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ARTICLE I.—*The Service of the House of God, according to the practice of the Church of Scotland.* By the Rev. WILLIAM LISTON, Minister of Redgorton. Edinburgh: 1858. Pp. 411. 12mo.

Presbyterian Liturgies, with specimens of Forms of Prayer for Worship, as used in the Continental Reformed and American Churches: with the Directory for the Public Worship of God, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster: and Forms of Prayer for Ordinary and Communion Sabbaths, and for other Services of the Church. By a Minister of the Church of Scotland. Edinburgh: 1858. Pp. 120. 8vo.

IN taking a survey of existing churches, it is curious to observe how far their maturity and strength are from bearing any uniform proportion to their age. While the largest division of the Christian world professes to have come down, almost in its actual condition, from the time of the Apostles, and the "Orthodox Oriental Church" lays claim, with equal justice, to a like antiquity; while the Vaudois place themselves as high upon the scale, and are never placed by others lower than the close of the twelfth century; while all the reformed national churches of Europe—German, Swiss, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Scotch, and English—owe their birth to the great moral revolution of the sixteenth century, and the *Unitas Fratrum* to the

ART. IV.—*The Position of Hosea in the Scheme of Divine Revelation.*

Der Prophet Hosea erklärt und übersetzt von Dr. AUGUST SIMSON, u. s. w. 8vo. pp. 352.

THE Old Testament consists of thirty-nine distinct but not unrelated books. It is not an aggregate of treatises having no other bond of union than that they chance to be bound together in the same volume, or have proceeded from the midst of the same people, or contain an exposition of the same system of religion. Nor is the whole truth exhausted by saying that they are all alike inspired. They contain the record of a divine scheme of training, under which Israel was placed with reference to the future Messiah and the dispensation which he was to introduce. The unity and consistent progress of this scheme involve the unity of the Old Testament and the intimate relation of all its parts, which thus conspire together to one predetermined end. This being so, to be studied aright this portion of the sacred volume should be treated as one harmonious whole, and the endeavour made to understand its various parts, not in themselves alone, but in their relation to the rest, and the place which they severally occupy in the general plan. As God is the wisest of teachers, we may derive instruction from his methods, as well as from his lessons; and it behoves us to give heed at once to the truth and to the fitness of his teachings, both as respects the general design and each particular emergency.

The structure of the Old Testament in its main divisions is obvious and simple. The books of Moses, which form its earliest portion, and lie at the foundation of the whole, record the constitution which God gave to Israel as his chosen people, and under which they were to be kept in pupilage until the times of the Messiah. The historical books exhibit this constitution in actual operation, and show the conduct of the people under it, and the leadings of God's providence with respect to them and it. The poetical books reveal the divinely guided struggles of the pious as they strive to realize the perfection of the law in

themselves, or to understand the consistency of its teachings with the ordinary experience of the world. The books of the prophets recall the transgressing people to the law by re-enacting its precepts and solemn sanctions, and by a growing fulness in their exposition of the goal to which all was tending.

Prophets had been raised up amongst the chosen people from time to time, from their first settlement in Canaan. But it was not until the reigns of Uzziah of Judah, and the second Jeroboam of Israel, that the conjuncture arrived in both kingdoms which called for the permanent recording of prophecy. The kingdom of the ten tribes was then upon the eve of its rejection and downfall. The mighty ministries of Elijah and Elisha had been tried upon them, but had failed to turn the mass of the people or their rulers back to God. The partial reformation of Jehu had never advanced beyond the abolition of Baal-worship. The idolatrous service of the calves and the schismatical separation from the temple at Jerusalem still continued, and the moral corruption consequent upon religious apostasy made the people an abomination. The instrument of their destruction was already preparing, and that generation would see its accomplishment. The last king of vigorous and successful sway was on the throne; from that time onward the history of Israel presents a constant succession of regicides, usurpations, anarchies, and civil wars, until the Lord in anger cast them out from his presence. But before such an extraordinary step was taken as the excision of ten-twelfths of the chosen people, it was important for the justification of the ways of God, the warning of future transgressors, and the consolation and information of the truly pious, that the grounds of it should be clearly stated, and left in a permanent form. Consequently the prophets, who were commissioned to make the last unsuccessful effort for their reformation, were instructed to make it appear both to their hearers and to all future ages, that they suffered as they did, not from the inability of their covenant God to protect them, for he had repeatedly warned them of this, and himself brought it upon them; and that he was not herein unfaithful to his promises made of old to their fathers,

for Israel was dealt with justly, and those promises should after all be fulfilled.

