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I.

LYMAN BEECHER ON THE ATONEMENT—ITS
NATURE AND EXTENT.

LYMAN BEECHER, *clarum et venerabile nomen*, was President and Professor of Systematic Theology in Lane Seminary, from the time of its full organization in 1832 to the date of his resignation in 1850; and continued to be Professor Emeritus until his death in 1863. In this relation he was truly eminent as a theological teacher, though his services in that line have been somewhat obscured, in the public estimation, by the superior brilliance of his career in the pulpit, and in the more general service of the church. While he was not remarkable for the extent of his reading, or the scope or comprehensiveness of his theology—while indeed lacking in method and system, and apparently impatient of exactness in definition and completeness in demonstration, he was always vigorous, earnest, broad in his theological conceptions, and always powerful in impressing his own convictions on the minds of those who became his pupils. If they were sometimes carried from point to point in his theological cursus, without due respect for logical order or for scholastic completeness in doctrine, they were often more than compensated by the fervors which he enkindled in their breasts, and by the grandeur of his presentation of his favorite topics in the scheme of grace. Though they may not have gone forth from his training as fully drilled in technical issues, as amply supplied with theological

IV.

THE LOGICAL METHODS OF PROFESSOR KUENEN.

PROFESSOR KUENEN is Dutch; most of the other well-known reconstructionist critics are German. Very few English-speaking scholars read Dutch, compared with the number who read German. The directly critical works of Kuenen are scarcely known among us except through German channels. Most English and American readers know of him only by the English translation of his "Religion of Israel" published some seven years ago, that of his work on the prophets published two or three years later—both of them in limited editions, now already out of print—and the little volume of the Hibbert Lectures, now just published. In these circumstances, it is no slight tribute to the abilities of Professor Kuenen that his name, rather than any other, certainly stands before English-speaking people as the representative name of this type of criticism. We need not raise the question whether this estimate of him is correct. So far as the statement just made is concerned, it is enough that the estimate exists.

If we should revive the term *Neology*, so much used a generation ago in the writings of Professor Stuart and others, and should apply it, in the general sense in which it would be applicable, to the reconstructionist criticism now in vogue, it would at once be evident that the recent Neology is much more formidable than that of the last generation. Even if one wholly denies the validity of the results it has reached, he is compelled to respect and admire the industry, the painstaking, the genuine scholarship by which the results have been reached. Such being the case, the very existence of this type of criticism points out distinctly one great need of our times. Meaning by rationalism what that word ought to mean, no one will dispute that we are in pressing need of a genuine, sanctified Christian rationalism. In whatever other ways the assaults made on the Bible by destructive criticism may be met, they should also be met by a study of the Bible that is reverently, yet distinctively critical.

In general terms, every one admits this. But many are startled and shocked at certain consequences which follow from it, or, rather, at their own misapprehension of these consequences. Professor Kuenen, for example, enters upon his subject from the point of view which recognizes in the religion of Israel simply one of the great religions of the earth. He refuses to assume that there is anything supernatural or exceptionally inspired in the Old or New Testaments, or in the religion described in them. Is not this sufficient to condemn him at once? Have we any occasion for at all investigating views which start from the denial of the fundamental truths of revealed religion? Is it even consistent for one who holds the divine authority of the Scriptures to be a settled truth to engage in such a controversy as that to which these critics challenge us? Does he not thus stultify himself by virtually admitting that what he holds to be divine is yet controvertible in the courts of human criticism?

At the outset, then, one who would examine Kuenen's positions from Kuenen's point of view, may be compelled to vindicate his right to do so. If he is a Presbyterian in the United States, he certainly will be thus compelled. If two men, highly honored among us, unite in producing the best statement of the strict doctrine of verbal inspiration which has ever been printed, there are not wanting newspaper critics who find their work characterized by laxity of doctrine, and hasten to remind its authors that they are set for the defence of orthodoxy. If one deems it important to insist that, in matters of Biblical study, our ministers and teachers shall be held to have all the liberty allowed by the very general statements of our standards, instead of being restricted by the narrower limits of the doctrine of inspiration which has been generally held among us—if another, in adversely commenting upon the works of Mr. Robertson Smith, acknowledges his opponent's standing as a Christian teacher, instead of stigmatizing him as a heretic—or if another, in presenting the theories of Julius Wellhausen, recognizes the fact that we need information in regard to the prince of German reconstructionist critics, even more than we need to be defended from him—these men are at once made to understand that they have faithful friends, both in the high court known as the General Assembly and in the high court known as the religious newspaper, who stand ready to perform all needful offices of admonition and rebuke.

We ought certainly to be gratified at these evidences of the existence of zeal for the truth and of kind concern for our loyalty thereto; but, however well meant, it may possibly be in some instances a zeal not according to knowledge. The frigates of the so-called higher crit-

icism advance in an endless circle and with perpetual broadsides around the fortresses of established orthodoxy. It may be that they do not harm the fortresses much, but some of the people within are occasionally hurt, and more are frightened. If we return the fire from the walls, it is very difficult to hit the frigates, because they are always in motion. Before the guns can be trained upon them in one position, they have shifted from that position and are somewhere else in the ceaseless circle. Shall one be counted a traitor if he regards it as wiser to fit out a few armored gun-boats to grapple with the frigates on their own element, even if this involves the leaving of the fortress for the time being that one may engage in the fight?

If we are at all to meet the destructive critics with their own weapons, we must, of course, subject ourselves to the necessary and fair laws of critical procedure. And every one certainly must recognize the propriety of the canon of criticism, which demands that we avoid undue assumptions; that we exclude, as far as possible, the influence of bias and prejudice. But a groundless assumption, in any investigative process, is not necessarily one that has no ground anywhere. It is sufficient for its exclusion that it has no ground among the primary facts of that particular investigation. In particular, a proposition which is to be proved or disproved by the investigation itself must be omitted from the premises of the investigation, even if it is capable of proof from other sources.

Now it is extremely desirable that the critical argument be made to furnish independent evidence in regard to the alleged divine character of the Bible; but if one proposes to accomplish this, he must not begin by assuming that the Bible is inspired. He might conceivably begin by satisfying himself of this from considerations external to his argument, and then build his critical structure upon this foundation; but if he should do this, he would be precluded from afterward transforming his foundation into a structure based upon the critical results he had reached. He may thus prove the fact of inspiration and use it, or he may leave out, for the time being, the question whether the Scriptures are inspired, or in what sense they are inspired; expecting that his critical investigations will throw light upon these points. He may pursue either of these courses, but he cannot be allowed to begin by assuming the inspiration of the Scriptures; afterward building the proof of their inspiration upon this assumption. To do this would be, of course, to violate a fundamental rule of critical procedure.

This does not mean that, in order to be critical, a man must be without opinions or prejudices. One is not required to become an

idiot to fit him for judging fairly. Every man who knows himself is conscious of having prepossessions. The one who is most fatally biased is the one who is so thoroughly under the influence of his bias as to be unconscious of being biased at all. But it means that a man, however conscious of his prepossessions he may be, shall yet be conscious of a determination to lay these aside, and of a power and habit of actually laying them aside, and of reaching conclusions purely in the light of the evidence presented. In Biblical studies it is not essential to genuine critical acumen that the student be without convictions as to the divine authority of the Word. The most ruinous of all processes of thought is that in which one undertakes to abandon, arbitrarily, the convictions which he has been accustomed to hold, for the sake of allowing fair weight to new evidence. To attempt this is to attempt an impossibility. We cannot thus divest ourselves, by an act of will, of deeply-rooted opinions. The result of trying to do it is utter self-deception. The mind is brought into false relations with itself, and into the worst of all attitudes for the intelligent reception of truth.

