word Elohim does not occur, I know it by the *style*; it begins in the middle of the thirteenth verse of this or that chapter, and it ends in the middle of the fourteenth, just at the word —.' 'No such thing,' cries a second; 'it is clearly Jehovistic, though the word Jehovah is not there; anybody can see that who knows the true genius of the writer.' 'You are both mistaken,' cries a third; 'it belongs to neither, as I have proved in a new dissertation of one hundred and fifty pages. It belongs clearly to a *junior* Elohist.' 'I beg your pardon,' cries a fourth; 'it is nothing but a little bit of cement by which the final *redacteur* of the documents has here glued his fragments together.' And when it is to be determined at what epoch these fortuitous atoms came together in the Pentateuch, equally edifying is the variety of opinion. 'No part,' says one, 'can be as old as the Judges, that is, if there ever *were* any Judges.' 'At least,' cries a second, 'there is no trace of it before Samuel's time.' 'We must come down yet lower,' says a third; 'Nathan or Gad may have had a hand in it.' 'Pure nonsense,' cries a fourth; 'the Pentateuch was not known even in Solomon's time.' 'No, nor then,' cries a fifth; 'we must come down to the time of the Captivity; perhaps, if Ezra were alive, he could tell us something about it.' And so you have your two, six, or ten documents to choose from, and compiled at any period between the time of the Judges and the Babylonish captivity! 'Pray, gentlemen, agree among yourselves,' an ordinary Christian feels inclined to say; 'it is impossible criticism can be worth much which terminates in such endless discordances.' One happy thing is, however, that whenever one of these theories is combated singly, it immediately crumbles to pieces in our hands. And no wonder, for the learned authors of all the rest, as well as the advocates of the ordinary view, fall upon it. And such, I predict, will be the issue in the present case.

"If I may judge from one or two hints in Part I., I fancy our author will endeavour to prove that the Pentateuch is a series of fictions, composed as a sort of Jewish 'Library of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge,' by Samuel or Nathan or Gad, or all of them; much as Æsop composed his 'Fables,' or John Bunyan his 'Pilgrim's Progress'; that though they everywhere protest they are telling mere matter of fact, and somehow uniformly produce the effect that they *meant* to do so, and everywhere appeal to God that they speak in His name and by His authority, yet they really meant nothing of the kind at all: that, on the other hand, the Israelites, finding that all this was very delightful reading—though they, as well as all their forefathers, are branded and libelled in every page, 'are huffed and cuffed and disrespeckit,' are told that they will never come to any good, that they will always prove an 'obstinate, stiff-necked generation,' and will at length (which has curiously come to pass) be scattered among the nations, and become 'a hissing, a byword, and a proverb'—yet were so tickled with this pleasant story-book, that they were somehow completely taken in, fancied it was their *true history*, and forthwith handed it down, without one sound of protest, doubt, or repugnance, to all future generations, as not only true in fact, but as divinely inspired! Here is likelihood, here is wisdom! I cannot say *Credat Judæus*, for certainly no Jew ever would or did believe such nonsense; credulous scepticism alone is equal to that."



BS1225.8 .W82

The question Was Moses the author of the

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00041 5135