At the same time that crisis occurred in the affairs of Judah, which led to a new form of prophetic labour, and to the reduction of prophecies to writing in that kingdom likewise. Judah was not utterly apostate, and was not to suffer total rejection; but she was entering upon a new and important stage of her history, the meaning of which needed to be explained to herself and others. A recent writer has suggested that the history of the chosen people may be regarded as successively typical of the three offices of the Redeemer. As organized under the Levitical law given in the wilderness, they appear in their sacerdotal character, containing in the midst of them the atoning sacrifice and the interceding priest. They had not yet attained their ultimate form of civil organization. This was reached under David, when they became a kingdom with a line of princes upon the throne, to whom perpetual sovereignty was promised. When in later years the glory of the kingdom waned, the prophetic character of the people stood more distinctly forth in the new prominence of the prophetic order, and in the nation being itself made the teacher of the world, and spreading abroad the knowledge of the Messiah's mission and character as had never been done before. By others the history of the chosen people has been regarded as typical of the two states of Christ in an inverted order: the glory of the kingdom under David and Solomon setting forth his state of exaltation, its subsequent depression his state of humiliation, which was nevertheless in the case of the type as well as of the antitype, a passage-way to new splendour and elevation.

It is with this last period, which according to these views presents Judah in her prophetic character, or in her humiliation, that we are now concerned. The sins of the people were such that they needed severe judgments to purify them, and bring them back to God, and keep them from turning aside completely from the fulfilment of their high destiny. This work of judgment was to proceed even to the extent of dispersing them widely among the nations, thus scattering everywhere the seed of the divine word, and preparing auditors in every land for the gospel when it should come to be preached in its fulness. The

hostility of the surrounding heathen was made the instrument of effecting these ends; especially the great Asiatic empire, which bearing essentially the same character, and embracing the same territory, changing only its centre and seat, was successively known as the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian, and subsequently fell under the Greek and Roman dominion. This was to be the rod of Judah's chastisement, and the instrument of their dispersion. It was besides to accomplish the work among the heathen themselves of breaking up their separate nationalities, and reducing them to one homogeneous mass, governed by the same laws, and amenable to a common authority, over which, when the proper time had arrived, the gospel might spread without encountering the obstructions which the existence of petty and independent States would everywhere have interposed.

Upon the threshold of these grand movements in Judah and in the heathen world, the prophets were commissioned to unfold their design and the duties which they involved, for the instruction and comfort of their contemporaries and of succeeding generations. Unexplained they would have presented a most perplexing and distressing problem, fraught with temptation, on the one hand to unbelief, on the other to despondency. The people of God were to be depressed while the heathen triumphed over them, even to the destruction of their State, the overthrow of the city where God had recorded his name, the burning of his temple, and the exile of the people from the land which he had given them. This would give occasion to the unbeliever to say that the gods of the heathen were mightier than the God of Judah: it would suggest to the heart of the believer the desponding conclusion that God had cast off his transgressing people, and that his covenant with their fathers was annulled. The prophets give the solution of this anomalous condition of affairs. They show the people that what they were enduring was both just and necessary. This humiliation and suffering was needed to purge them from sin; it was by this means they were to accomplish the task, assigned them in preparation for Messiah's coming, of making his mission known among the nations: it would, when its ends were answered, lead to the glory, which belonged to the true people of the

living God, the certainty and character of which were now set forth with new and increasing clearness. On the other hand the exaltation of heathen nations, and especially of that great power which then oppressed the people of God, was provisional and temporary. God's instrument to chastise Judah and to subject the nations, they should be cast down when their work was done, and "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."