One who holds to the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures is not under obligation to cease holding that doctrine as the condition of being able, with fairness, to pursue critical studies. And one who rejects all idea whatever of supernatural interference is not excluded, so far as the mere demands of the critical process are concerned, for his peculiarities of creed. But each must, provisionally, hold his creed in abeyance while the investigation is going on. And however confident each may be of the truth of his creed, he must hold himself ready to give it up if it is proved to be untrue. That the critical inquiry may yield its best results, it must be made strictly independent. That it may be so, it must be carried on in the spirit which loves the creed for the truth it contains, and not in that which loves the truth because it is contained in the creed, and by a method which refuses to demonstrate a proposition by first assuming it to be true. That the critical inquiry into the nature of the Scriptures may be independent, it must reject all evidence which is based on the assumption that the Books are inspired, just as it rejects that which is based on the assumption that they are not inspired. While it is in progress, it has nothing directly to do with inspiration. When it is finished and its results are reached, these may be compared with results reached in other quarters. It is conceivable that, on comparison, the two may be found to agree and thus confirm each other. It is conceivable that one or both may require to be modified so as to make them agree. It is conceivable that they may be found to be in hope-

less conflict. In this case it is conceivable that a man may find his critical results to be better founded than his dogmatic opinions concerning inspiration, and may be compelled to give up the latter in favor of the former. It is equally conceivable that he may find it reasonable to give up his critical results and retain his doctrinal opinions. But all these possibilities are matters of subsequent consideration. While the inquiry is in progress, it must be untrammelled by assumptions in either direction.

All this is certainly fair and reasonable, and the truth never needs to fear fair play. There is no reason, therefore, why any lover of the Bible or of its religion should find fault with the application of purely critical methods to the study of Biblical questions. It would be unreasonable to reproach Doctor Kuenen for professing to have done this. But we have a right to test his work by the question whether it is genuinely critical or only spuriously so.

One of the first canons of criticism, and one which many of the recent critics are very eager to assert, as against the alleged theological bias of the traditional view, is the one just mentioned, namely, that we must avoid groundless assumptions. *Whatever offers itself in the shape of premises must either be proved or rejected. Professor Kuenen's work is uncritical if it has habitually violated this canon.

In matters of history, another canon of critical procedure is that reputable human testimony has a presumption in its favor. This canon, of course, is not to be understood in a sense which would make it inconsistent with the previous one. To say that the truthfulness of a history must be presumed, is very different from saying that it must be assumed. To assume that untested evidence is true would be to violate the first canon of criticism; to assume that it is false is equally to violate that canon. Very different from either is the presumption in favor of the untested evidence of a human witness. Attention to this presumption is nearly as essential to correct critical procedure as is the avoidance of false assumptions.

This would be true, even if the presumption in favor of historical evidence were merely formal. A merely formal presumption, as distinguished from evidence, never settles the question whether an allegation is true; but it may settle the question whether, for certain purposes of investigation, the allegation shall be provisionally taken to be true. Or it may decide which of two imperfectly proved propositions is to be preferred. But the presumption in favor of historical testimony is seldom merely formal. In most cases it has something of the character of evidence. Men, to be sure, are not very truthful.

They may lie, from evil motives. They may be mistaken, through ignorance or carelessness. Yet we are so constituted that we cannot even continue to exist without some attention to reality. The worst liar makes, in all, more true statements than false statements. Much more, if a man is enough interested in the reality of events to look them up and write out what he learns, it is likely that he will mainly tell the truth about them. The presumption in favor of historical testimony may, of course, be overcome by evidence; but in the absence of contradictory proof, it must be allowed its own proper validity. If Professor Kuenen has not sufficiently attended to this, he must plead guilty to the charge of being uncritical.

Another canon of true criticism is, that mere hypothesis proves nothing. The argument which consists in supposing that a thing is so and so, may always be sufficiently met by supposing that it is not so and so. If there is some positive evidence in favor of an allegation, hypotheses may remove objections or strengthen the proof, just as slanting sticks may brace something so firmly as to give it tremendous strength. But without some element of positive evidence, a hypothesis or a hundred hypotheses fail of themselves, as slanting sticks with nothing to brace against fall to the ground by their own weight. Any author is uncritical if he indulges in assertions which are based on mere hypotheses.

Another law of criticism is that we must go as near as possible to the original sources to obtain evidence. Of course, the reconstructionist critics will not object to this. It is the canon by which they justify their process of *crumbling* our present books of the Bible. They regard it as especially important to distinguish those crumbs of Scripture which originated contemporaneously with certain events from those of later origin. That truly distinguished man, Doctor Franz Delitzsch, must feel at once amused and complimented and sorry at the way in which we Americans, and many other people than Americans, use his honored name in violation of this canon. If we wish to defend the traditional view of the Pentateuch, we appeal from the opinions of our learned opponents to those of Delitzsch; and our opponents instantly meet us with the reply: "But Delitzsch concedes to some elements in the Pentateuch a later origin, and since his views are extremely conservative, this may be taken as proving much more than he concedes." However we may honor the attainments of distinguished scholars, we cannot afford to allow critical investigation thus to degenerate into a mere comparison of the results reached by leading men. Our conclusions must be tested, not by the reputation of the mind that draws them, but by the character of the

evidence from which they are drawn. And the adverse critics will not flinch, of course, if we remind them that, under this rule, a statement of the Book of Chronicles, for example, whether strictly historical or not, is, at least, nearer to the original sources of evidence, by some twenty centuries or more, than a similar statement made by Graf or Reuss or Kuenen.

To make but one more specification, all the laws of deductive reasoning are fundamental canons of critical procedure. If one uses a middle term of reasoning ambiguously, or makes inferences that are wider than his premises, or draws positive conclusions where one of the premises is negative, or draws any conclusion at all from purely negative premises, his work is thereby rendered uncritical.

No one disputes the validity of these and similar principles. Let us, by applying them, test the logical methods used in Dr. Kuenen's works on the "Religion of Israel," "The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel," and "National Religions and Universal Religions," and in other works of the same school.

The three works just mentioned are not primarily critical. The first is the promulgation of a theory of the rise and progress, by development, of the religion of Jehovah in Israel. The second is a decidedly polemic discussion of the alleged supernatural element in Prophecy, conducted in defence of this theory. In the third, this theory is put to use, in the comparing of the great religions of the earth. But this theory is based upon certain views as to the structure of the Old Testament, and stands or falls with them. The proofs of the one are the proofs of the other. The logical procedure of Kuenen, the religious historian, is identical with that of Kuenen, the Old Testament critic. And his method is such that in one part or another of the historical works, he has occasion to reproduce, or at least to recapitulate, a very considerable proportion of the contents of his distinctively critical works.

Stated in brief, his historical theory is that in the eighth century B.C. the religion of Jehovah, as it then existed in Israel and Judah, in what was, at that stage of its development, its normal type, was what we might now call a semi-pagan idolatry, being only imperfectly monotheistic, using images and similar accessories in worship as an essential part of the cultus; and that this semi-pagan idolatry was evolved from still lower previous forms of religion, and was now in those processes of change by which a higher monotheism was at length evolved from it.

In its general outlines, this is the view which has been so thoroughly popularized for English readers in the works of Dr. Robert-

son Smith. A recent and particularly brilliant, though somewhat school-girlish presentation of it, is Wellhausen's article on "Israel" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Dr. Chambers, in THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, has adversely discussed the theory of Kuenen, taken as a whole. Dr. Cave, in the *Princeton Review*, has paid his respects especially to those portions of it which deal with the Mosaic institutions, and Dr. Green, in the same *Review*, to its positions in regard to the prophets and prophecy, while its view as to Ezekiel in particular, is criticized by Dr. Gardner, in the *Journal of the Exegetical Society*, 1881. In the same journal, Professor Toy publishes certain studies on Ezekiel, which would go to sustain the views held by Kuenen. Kuenen's treatment of the Pentateuch is opposed at length by Dr. Stebbins, in his book, "A Study of the Pentateuch for Popular Reading." His treatment both of the Pentateuch and of the rest of the Old Testament is reviewed in Dr. Green's new book, "Moses and the Prophets." And this list of able discussions of the subject, in American publications, might easily be extended. The present article, however, confines itself to Dr. Kuenen's proof of his statement of the condition of things in the eighth century before Christ, not so much for the sake of avoiding the ground already traversed by these other writings, as because of the central position which that statement occupies in the work of Kuenen. Unless he has established that statement, he has had nothing to establish, for either the previous or the succeeding period. And the logical methods by which he supposes himself to have established that statement are the same which he everywhere employs.

