

THE
PRINCETON REVIEW.

APRIL, 1856.

Wm. H. Green

No. II.

ARTICLE I.—*History of the Old Covenant.* By J. H. Kurtz, Ord. Prof. at Dorpat.* Vol. II. 1855. 8vo. pp. 563.

THE first volume of this work traced the history of Israel as a family to its close in the death of Jacob, their last common progenitor. The next period regards Israel as a nation, and, according to the epochs marked by our author, extends to the establishment of the kingdom. This period is divided into four unequal parts, severally represented by the residence in Egypt, the wanderings in the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, and the residence in Canaan. Each of these has its own distinctly marked character and aim. First, the family was to expand to a nation and to attain a separate and independent existence. Secondly, they must receive their national form and constitution; they are not to be like other nations, but God's peculiar people. Hence he concludes a covenant with them and provides them with their code of laws. Thirdly, in order to realize the destiny thus set before them, and to develop themselves in their newly imparted character, they need to come into the possession of a suitable land. Fourthly,

* Geschichte des Alten Bundes, von Joh. Heinr. Kurtz, u. s. w. Berlin, New York und Adelaide.

rial administration, by men nominated by the government. Under pretence too, of re-organizing the schools, many have been broken up, while a few have been saved by incredible sacrifices. Let us hope and pray, for God only can reach the case, that the day of deliverance for the bleeding cause of Protestantism in Hungary may speedily come.

ART. III.—*Biblische Numismatik oder Erklärung der in der heil. Schrift erwähnten alten Münzen, von D. Celestino Cavendoni.* Aus dem Italienischen übersetzt und mit Zusätzen versehen, von A. von Werlhof, 1855. 8vo. pp. 163; with one plate of fac-similes.

THIS treatise on the money of the Bible, with which we have first become acquainted in its German dress, was published in Italian at Modena in 1850, and received a prize the same year from the Academy of Inscriptions at Paris. The author is, what are not often found combined, both a theologian and a numismatologist. The translator, who is himself the author of a Handbook of Greek Numismatics, has enhanced the value of the work by occasional notes from his own observations, or those of Bœckh, and other Germans of note in this department.

The tradition which makes money to have been first coined at Ægina, by direction of Phidon, king of Argos, about the time of the founding of Rome, receives confirmation from the fact, that rude Æginetan coins have been found of a higher antiquity than any others. For this reason the preference is accorded to this, above the opposing statements that coined money was an invention of the Lydians or of the Phenicians. The earliest form of traffic was a simple barter of one article of utility for another; in the next, certain metals were taken as representatives of value, and in the form of lumps, or bars, were given and taken in exchange for wares. In the primitive mode of barter, the domestic animals, which formed the chief wealth of the patriarchs, seem to have constituted the earliest standard

of valuation. Hence, when lumps of the precious metals subsequently came into use, they were graduated in size to correspond to the value of an ox, a sheep, or some other animal. Hence the *pecunia* of the Latins derived its name from *pecus*. And the *kesita* (כֶּסֶתָּה Gen. xxxiii. 19; Job xlii. 12) of the patriarchs, which, by consent of the ancient versions, means "a lamb," must have denoted a piece of uncoined silver equal in worth to a lamb. This is sometimes incorrectly explained as a piece of money bearing the image of a lamb: the coin which gave rise to this explanation was not struck for a thousand years after the time of Jacob. So too, in the *Iliad*, which knows nothing of coined money, the tripod of Achilles was prized at twelve oxen, and a female slave at four oxen, in the games at the death of Patroclus. The precious metals seem also in Egypt to have been weighed out in portions answering to the value of an ox, a goat, or a frog; the last being esteemed for mythological reasons.

The pieces of metal used in trade were mostly in the form of plates or bars. Of this character was the wedge (Heb. *tongue*) of gold coveted by Achan. Such bars continued in use long after the introduction of coins, and a considerable quantity was found some years since at Cadriano, along with many thousand Roman *denarii*, which had been buried in the civil wars of Pompey and Cæsar. A Greek inscription of the time of Nerva mentions as a definite sum, seventy plates (*πλάτη*) of silver, though *πλάτη* may have a double sense, like the Italian *pietra*, meaning both a plate and a coin. The Egyptians seem to have preferred the form of rings. Hence possibly it may be accounted for, that the Septuagint renders the "ring of gold," Job xlii. 12, by *τετραδράχμων*, which is an indication that the gold rings of Egyptian trade weighed four Alexandrian, which are equivalent to eight Attic, *drachmæ*.