He begins by setting aside the historical character of both the Old and the New Testaments, taken as a whole. To this, for the present, we simply take exception, admitting Professor Kuenen's right, however, to present his case in his own way. He holds that, since the only evidence we have is, in its entirety, unhistorical, it is therefore impossible, for most of the time covered by the Old Testament history, to determine what parts of it can be depended upon. He says that we must "give up for good the knowledge of detail which is no longer attainable" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 28). He does not profess to be able to tell, by inspecting the parts, which parts are historical and which are not. In this he is certainly far wiser than the critics, who having shivered, in their own view, the vase of historical testimony, depend upon their skill in putting it together again in a new shape, by the aid of the cement of a puerile verbal criticism. To Dr. Kuenen, apparently, no statement of either Testament is historical in its own right. But he recognizes the historical principle that "an

event does not pass away without leaving any trace, any more than it occurs without preparation. If we succeed in discovering its traces, our conviction of its reality is confirmed. But also conversely" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 19). By the aid of this principle we may test statements, and arrive at approximations to the historical truth.

It is for the purpose of establishing a base line of this sort, by which all his other measurements and angles may be tested, that he begins at the point where he does rather than at any other. He asks, what was the religion of Jehovah in the times of Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah. Here, he correctly avers, the number of contemporary writers is sufficiently large to give us the means of comparing one account with another, and testing, to some extent, the historical sketch presented. Having thus attained a knowledge of the condition of things at this point, we may know that any statement inconsistent with this, as to the previous or subsequent condition of things, is unhistorical, and that whatever will account for this condition of things, or may be accounted for by it, has certain probabilities in its favor. By this process the whole history is to be reconstructed.

The mere statement of this outline is the assigning of a sufficient reason, both for the order which our author has followed in his books, and for that followed in this article. We can test his logical methods as well at this section of his work as at any other. But in addition to all discussion of his methods, if this section of his work be found insecure, every other section, being absolutely based upon this, falls with it.

Dr. Kuenen counts as contemporaneous writers of the eighth century before Christ, Amos, Hosea, Micah, the author of the last chapters of Zechariah, and Isaiah, to whom he assigns considerable, though rather fragmentary, portions of the first thirty-five chapters of the book which bears his name. Jeremiah, with Deuteronomy and fragments of the other books of the Pentateuch, and of the older historical books, of later date than the eighth century, are yet near enough to it to have some weight as evidence. Nearly all the rest of the Old Testament is considered to be several centuries later in date, and therefore too remote to be of any value.

On the testimony of these witnesses, our author first presents the idea of Jehovah and his religion which was held and preached by the prophets. This part of his work is superbly done. It is a series of sound assertions fortified by apt citations. It is a chapter which might well be commended to the perusal of a large class of very orthodox Christian interpreters, who are in the habit of magnifying the religion of Jesus by minifying that of the prophets. Kuenen finds that the

prophets prophesy in the name of one God, who is boundless in might, in wisdom, in creative power, in love and tenderness, and, above all, in holiness and justice; who is in a peculiar sense Israel's God, but is at the same time the only God of all the nations, to the exclusion of everything else that is called God; whose word dwells in the hearts of His servants, and whose service is essentially moral and spiritual in its character. This view is mentioned all through the volumes. It is stated in compact form in "Rel. of Is.," vol. i., pp. 39-67. The higher elements of this view of religion were *nascent* in the minds of Isaiah and his contemporaries, and reached their maturity in the following century. (*Theological Review* for 1874, and Hibbert Lect., 1882, pp. 128, 340.)

The effect of this is somewhat marred by a certain line of flings at the prophets as men who had their own personal grudges and ambitions to serve, in the religion they preached. They are described as being men of the people, with strong plebeian instincts, by whom "the high and eminent is condemned, because it is high and eminent," as well as because of its injustice and insolence. Their political utterances are described as "lay-politics, so to speak, all the more easy to hold in proportion as those who propounded them had less need to apply them directly." Isaiah's zeal against the false prophets is explained by saying: "Probably it is they especially who hold up the preaching of an Isaiah to ridicule, and who are therefore the first to be aimed at in his announcement of punishment" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., pp. 62, 63, 84). This attributing of mean motives to the prophets is entirely gratuitous, so far as the evidence is concerned. There is nothing in their utterances or conduct which requires to be thus accounted for. It is quite inconsistent with the spirit of disinterestedness and earnestness of conviction which seems to characterize them. Logically, it is a groundless assumption, and a nullity. But rhetorically, it is quite effective in preparing us presently to discredit some of the statements made by the prophets.

A similar effect is also accomplished by a seemingly unimportant inexactness of statement as to the political status of the prophets. On page 35 of vol. i. of "Rel. of Is.," we have the assertion: "In the writings of the eighth century, we accordingly find clear proofs of the existence of two parties, which we may call the Assyrian and the Egyptian." This statement is accompanied by a full and valuable list of Scriptural references, and by the statement that the prophets whose works have come down to us were opposed to both parties. His references rather prove, as he himself seems to acknowledge on the following page, the existence of two parties, one of which, headed

by the prophets, opposed all foreign alliances whatever, while the other was disposed to seek alliances with whichever power seemed at the time to be most available for that purpose, whether it were Assyria or Damascus or Hamath or Egypt or the Empire of Merodach Baladan. In this case, the evidence of the prophets is corroborated by what we know of the geography of Palestine and of the analogies of history. In a small country, with peculiarly strong natural defences, on the highway between two conflicting groups of more powerful nations, the important question could never have been, for very long at a time, which foreign intervention should be allowed, but whether any intervention should be allowed. Upon this latter depended the very question of national existence. By refusing alliances in either direction, Israel might hope to maintain its independence, thanks to God, its own courage, its difficult mountain passes, and the jealousy of its neighbors. But to take either neighbor for an ally was virtually to take him for a master, and transform Palestine into a battle-field for his wars with the other. This was the permanent and important question, and the party on it with which the prophets acted, though not always dominant, yet never sank into insignificance. If evidence is of any weight, the great literary prophets of the eighth century were successful men of influence in public affairs; and not a group of soured and disappointed enthusiasts, whose statements concerning the times in which they lived must be discounted accordingly. Dr. Kuenen does not in words ascribe to them this character; but he certainly discounts their statements on precisely this basis, without mentioning the basis itself.

While reading what our author has to say concerning the religious teachings of the prophets, one involuntarily asks himself what force this testimony can possibly have toward proving that the religion of Jehovah then current was an image-worshipping paganism. Men of less ability than Dr. Kuenen have attempted to prove the same proposition by methods very different from this. They have done it by depreciating the views of the prophets, by exaggerating every apparently harsh expression, by interpreting grossly every representation that was capable of gross interpretation, by explaining away whatever sounded like sublime spiritual truth so as to make it mean something coarser and less sublime. In distinct contrast with everything of this sort, Dr. Kuenen, like several others among the chieftains of the higher criticism, displays a gratifying appreciation of the ethical and spiritual exaltation of the earlier literary prophets. More than this: That the lofty views of religion held by the prophets must have been intelligible to their contemporaries, and must even have been widely cur-

rent among them, is a conclusion which he does not leave to the reader to infer, but which he himself takes pains expressly to affirm.

On the face of it, this evidence, instead of tending to prove that the prevalent regular form of the religion of Jehovah was at that time idolatrous, seems conclusively to prove the direct opposite. Usually a religion is taken to be that which its representative men understand it to be. On all hands it is conceded that the prophets of Israel were the representative men of the religion of Jehovah. On what principles of reasoning, then, are we to understand that Jehovah's religion was, during that period, essentially in contrast with what His prophets declared it to be?

Rhetorically, this working up of the case is most admirable. It shows the hand of a master. Not a particle of evidence has yet been adduced to prove that the prophets were innovators—that their views of the character of the religion of Jehovah are something hitherto unheard of, and in complete contradiction with the character of that religion as it has formerly been understood and practiced, and is, in their times, still understood and practiced. Our author has abstained from asserting that these prophets belong to the class of reforming enthusiasts who are sometimes described as being in advance of their age, as being too good for this world, as being theoretically so extremely wise that they are practically very foolish, as constitutionally addicted to being members of a very small minority, as likely to be isolated by the very loftiness of their ideals, and possibly to be thus driven into a moroseness which they themselves shall mistake for virtue, and therefore, as very likely to describe current affairs in a light quite different from that in which they appear to average people; and yet he has paved the way for treating their testimony as if it were precisely of this character.

He opens the case with the following and similar statements: "The prophets are, above all, preachers of repentance. Wherever they look around them they find much to reprove. They bring accusations against kings, princes, judges, and even priests and prophets. Therefore it is quite necessary to distinguish their way of thinking from that of their contemporaries" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 68). From the fact that the prophets are preachers of repentance, he infers two consequences. One consequence is, that we must make allowances in receiving their testimony. "Preachers of repentance usually furnish us with valuable contributions to the knowledge of their times, but yet they are not the guides to whom we prefer to trust ourselves. From the very nature of the case, they do not make sufficient distinctions." The other consequence is, that the religion of the people who were

called upon to repent must have differed radically from the religion which summoned them to repentance. Dr. Kuenen is well enough aware that the second of these consequences is by no means a necessary one. A call to repentance is not always a call to change from one religion to another. It is much more commonly a call to a change of conduct and of feeling than to a radical change of religious views or practices. But in this particular instance, our author affirms: "That Jahveh's precepts were acknowledged in theory, but denied in practice, is not the true state of the case" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 71). On page 235 of the same volume he makes these views distinct by distinguishing between three types of Jahvism, namely: (1). The Jahvism of the people; that is, the religion of Jehovah as it was understood and received by its adherents, in the eighth century B.C., and indeed, up to the captivity. (2). The Jahvism of the law; that is, the religion of Jehovah, in the form which it assumed after the exile, under the pentateuchal legislation; and (3). The Jahvism of the prophets, namely, the religion of Jehovah as it was understood and preached by the prophets from the eighth century.

That there were people in existence, then and ever since, who professed to worship Jehovah, but whose service was idolatrous and unintelligent, every one would admit. Nobody would dispute the assertion that the prophets rebuked what they considered as the false worship of Jehovah, as well as the worship of other gods than Jehovah. What Professor Kuenen has to prove is, that this idolatrous Jahvism, ethically and spiritually bad as it was, was yet the true historical Jahvism of the time. In his attempt to prove this, he certainly illustrates the maxim which he quotes from Renan ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 389), that "*la verite est dans les nuances.*" What else he illustrates will appear as we examine some specimens of his reasoning.

His first allegation is, that in answering the question how Jehovah is to be served, "the prophets do not point—as perhaps we expected—to a code of laws in which Jahveh is understood to have made known his will" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 55). He admits that they mention the Torah "a few times." He admits that they may possibly have had a written Torah in their minds. But by the Torah he alleges that they meant, not a body of laws, but the body of prophetic teachings. Whether these statements are true or false, and whether they are apt or inapt for the purposes for which they are made, depends entirely on the shade of meaning to be attributed to them. "A few times," says Professor Kuenen. He seems to have in his mind the impression that these earlier literary prophets do not very prominently

mention the Torah, even in the modified sense in which they are said to use the term. This impression he certainly conveys to his reader. But he himself cites ten instances of the use of it, in the note at the bottom of the page. He might have extended his list. By including the verb, as well as the noun, he might have doubled the number of instances. Now, twenty instances are not very many. With the right shade to the meaning, one might fairly say here, "a few times." But the twenty instances occur in the writings of Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah, as these writings are accepted by Professor Kuenen. The entire bulk of these is a trifle less than that of the gospel by Luke. How many times does the gospel by Luke mention the Law? If the Law is prominently spoken of in any part of the Old Testament, or in any part of the New, or anywhere else in literature, then it is prominently spoken of in the literature which Dr. Kuenen attributes to the literary prophets of the eighth century before Christ. Dr. Kuenen's phrase, "A few times," conveys an impression that is entirely misleading.

He says again, that "it is possible" that the prophets had in their minds some sort of a written Torah. This statement is so made as to suggest that we have no proof that the prophets ever connected the idea of writing with that of the law, but that Dr. Kuenen, out of his superabundant candor, is willing to concede this, not indeed as a fact, but as a possibility, without proof. The meaning is skilfully shaded again. Somehow it looks as if the position of our author must be a remarkably strong one, since he is so willing to allow needless advantages to his opponents. Who would imagine that one of the prophetic passages which he cites here concerning the Torah is: "Bind up a testimony, seal a Law among my disciples"? No one can read the context of this, in the eighth chapter of Isaiah, without seeing at once that a Torah is here described as some sort of a written sealed document. In Is. xxx. 9, there is a similar mention of writing in connection with the Torah. And in Hos. viii. 12, we read: "I have written to him the great things of my Law." That these prophets were familiar with a written Torah is not a mere possibility, conceded by Dr. Kuenen as a favor to his opponents, but a fact distinctly affirmed by themselves. Considered as a fact, it is very damaging to his position. We are not surprised that he should prefer to have his readers regard it as a concession on his part.

On the face of it, these prophets seem to speak of the Torah precisely as do the later writers, up to the times of the New Testament. But by Torah Dr. Kuenen insists that they mean something very different from what the later writers mean. On any possible supposi-

tion, they have "made no essential distinction between those laws and their own preaching, and have ascribed to the former no higher authority." He intends this to apply, of course, only to that in their preaching which they uttered as the word of the Lord. Do the later Old Testament authors, then, or the authors of the New Testament, know of any Torah which is authoritative otherwise than as the prophetic word of the Lord? Dr. Kuenen cites, to establish his position, the statement in Hos. xii. 13: "By a prophet Jahveh has led Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was Israel preserved." According to Hosea, whatever authority Moses possessed he possessed in virtue of his character as a prophet. Is there anywhere in Israelitish literature, up to the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, a syllable which hints at the existence of any different view of the matter? The author of the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, when he emphasizes the declaration that the Lord will raise up a prophet "like unto me," certainly holds that, under God, the prophet is the supreme authority in Israel, and that the authority of Moses is that of a prophet. The New Testament writers, when they cite this passage, endorse the same doctrine. It is the doctrine which was held in the times of the Maccabees, when Israel laid away the stones of the polluted altar, to wait until God should make known His will through a prophet.

According to Dr. Kuenen, the prophets held the Torah to be the body of authoritative instruction which Jehovah had revealed through His prophets. Of course, this may have been wholly or partly written, and must have included whatever authoritative instruction was then regarded as of Mosaic origin, since they regarded Moses as a prophet. How does this view differ from that of the Books of Chronicles, or of the New Testament, or of Josephus, or of the earliest Mishnaic traditions? Jesus and His opponents alike profess to be citing the Law when they quote from the Psalms (John x. 34 and xii. 34). Paul cites from Isaiah as being part of the Law (I Cor. xiv. 21). When the New Testament authors attribute the Old Testament to inspiration, it is to prophetic inspiration that they attribute it. They too, like the prophets of the eighth century B.C., hold the Law to be the whole body of authoritative instruction revealed by Jehovah through His prophets. Neither they nor their opponents show any sign of recognizing any part of it as having less or more than prophetic authority. In their case, this is consistent with their also using the term Law in a narrower sense to denote especially the Pentateuchal books; and it may be equally consistent with the same in the case of the earlier literary prophets.

Kuenen may be correct in asserting that the Torah of the prophets of this group is the authoritative body of instruction given through the prophets. It may be impossible to identify their Torah with our present Pentateuch as distinguished from the prophetic utterances. But this will serve his purpose only on the assumption that the Pentateuch itself, or some authorized claimant in behalf of the Pentateuch, makes a different claim. Kuenen makes this assumption. He assumes that the proper historical position of the Pentateuch is that of a body of legislation separate from the prophetic writings, and having a different sort of authority from theirs. Unless the assumption holds good, his argument is a nullity. Does it hold good? The question will prove instructive in more ways than one.