From its original shape, that of a bar or spit, (*ὀβελός*), the Greek *obolos* derived its name. Six *oboloi* made a *drachma*, *δραχμή*, literally a handful, as many as one can hold in the hand. That these bars were sometimes tied together in bundles of definite size, may be inferred from the history of Joseph's brethren, Gen. xlii. 35, where the LXX have *δεσμὸς ἀργυρίου*. For transactions of small moment, in which less ap-

prehesion was entertained of error or fraud, small pieces of silver of known weight appear to have been in circulation, which were given and taken without being freshly weighed each time. Of this sort was the quarter shekel in the possession of the servant of Saul, (1 Sam. ix. 8,) and the bit of silver, *אגרת כסף*, mentioned 1 Sam. ii. 36. In matters of greater consequence, the silver and gold were weighed, and were ascertained, whether by the touchstone or by some conventional mark upon the bars, to possess the requisite purity and fineness; hence we read in the time of Abraham of "silver current with the merchant." Gen. xxiii. 16. The frauds to which this mode of trade was incident, are forbidden by Moses, (Deut. xxv. 13) and by Solomon, (Prov. xx. 10) and denounced by the prophets, (Amos viii. 5; Micah vi. 10, 11,) the having weights of different sizes, the smaller for the articles sold, the larger for the price to be received.

To prevent these frauds, which must have prevailed to a much greater extent among heathen nations than among the covenant people, coins bearing a recognized stamp, which should entitle them to public confidence, were first introduced into Greece; and thence, as it would appear, the practice was borrowed by the Persians and the Phœnicians. Egypt had no native coins until the reign of the Ptolemies, and then only with Greek figures and inscriptions. The Hebrews at the time of the Babylonish captivity made use of Persian, Phœnician, and Greek coins, and, at a subsequent period, had coins of their own; but prior to the captivity they continued to observe the old method of weighing the precious metals.

Abraham, who was very rich not only in cattle but in silver and gold, weighed four hundred shekels of silver as the price of the cave of Machpelah. Joseph's brethren brought back with them to Egypt the money (Heb. *silver*) found in their sacks in full weight. Gen. xliiii. 21. The man who saw Absalom hanging in the oak, said to Joab, (Eng. Ver. Marg.), "Though I were to weigh upon my hand a thousand shekels of silver, yet would I not put forth my hand against the king's son." 2 Sam. xviii. 12. Isaiah speaks, (xlv. 6) of men lavishing gold out of the bag and weighing silver in the balance. He asks, (lv. 2,) "Wherefore do ye weigh silver (Heb.) for that

which is not bread?" Jeremiah weighed the silver which he paid for the field in Anathoth. Jer. xxxii. 9, 10. And even after the captivity, Zechariah speaks of the ungrateful flock weighing, as the price of the good shepherd, thirty *shekels* of silver. Zech. xi. 12. When, in 2 Kings, xii. 10, the silver contributed for the repairs of the house of God is said to have been told or counted, this may be because a later writer employed a term appropriate to his own days, or the contributions may have been in pieces of silver of equal size, which only needed therefore to be counted. There is no word in the whole Old Testament answering to coin, νόμισμα, *nummus*, but simply silver and brass (or rather bronze or copper) used in the general sense of money, like the Greek ἀργύριον, and the Latin *aes*.

After the exile, the Jews were first under the dominion of Persia; then under that of Syria. It was not until the yoke of the latter was shaken off, under the conduct of the Maccabees, that any native Jewish coins were struck. Such are found, however, both of silver and bronze, bearing date from the first, second, third and fourth years of the "Redemption of Israel," or the "Freedom of Israel," B. C. 143 to 140. It is a singular circumstance, that upon coins of various denominations belonging to the first year, the name of the city is written ירושלים, and on those of the following years ירושלים; which our author undertakes to account for by the hypothesis of the dual signification of the latter; Jerusalem being regarded as consisting of two parts, the upper and the lower city. It was not until the second year, according to 1 Macc. xiii. 51, that possession was gained of the upper city, or the tower of Zion. It is well known that the shape of the Hebrew letters upon these coins is quite different from that now in use, and that it bears a striking resemblance to the Samaritan character. The same letter is found upon the coins of the Pseudo-Messiah Barcochba, as late as the reign of Hadrian, A. D. 132. Many of these are the *denarii* of Trajan recoined; upon one which once evidently bore the name of the emperor Servius Galba, the Roman letters . . . PSER . . . remain still uneffaced. The letter *Tav* upon the coins, has the form of a cross ×; which affords an illustration of Ezek. ix. 4, where the man with the

inkhorn is directed to set a mark (Heb. *tav*,) upon the foreheads of all the pious in the city.