We have here an illustration of the principle that the strength of a novel error often lies less in the points in which it differs from the received view, than in the groundless assumptions which it makes in common with the received view. The great body of traditional writers seem to be on the same ground with Professor Kuenen in ascribing to the Law of Moses a different sort of authority from that which they ascribe to the prophets. Many seem to think of the latter as mainly predictors of events, while the former contains God's will as to the conduct of life. We are accustomed to being regaled at irreproachably orthodox tables with scraps from the Talmuds and from other Israelitish sources, discriminating in favor of the Mosaic writings as compared with the rest of the Canon. From the same sources we learn how rigid and mechanical the Jews were in matters of ceremonial observance, and then make this our point of view for the interpretation of the Mosaic books. By these processes we identify the Old Testament ideas with those of the later Judaism. Instead of regarding these books in the light of their own statements and of contemporaneous history, we come to them from the point of view of the later Tanaite scribes, who flourished after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. All parties seem to be mainly agreed in this. The traditional interpretation is full of it. The current defence of Christianity, in particular, abounds in brilliant contrasts based upon it, between the narrowness of the old dispensation and the freedom of the new. To this procedure the newer critics do not object; on the contrary, they build upon it. They have scarcely a structure which would not be seriously damaged if this part of its foundation were removed.

But, when we think of it, is the point of view of the later Tanaim the best for understanding the proper spirit of the Pentateuch or of the remainder of the Old Testament? Certainly a great gulf sepa-

rates these men from their predecessors. By the destruction of Jerusalem, temple, priesthood, and civil rule were alike blotted out; leaving whatever of public authority remained in Israel concentrated in the hands of the scribes. Their control came to be probably the most absolute spiritual despotism that ever existed. Doctor Kuenen ("Rel. of Is.," vol. iii., p. 289) describes their work as "the reorganization of Judaism." In it the lines of tradition which Jesus was so constantly in the habit of condemning became supreme. They had not been so before. What was yet only a tendency as late as the time of Jesus, became, after the fall of Jerusalem, a fixed fact.

Now the prophets of the eighth century certainly knew of no Torah which they sharply distinguished from their own teachings, and regarded as possessing a higher grade of authority. It may be true that their language on this point is different from that of the Talmuds. It does not follow that their Torah was different from that of the Talmudists. The difference may rather lie in the fact that they conceived of legislation as a part of prophecy, while the Talmudists conceive of it as different from prophecy and superior to it. The assumption that if they had possessed the Torah of the Talmudists they must have regarded it as the Talmudists did, is not only incapable of proof, but can be completely disproved.

Add to this that Isaiah and his contemporaries habitually speak of the Law in the way of distinct and emphatic appeal to its authority, and we have, on the whole, a decidedly different impression of the testimony of Professor Kuenen's chosen witnesses on this point from that which he himself would convey. Translating Torah and its verb by the English words *instruction*, *instruct*, we may put the testimony into the form of a Bible-reading, as follows: God instructs men (Is. xxviii. 9). Sometimes, perhaps, He instructs them through their own perceptions (Is. xxviii. 26). But He has His constituted instructors—prophets who are instructors, priests who give instruction—who, if unfaithful, are guilty of peculiar baseness (Is. xxx. 20 and ix. 15, and Mic. iii. 11). The nations shall flock to Sion, that He may instruct them (Is. ii. 3 and Mic. iv. 2). Instruction may be written. Indeed this is, perhaps, the characteristic which distinguishes it from other teaching (Is. viii. 16, 20, and xxx. 8, 9; and Hos. viii. 12). This point will be greatly strengthened if we add here the passages in which these prophets in other terms speak of an appeal to written documents. The prophets are familiar with a definite body of instruction known as *the instruction*, and by other definite forms of expression (Mic. iv. 2; Is. ii. 3; xxx. 9; i. 10; v. 24; Hos. iv. 6; viii. 1, 12; Am. ii. 4). God instructs in respect of righteousness (Hos. x.

12). But, as several of the passages show, His instruction has something to do with services of worship as well as with other matters. In short, it cannot escape notice that their Torah contained many things which are now contained in the Pentateuch, and nothing which is not now contained in the Old Testament books, which tradition regards as having been written by these prophets or before them.

The evidence thus far cited clearly does not tend to prove that the Jahvism preached by the prophets was something then radically new, which they were endeavoring to introduce in place of the received religion. Whatever weight it has is decidedly in the opposite direction. But our author further alleges that the prophets, while recognizing the existence of a defined Jahvistic cultus, "nowhere insist upon fidelity in observing these holy ceremonies. On the contrary, they speak of them with an indifference which borders upon disapproval, sometimes even with unfeigned aversion" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 57). This last statement, by the time he reaches page 78, has grown into the assertion that "the prophets frequently speak of the outward worship of Jahveh in a tone of censure." The instances by which he supports these allegations are Am. v. 21-23, Hos. vi. 6, and Is. i. 11-14. The three passages are alike in spirit. It will be sufficient here to cite Professor Kuenen's translation of the first:

" I hate, I despise your feasts,
And have no delight in your assemblies.
Although ye offer me burnt-offerings and gifts, I will not accept them,
And your thank-offering of fatted calves I will not regard.
Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs:
I will not hear the melody of thy viols."

Is there here any sign that the speaker is indifferent to the offices of worship of which he speaks? Do men express indignation of this sort over that for which they care nothing? Here again our author has shown his wonderful skill in shade-pencilling. The prophets do indeed sometimes express strong aversion for something which they find in connection with the worship of Jehovah. It is uniformly the indignant emotion which one feels over the perversion of something which he regards as sacred. By a felicitous turn of language our author transforms this verbally into "an indifference which borders upon disapproval" and sometimes grows into positive dislike. But the verbal transformation is untrue to the fact. The prophets cannot be placed in the attitude of men who regard the order of public worship as of small account. When they speak of it, their language is uniformly impassioned. It was a matter on which they felt deeply. Their hearts were stirred by it. They certainly said harsh things

about the public worship in certain circumstances. But this does not show that they were indifferent; it rather shows the contrary. It also shows either that they gravely disapproved the new moons and public feasts and sacrifices, or else that their zeal for these was so well known, that they need not limit their language when they had occasion to speak of the worthlessness of the public worship which yields no moral and spiritual fruit. Here again the true outline of the fact, when we disentangle it from the deceiving shadows, is inconsistent with the supposition that the prophets were radical religious innovators. For certainly no one would hesitate in his decision as to which of the alternatives just mentioned is the true one.

It is conceivable that we may reach a different result when we come to examine the nature of the charges which the prophets bring against the religion of their day. In the Hibbert Lectures (p. 61), Kuenen expresses his opinion in the matter, by asserting that the traditional view denies that the religion of Jehovah was the national religion of Israel until after the exile. Up to that time, he declares, "Yahwism was the religion of a minority, and the worship of other gods had a better claim to be called national." In opposition to this, his own view is that the religion of Jehovah was always the national religion, but that it existed in lower types, which were afterward confounded, in the records of the historians, with the false religions of the neighboring peoples. In distinction from both these views, most persons who hold the traditional view suppose themselves to hold that the national religion of Israel was always the religion described in the Law and preached by the prophets; and that it existed, during the national existence of Israel, in perpetual and fierce conflict both with internal corruptions and with other religions.

This portion of Kuenen's argument is based mostly on what the accounts say in regard to the bull-worship in the northern kingdom, and the Baalite accessories to worship in both kingdoms. He says, for example, "In the kingdom of Judah also the images, pillars, and asheras were not considered by those who worshipped them as antagonistic to the acknowledgment of Jahveh as the God of Israel, and therefore by no means antagonistic to the worship of Jahveh." He reminds us that "not even of Uzziah and Jotham—although they 'did that which was right in the sight of Jahveh'—do we read that they tried to abolish the high places," but on the contrary, it is "expressly asserted that the high places were not removed" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., pp. 80, 81). To the statement in this last citation it might be added that we nowhere read that these kings did *not* try to abolish the high places. If the narrative implies either, it certainly implies

that they tried and failed, rather than that they failed to try. Again, on page 82, our author says of the assertion of Rabshakeh that it was Jehovah's altars which Hezekiah had cast down: "Here the Assyrian envoy is simply the mouthpiece of the discontented in the kingdom of Judah. The prohibition to sacrifice on the high places and altars must have been so novel, and at the same time so scandalous in their eyes, that the king seemed to them to have forfeited thereby all claim to Jahveh's assistance." But if there was such a disaffection as is here assumed, it must have played a prominent part in the history then transacting. It is strange that we find no allusion to it in the remarkably full Hebrew and Assyrian records of these events. This is the more noticeable because, according to Kuenen, the adherents of the Jahvism of the high places included the great majority of all the people, and even the great majority of all the regularly constituted prophets of Jehovah. On page 84, he says: "It does not appear that the prophets against whom these complaints were raised spoke to the people in the name of other gods than Jahveh. It is true that they are called soothsayers and are mentioned in company with the 'Teraphim,' but nothing more can be concluded from this than that they upheld that form of Jahvism to which the great majority of the people were also addicted." On page 371, he speaks of "the decline of the prophetic schools, to which we heard Amos bear witness." This witness of Amos is described on page 82, by asserting that he "thinks it necessary to state expressly that he is no prophet, neither a prophet's son, and therefore he decidedly does not regard that title as an honor." The implication from this is that the men whom we know as the prophets of the eighth century are men of a new departure. "They occupied a hostile position toward a great majority of those who called themselves prophets."

Our space forbids any detailed discussion of the passages by which Dr. Kuenen supports these affirmations. It is sufficient to say that his reasoning is throughout very much like the game of run, skip, and jump among the boys. He runs carefully over the ground of evidence which proves that some persons may likely enough have worshipped Jehovah idolatrously; just as they, or others, idolatrously worshipped false gods. Then he skips to the conclusion that they *actually did* so worship Jehovah; and jumps from that to the statement that this was the prevailing worship of the "great majority" of the people and prophets. He runs carefully over the ground, which proves that the prophets who are rebuked cannot always be shown to be prophets of the false gods. Then he skips to the inference that

they comprised the great body of the men who had been connected with the prophetic schools, Isaiah and his friends being simply a group of dissenters; and from that jumps to the conclusion that the idolatrous Jahvism of the times was in conformity with the traditional doctrines which had been handed down in the schools of the prophets from the times of Samuel. He runs carefully through the steps which might prove that some of the worshippers at Bethel may probably have intended to worship Jehovah, in their worship of the calves, skips to the conclusion that this was indeed their intention, and then jumps to the result that the bull-worship was actually a characteristic of the earlier Jahvism. And, in each case, the distance between his premises and his conclusion is wide enough to give him an opportunity to display the most tremendous agility.

On the face of it, there is some probability that, in the midst of the prevailing idolatry, some persons introduced idolatrous ideas and rites into their worship of Jehovah. Apart from the antecedent probability, the proof of this is not very convincing. Even Professor Kuenen would not claim most of the alleged instances as at all decisive. Rabshakeh is, I believe, the only witness who testifies precisely and unequivocally to the point. And in the circumstances, his testimony, to use a familiar phrase of our critical friends, "does not inspire confidence." Were the high places, the pillars, the asheras, and the calves to demand trial, it would be difficult to convict them of having ever participated in Jahvistic worship. But if this participation on their part were proved, or were admitted, that would be a very different thing from admitting that this type of Jahvism was the prevailing and established type, the genuine religion of Israel up to that date, handed down from ancient times, while the Jahvism of the prophets was an innovation.

In all this part of his argument, Kuenen, like many of the other critics, indulges in a neat ambiguity in the use of general expressions, which would have made the fortune of a Greek sophist. When we say that a practice existed in a certain community, we may mean that one or two instances of it have been known, or we may mean that it was so prevalent as to be characteristic. By affirming something in the first of these senses, and then drawing inferences from it as if it were true in the second, one might accomplish the most marvellous feats of logic. For instance, one might reason as follows concerning the Jahvism of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in the United States of America: Assassination was practiced under the claim of inspiration from Jehovah (by Charles Guiteau). Polygamy and polyandry were alike practiced and defended as meritorious in

themselves and as according to Jehovah's ordinance (witness, Brigham Young and the Oneida Community). Marriage was prohibited (in the case of the Shaker communities and of the Roman priesthood). People built joss-houses and burned incense in them (that is, the Chinese did, on the Pacific Slope). And all the while, there were certain men who claimed to be Jehovah's ministers, who were thundering out their condemnations of these things, and of the moral corruptions and the spiritual deadness of the times; which proves that in America, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the lofty and pure monotheism preached by the prophets of Jehovah is a novelty, while the practices which they condemn indicate the true nature of our holy religion, in its present stage of development. This is precisely Kuenen's reasoning, and not at all a travesty of it. Page after page of his volumes might, without making a single change in the form of the reasoning, be transformed into proof that our present Christianity has never yet reached the stage at which a religion becomes properly monotheistic and spiritual. If our author has established his conclusions concerning the religion of Jehovah as it existed in Israel in the year 800 B.C., he has also shown that substantially the same is true of the religion of Jehovah as it exists among us.

Having established, satisfactorily to himself, the fact that there was a radical difference between the actual Jahvism and the ideal Jahvism preached by the prophets, our author gives large space to the details of the actual Jahvism. In this we can only follow him to the extent of the rapid mention of a few statements. He affirms that in Egypt "the Hebrews were undoubtedly Polytheists," and that the great majority of the people continued to be Polytheistic up to the exile ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., pp. 270, 223). He accounts for the ark and the tables of the law, on the theory that Jehovah was originally supposed to be, or to inhabit, sacred stones, which were therefore carried around as objects of worship. In the Hibbert Lectures, he frequently speaks of the images of Jehovah, and counts the ephod as having been originally an image of this sort (pp. 79, 81, 87, 88). He regards the story of Jephthah and similar narratives, as proving that human sacrifices were once more or less customary in the service of Jehovah, and counts the dedication of the first-born, and circumcision, as relics of that custom ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., pp. 237-40). Commenting upon the expression in Micah, "Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" he says: "It is undoubtedly implied that in his days such a sacrifice was not looked upon as at all unreasonable. The prophet himself has other ideas of what Jahveh requires; but if human sacrifice had been foreign to the

service of Israel's God, he could not have mentioned it in this manner." But we ourselves, in our public services and confessions, constantly use these words of Micah, and other similar language. Is this to be taken as proof that human sacrifices are not now regarded as foreign to the service of Israel's God?

We cannot specify further as to the testimony which Professor Kuenen draws from these prophetic witnesses. We must notice, however, that he does not at all claim that the prophets themselves intended any such meaning as he extracts from them. He distinctly admits and asserts the contrary. "The prophets do not bring forward their ideas as anything new; on the contrary, they consider themselves entitled to exact submission to their demands from the whole people. But the reality is very far from corresponding even partially to their demands" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 374). "It may not be doubted that the bull-worship was really the worship of Jahveh. The prophets refuse to acknowledge it as such, it is true, but this proves nothing more than" that the acknowledgment would have been inconsistent with their improved theology ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 235). Pure Jahvism our author declares to have been a "spiritual monotheism" (p. 368). As it was formulated in Deuteronomy, "All depends upon the state of the heart: the inward, and not the outward circumcision is the main thing (Deut. x. 16, comp. xxx. 6). In a word, religion, to the Deuteronomist, is above all *a matter of the heart*" (vol. 2, p. 23). But whence came this pure Jahvism? Kuenen's answer is: "In the eighth century B.C., the prophets came forward as champions of pure Jahvism. What can be more natural than to regard the new conception as their creation? And this we have not a moment's hesitation in doing."

One would suppose that men who were thus under the power of a spiritual monotheism, of a religion which was above all a matter of the heart, whose lives were spent in calling their compatriots to the true acceptance of a just and truthful God, would themselves have seen the importance of being at least ordinarily truthful. They themselves uniformly declare, as Professor Kuenen readily admits, that the Jahvism they teach is not a new creation of their own, but is the old truth which has been taught from the beginning. Why should we assume that their statements are untrue? Why should we apply to their testimony, the so-called critical process which consists in guessing that a witness needs to be corrected, and then guessing at the correction? This is precisely what our critic does. He assumes that these men were likely to warp the truth in the direction which would adapt it to their purposes. He conjectures what kind and amount of

warping would answer their purpose, and estimates the original truth accordingly.