We pass over the discussion of the various legends and figures upon these coins, noting only the fact that they never contain any representations of men or animals. We pass also the coins with Greek legends, bearing the names of different members of the Herodian family, or of the Roman emperors, or their connections, and come to the foreign coins which found circulation in Palestine. These were chiefly Persian, Greek, and Roman. The gold *darics*, *δαρειχοί* of the Persians, are mentioned in the Old Testament under the names דָּרַכִּים & דָּרַכִּיָּם . From their bearing a figure which holds in his hands a bow and a lance, they were sometimes called by the Greeks *τοξόται*, *archers*. It was to this name and to the power of Persian gold, that Agesilaus alluded, when he said that he had been driven from Asia Minor by thirty thousand archers. The coin has the weight of two Attic *drachmæ*, or one hundred and fifty-seven and three-quarter Parisian grains, and is valued at twenty-eight and one-half francs. Mention is made of *darics* several times in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, where the English version follows the Septuagint in translating "*drams*;" the Alexandrian *drachma* being double the Attic. An incidental proof may hence be drawn of the genuineness of these books; for had they been written in the time of the Maccabees or even as late as Alexander, the *daric* would have been superseded in common use by other coins. When (1 Chron. xxix. 7) the contributions of gold made for the temple in the days of David are partly reckoned in *drams* (*darics*,) there is no implication of course of the existence of this coin, at the time referred to; but the writer, in order to be better understood, states the sum in the currency of his own times.

The Greek coins mentioned in the New Testament are the *drachma*, and its multiples the *didrachmon*, and the *stater* or *tetradrachmon*. These are thought to have been not of the Attic, but the Phœnician standard, which was somewhat inferior in weight and value. The piece of money lost by the woman in the parable, (Luke xv. 8, 9,) was a silver *drachma*, which was almost equal in value to a Roman *denarius* under Augustus, and might very well be an object of concern at that

time to a woman in humble circumstances. If, however, this be thought too small, a *drachma* of gold is supposable, whose value was twelve and a half times greater. The tribute money (Matt. xvii. 24,) was the *didrachmon*, and the piece of money found in the fish's mouth (v. 27,) was the *stater*. The *stater* exceeded the Jewish shekel somewhat in weight; but the difference was taken by the money-changers as their percentage for furnishing Jewish, in place of heathen coins, for payment into the treasury of the temple. The fifty thousand pieces of silver, the value of the books of curious arts burned by the converts at Ephesus, (Acts xix. 19,) are supposed to have been the Ephesian *drachmæ*, this being the common standard coin of that region.

When Augustus came to the empire, he ordained by the advice of Mæcenas, that the weights, measures, and coins of Rome should be adopted in all the provinces. The wide extent of their circulation is proved, not only by the statements of ancient authors, but by their being found in modern times in the most remote regions, even in India. The Roman coins mentioned in the Gospels are the silver *denarius*, and the bronze *as* and *quadrans*. The *as* derived its name, according to some authors, from *aes*, as a bronze coin; according to others, from εἰς, as the unit of computation; according to Cavedoni, from *assis*, a board, its original shape being that of a flat square piece of metal. It at first weighed a pound, and was synonymous with *libra* and *pondus*; but in the straitened condition of the public funds, produced by the first Punic war, it was reduced to two ounces. Further reductions were made in the second Punic war to one ounce; in the Marsian war to half an ounce; and after the time of Augustus to a quarter of an ounce, or one forty-eighth of its original weight. The *denarius* received its name from its being equivalent to ten *asses*; upon the reduction which took place in the value of the latter, in the second Punic war, however, it was fixed at sixteen times the *as*, except in the payment of soldiers. The *denarius* bore the name and title, and most commonly the head, of the reigning emperor. It was one of these that our Saviour held in his hand, when he asked his captious questioners: "Whose is this image and superscription?" Mat. xxii. 20. Two hundred *de-*

narii, it is stated, John vi. 7, would have purchased bread enough for five thousand people. According to John xii. 3-5, a pound of ointment of spikenard was worth three hundred *denarii*; a statement confirmed by Pliny, who speaks of cinnamon-ointment costing from twenty-five to three hundred *denarii*, and of the ointment of spikenard as being of about the same price. At Athens, a *cotyla* (less than a pound) of expensive oriental ointment is spoken of as worth from five hundred to one thousand *drachmæ*. Two sparrows are said (Mat. x. 29) to cost an *as*, and five (Luke xii. 6) to cost two *asses*, the price being cheapened as a larger quantity was taken. The *quadrans* or quarter *as*, is twice referred to, Mat. v. 26 (where it is paralleled to the *lepton*, Luke xii. 59) and Mark xii. 42. The widow's mite (*lepton*) is thought to be equal to the *quadrans*, not the half of it, as this latter passage is sometimes explained.

The discussion presented in this volume of the imaginary coins of the Bible (talents and minæ) and particularly that regarding the prices of various articles which are there mentioned, is very interesting, but we cannot enter upon it here.

ART. IV.—*Sketches of Virginia, Historical and Biographical.*

By the Rev. William Henry Foote, D. D., Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Romney, Va. Second Series. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1855. Pp. 596, 8vo.

EXACTLY six years have elapsed, since we took occasion to say, that Dr. Foote had, by his first series of Sketches, made an offering of inestimable value to our Church. Not only will we not retract this judgment, but we hasten to renew it in favour of the volume before us. Of general remark there is the less left us to make, since what we had to say on the foregoing volume. The characteristics of both are the same; and we observe now, as before, the author's industrious quest of facts; his faithful transcription of authorities; his careful preservation of minute, and often unique fragments; and his perpetual love and zeal