We are on the field of criticism, let us remember. As cold-blooded critics, we have no indignation to express at the subjecting of the words of holy prophets to treatment of this sort. But we have a right to inquire whether such treatment is called for by the canons of criticism. Certainly, some things in the language of the prophets can be accounted for, by supposing that they needed and therefore sought the help of pious fraud; but the same things can equally well be accounted for by supposing that they were truthful men, telling the truth. Which mode of accounting for them does accurate criticism prefer? If Professor Kuenen were a guest at some house, and after his departure no spoons were found to be missing, this might, of course, be accounted for by supposing that the Professor had been very closely watched. But it would be more reasonable, as well as more gratifying, in the absence of proof in the matter, to account for it by supposing that the Professor had no disposition to steal spoons. Sincere men of large abilities and earnest convictions may be untruthful, as they may be dishonest; but there is a presumption, and not merely a formal presumption, but a strong preponderance of probabilities in favor of their being both honest and truthful. Gratuitously to assume the opposite is uncritical.

But to assume the opposite, in the present case, is not merely gratuitous, but is in the face of strong probabilities. By claiming that the religion they taught was the old established Jahvism of the nation, the prophets challenged the assertion and the proof of the contrary. This was foolish policy for them, unless their claim was true. It would have been more natural for them, and more in accordance with the analogies of history, to have laid stress on the new revelation which God had given them, and on its superiority to the old. Like the disciples of Jesus, or like Mohammed, or Jo. Smith, they might have claimed for their religion a certain sort of identity with that of the past; but they would have been sure to have emphasized the fact of the new revelation. This they abstained from doing. They prefer to challenge exposure by insisting on the genuine and exclusive antiquity of the Jahvism which they preach.

Did any one meet their challenge? Did any one oppose them, on the ground of their being innovators? They met with opposition of many sorts. We have many and detailed accounts of this. If they were innovators, they must inevitably, in the circumstances, have been prominently opposed upon that ground. It could hardly have happened but that some trace of such opposition should have

been somewhere handed down. Is there any such trace? We must add this to the other reasons for holding that the prophets were not innovators.

We turn to other sources than the testimony of these prophets themselves. The larger part of the bulk of Dr. Kuenen's volumes is occupied with a patient and industrious induction of all portions of the Old Testament, showing what historical value should or should not be attached to each fragment, and how the various fragments may be made to fit into his view. In this we cannot at present follow him. It is sufficient to say that critical weaknesses appear everywhere, in all the vast collection of details. They are of the same types with those which we have already noticed. And considered as proofs of our author's main position, they all have this additional weakness, that they depend for their validity upon the positions we have already traversed, and which we have found to be untenable.

Let us turn, however, from all points of detail, to consider our author's treatment of the Old Testament as a whole. And although we must confine our discussion of this to very narrow limits, let us yet remind ourselves that we have here infinitely the most important of all the questions traversed in the recent critical discussions. The Pentateuch might conceivably be proved to be of post-exilic origin without at all impairing its credit. We might conceivably come to recognize a second Isaiah, and yet count him as worthy as the first. As between the traditional view that the post-exilic prophets and scribes revised and annotated the earlier books, and the view that they incorporated these into new works, giving them their present literary form, there is much less difference than many imagine. But if, in the process of proving any of these theories, or as preliminary to proving them, we discredit the historical truthfulness of the Old Testament, that is a different matter. Our blessed Christianity is so magnificently strong that it could survive the loss of even such a bulwark as the historicity of its Bible. Its record as a universal religion, and its record in the hearts and lives of men, would still keep it triumphantly above the waves, even if most of the structures it has built for itself out of its holy books should be wrecked. But if the Old Testament is not properly historical, a large proportion of these structures are wrecked. This, in distinction from all else, is the question of questions with which our criticism has to deal.

Early in this discussion, we took exception to Professor Kuenen's method, because he entirely excluded a large amount of testimony which, on the face of it, seemed entirely relevant. We now recur to that exception for the purpose of trying its validity. In addition to

all the defects we have shown in our author's case, we now propose to offer, as opposing evidence, the entire Bible, and especially the whole Old Testament.

Dr. Kuenen's rejoinder to this is peculiarly satisfactory, because it is unmistakable in its meaning. He decidedly objects to the evidence we offer, as unhistorical; and distinctly admits that the evidence, if taken, would be conclusive against him. The following quotations are made at random. Page after page of the like might be added. Mentioning that the Old Testament, as a whole, claims a supernatural origin for the religion of Israel, he says: "He who relies upon the impression made by the whole, without interrogating the parts one by one, repudiates the first principles of all scientific research." This would be true if it meant that we must interpret the whole by the parts, and the parts by the whole. But he uses it as if it meant that, untrustworthy as the parts are, the whole is still more so; so that we ought to prefer that interpretation of the parts which makes them disagree with the whole, and thus discredits both. We have already seen that he does not treat the parts, the testimony of the prophets, for example, as entitled to the credence ordinarily accorded to historical witnesses. This is not sound critical procedure. But we just now have to do, not with its unsoundness, but with the fact that it is the avowed method of Kuenen.

The extract just given is from page 11 of the first vol. of the "Rel. of Is." On page 220, he says: "Let no one be surprised that we do not rather let the Old Testament itself decide." "The Old Testament narratives relating to the past can lay no claim to unlimited confidence." And what is thus repeatedly alleged against the Old Testament in general is said to be especially true of the Books of the Chronicles. It is asserted, for example (p. 324), that the history of David as given in 2 Sam. "is modified or completed on all these points by the chronicler, not because he had consulted other, more exact accounts, but because he considered it certain that David would not have acted in opposition to the stipulations of the Law. Conversely we find in these particulars a fresh proof that the Law did not yet exist at that time."

Kuenen's frankness is in refreshing contrast with the indecisiveness of some of his disciples. He does not take the trouble to assign to the Scriptures even the *quasi* historical value recognized by those who claim that they consist of a substratum of historical fact, allegorically expressed; although he actually finds in them some of this sort of composition. He does not profess to hold to the historicity of the Scriptures, while denying a large proportion of their statements, and

regard himself as persecuted when men charge him with inconsistency. He is, perhaps, no more conscious than his comrades that the natural impression made by the reading of the Old and New Testaments, as a whole, is absolutely against them; that, in order to reach their conclusions, they must break down the testimony of the Bible in its historical entirety; that if these writings are ordinarily trustworthy, they themselves have no case. Their arguments, as well as his, depend upon the proposition that the two Testaments are historical only by piecemeal, and not in their complete character; and lose all logical value, if this proposition be not maintained. But Professor Kuenen is bolder than most of the others in accepting the issue.

Is this proposition a mere assumption, or is it capable of proof? If it can be proved, we must accept it, with all the revolutionary consequences that follow. If it is mistaken it is the most mischievous of all the mistakes of recent critical science. It is the most important question to be considered in this argument. Technically subsidiary as it is, the main questions with which criticism deals are insignificant by the side of it.

Dr. Kuenen is not guilty of assuming that the Scriptures are unhistorical, but undertakes to prove this. Apparently he is conscious that the presumption is against him, although he is too consummate a rhetorician to call attention to this by very prominently mentioning it. The presumption exists, however. It is his task to overthrow it, if possible.

To accomplish this task, he cites certain alleged analogies of history. "It is certain that the thirst for reality which is proper to our age was unknown to antiquity. Numerous examples prove to us that men then went to work with great freedom even in representing the immediate past ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 23). Under this general charge, he alleges that the Israelitish history is likely to have been changed while it was orally transmitted, to have been further changed by the men who first committed the oral traditions to writing, and still further by those who compiled the present books from the older written sources. This lack of historical fidelity our author does not regard as very culpable in them. "Most ancient historians, and among them the Israelitish, had what we should now call a secondary purpose, but what for them was really their principal object. They wished to instruct their readers as to what they ought to do" (p. 384).

These assertions of the comparative lack of historical truthfulness among the ancients are by no means beyond dispute, even if we assume that Greece and Alexandria are the proper types of all antiquity. But Josephus, nearly eighteen centuries ago, called attention to the

differences which then existed between the Greek-speaking peoples and the Egyptian and Semitic peoples, in just this matter of historical realism. The discoveries recently made along the Euphrates and the Nile, conclusively prove that Josephus was mainly in the right in this matter, even if this were not otherwise sufficiently proved. No one would now dispute the existence of a genuine sense of historical reality among the Egyptians and the Assyrians. Is there any reason to hold that the Israelites were behind their neighbors in this respect? The criticism of Kuenen and his school makes great use of the fact that the compilers of the Old Testament were accustomed substantially to copy from the documents they used, instead of telling the story afresh in their own words. That looks like a sense of reality. Through the use of the verbs *ascend*, *descend*, and the other Hebrew verbs of motion, they have made their writings fit the acclivities and declivities and other topographical features of Palestine, as the squeeze fits the tablet from which it was taken. It is inconceivable that they can have accomplished this as a mere feat of realistic writing. In their books it is a token of reality and not of realism. To argue the point with any fulness would require an article. As a matter of fact, the assumption that the Israelitish writers were lacking in historical instinct is not merely baseless, but is opposed to pretty decisive evidence. And the additional assumption that a man who attempts to make history instructive thereby becomes an untrustworthy narrator of facts, is really equivalent to assuming that in order to be truthful one must cease to love the truth.

Dr. Kuenen brings forward another consideration. The Old Testament witnesses are too remote from events which occurred before 800 B.C., to make it safe for us to depend on what they say concerning those events. "In the eighth century B.C., the prophet of Jahveh has become a writer." "It does not appear that the older prophets, Samuel and his contemporaries, and afterward Elijah and Elisha and their disciples, thought of writing down what they had spoken, or of taking care that it was written down by others" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., pp. 208, 209). There is no evidence on this point, except the statements of the Old Testament; and according to these, as any one may see by the aid of a concordance of proper names, Elijah and Samuel, with Nathan, Gad, Shemaiah, Ahijah, Moses, Joshua, and many other earlier prophets, were writers. Kuenen himself admits the existence of written narratives previous to the eighth century, and admits that they were regarded as historical, but denies that they were really so.

As against both the original narratives and our present versions of them, he alleges that they contain many particulars "which cannot

possibly pass for history" because of their inherent improbability. Here, again, we are precluded from following him in detail. The large majority of his alleged discrepancies and other difficulties are made such only by strained interpretations. Most of the remainder are capable of being easily explained, and therefore have no weight to overthrow even the slightest presumption in favor of the historicity of the writings. The utmost that any one would infer from just such instances as these, if he found them in the recovered Assyrian or Egyptian records, for example, would be that there was some need of care in separating the probable from the improbable. Our Associated Press reports contain a multitude of errors, but no one doubts that the daily press gives a fairly correct account, on the whole, of current events. Few if any of the absurdities which Kuenen charges upon the Old Testament can be proved to be real. But if they were all real, they would not prove the Scriptures to be less credible than an average newspaper. And if, at the start, even this degree of credibility be accorded to them, they will easily vindicate their own historical character.

In short, the vast mass of detailed proofs by which our author would invalidate the testimony of the Bible narratives, is so utterly valueless for that purpose, that one is led to ask how it could possibly seem to him worth while thus laboriously to advance them. And when we ask this question, we find the answer to it in certain assumptions which underlie his whole argument. One of his proofs that the narratives of Genesis cannot be historical, is the fact that they represent the patriarchs "as not inferior to the prophets of the 8th century, in pureness of religious insight and inward spiritual piety" ("Rel. of Is.," vol. i., p. 108). Another proof is that the familiar intercourse of the patriarchs with the Deity, shows the accounts to be legendary. The first of these proofs rests on the assumption that all religions arise by evolution and never by direct revelation, and that the evolutionary process must have been further advanced in the eighth than in the previous centuries. The second rests on the broader assumption, that what is commonly called the supernatural, is incredible. In some of the forms in which he states these propositions, he makes some show of proving them, rather than assuming them to be true, but he never proves them by anything more ultimate than themselves. And without these assumptions, his charges against the body of the Old Testament Scriptures amount to nothing.

Now a Christian dogmatist might start from the assumption that the religion of Israel originated in supernatural revelation. Dr. Kuenen would object at once to this procedure as uncritical. That is one of the important questions to be settled by the investigation.

We must not, in advance, assume it as settled. But how would his procedure differ from that of the opposing critics, when they start from the assumption that the religion of Israel originated in evolutionary development? That is one of the questions to be settled by the investigation. It is uncritical for them to assume it in advance.

This is a point which will bear emphasizing. The critical canon is not merely that one should hold himself free from the doctrinal prepossessions of orthodox theology, but from all other prepossessions as well. If he has no right to assume that the Bible is inspired, he has no more right to assume that it is uninspired. One of the most evident facts in the case is that these writings have been commonly supposed, by those most familiar with them, to possess a peculiar divine character. It is as uncritical to assume that this view is mistaken, as to assume that it is correct. One assumption is just as much an instance of theological bias as the other. The only truly critical course is to refuse to make either assumption.

No dogmatist could be narrower than is Dr. Kuenen in some of the assertions he makes in this matter. On page 11 of the "Religion of Israel" he says: "The belief in the exceptional origin of the religion of the Israelites is founded simply and solely on the testimony of their holy records." He argues that this must be taken as discrediting the records, and not as proving the fact to which they testify. This statement coolly ignores the vast body of the evidences of revealed religion, as they are commonly presented in treatises on that subject. Considering the religion of Jehovah as a fact now in existence; considering the connection between this fact and the moral convictions and spiritual experiences of men; considering the wonderful history and the present peculiar position of the Israelitish people; considering the remarkable critical history of their Scriptures—the one literature which, during many centuries preceding the last, was transmitted in a genuinely critical text; considering the part which these books have played in the history of Israel, of Christianity, and of civilization; looking at a multitude of other considerations abundantly presented in current works on the subject;—there is no absurdity in supposing that historical facts which are so exceptional in their character, may be equally exceptional in their origin. The procedure which assumes that all these evidences go for nothing, and even that the conclusion to which they lead is untrue, does not commend itself to a genuinely critical mind.

The case needs no summing up. The critical craze of the last half of the nineteenth century is only more respectable than its æsthetical craze. In its own proper strength it is not very formidable. But it is possible for us, who oppose it, to endow it with amazing

power for mischief. All that is requisite to accomplish this is that we proscribe its authors and proscribe those who object to proscribing its authors. The leaders of this movement appear to be serious men, of strong convictions, given, in matters of scholarship, to a painstaking industry which we might be proud to rival. They are excellent stuff to make martyrs of. They have the ear of the world, and to some extent deserve it. Their claims are of a sort which most people will settle, not on their merits, but according to the impressions they have concerning the claimants. If we wish men to adopt their views as well as to discuss them, we need only denounce them instead of answering them. For the purpose of concealing the weakness of their position, no cloak would be better than that of violent accusation. By methods like these, and only by methods like these, can we make the impression that our orthodoxy is helpless before criticism of this type, and conscious of its helplessness.

We have something better to do. The traditional treatment of the Old Testament has not been altogether as broad and intelligent as could be desired. We have not adequately used the materials which recent research has provided, and have by no means exhausted those which we formerly possessed. Such work as that of Kuenen is legitimate and valuable, if we regard it as a discussion of the question whether the hypothesis that the religion of Israel originated in merely natural evolution will account for what appear to be the historical facts in the case. And his argument, so far as it can be regarded as having any logical weight, favors the negative of this question, for it conditions our acceptance of the affirmative upon our wholesale repudiation of what ordinary investigation would accept as the facts. On the other hand, much of the traditional treatment of the subject is really a discussion of the question whether the religion of Israel can be accounted for as the product of a special divine revelation. This is also legitimate and valuable, but it does not cover the whole ground. To prove that it *can* be thus accounted for does not prove that it *must* be. Conceivably the facts might equally suit any one of several theories. The scholarship of to-day ought to aspire to a wider and stronger treatment of the Old Testament, a treatment that should recognize the fair presumption which exists in favor of what purport to be historical statements, while it tests and cross-examines the statements themselves at every point; a treatment as thorough and exhaustive as that of Kuenen, without the weakness of his bad logic. The results of such criticism must needs rejoice the heart of every one who loves the Bible as the word of God.

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