Quite distinct ministries were thus demanded from the prophets of the two kingdoms, conditioned by the circumstances in which, as we have seen, they were respectively called to act. The books of the prophets, whose general intent and aim has already been stated, naturally divide themselves accordingly into the prophets of the kingdom of Israel, and those of the kingdom of Judah, each having a function to perform in the economy of the volume of revelation peculiar to themselves. If again we proceed to examine the history of Judah from the beginning of written prophecy to its close, we shall find it governed by three great crises which bound its successive periods. The first is the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib in the middle of the reign of Hezekiah; this power having overthrown the kingdom of the ten tribes, threatened destruction to Judah, but was miraculously defeated. The second is the Babylonish invasion under Nebuchadnezzar, which not only threatened but actually destroyed Jerusalem and the Jewish state, and carried the people into exile. The third is the decree of Cyrus permitting the exiles to return to their own land. These great providential events with their causes and results may be said to govern the prophetic themes, each in their proper period. They determine the circumstances and spiritual necessities of the people, or supply the most impressive and needed lessons. The inspired instruction which is given gathers about them, or takes its rise from them, and to whatever expansion, elevation, or far-sighted penetration it may attain, still borrows from them its form and its direction. Conformably to these hints the prophets of Judah are readily divisible into four classes. The first comprises those who uttered their prophecies before the Assyrian invasion, or immediately subsequent to it, and while this was still the most prominent subject

before the people; the second those who prophesied before Nebuchadnezzar's conquest, or immediately after, as long as prophetic labours continued among the wretched remnant of Judah; the third those who were in exile; and fourth, all after the edict of restoration to the cessation of the spirit of prophecy.

Each of these classes of prophets will be found to have characteristics which are peculiar to themselves and distinguish them from others, growing out of the circumstances of the period and the condition of things in which they prophesy. Each age had its special wants; and the inspired communications were adapted to those wants. And not only were the amount and character of the prophetic revelations of each period thus determined by the general plan of God, and the particular junctures of his providence, but special functions were assigned likewise to each individual prophet within his own period. One was commissioned to meet the existing spiritual necessities of the people upon one side, another upon another. They thus mutually complete each other, and it is by the combination of the whole that their appointed task is fully accomplished.

The utterances of the prophets accordingly exhibit neither a dull uniformity nor a disordered confusion. There is a reason why they are what they are, and are made when they are; why, for example, the revelations of Isaiah were granted to him rather than to Amos, and why neither saw what was disclosed to Daniel. There is a divine mechanism here; a skilful disposition of parts, and a close concatenation, such that all is made to fit harmoniously together, and to tally precisely with the concurrent developments of Providence, thus plainly showing, behind the human agents and above them, an all-embracing Intelligence, directing the whole agreeably to one preconceived, consistent, and admirable scheme; and the more this is studied, the more wonderful it will be found to be. And hence may be derived a fresh check to the unwarrantable procedures and conclusions of such unbelieving critics, as setting aside the well attested evidence of the genuineness of the books of the prophets, have, from newly invented criteria of their own, ascribed them to different periods from those to which they really belong.

Every alteration is a derangement. It is like taking out a wheel at random from a complicated machine, or altering the position or proportions of a limb or member in a finely modelled statue: the result can only be confusion and deformity. A right conception of the whole will of itself justify the proportions and adjustments of the several parts. And in like manner when the genuineness of paragraphs or sections in particular books is denied, the completeness and symmetry of an individual ministry is oftentimes defaced thereby. The writings of the prophets are not random and fragmentary compilations of stray discourses casually brought together. There is a method in them, even when they contain the record of the longest ministry, which verifies their unity; and forbids the mutilation of their various parts.

It is not our design at present to evince the truth of these remarks in regard to the prophets generally, but simply to make a few suggestions touching the position of Hosea in the scheme of prophetic communication. This will require us to glance at the mission of the period to which he belongs, the function assigned to himself in particular, and the plan or arrangement of the book which bears his name.

Eight prophets, one-half of the whole number, belong to the first prophetic period, embracing the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah, and extending from the reign of the second Jeroboam of Israel to the destruction of the kingdom. Of these, three exercised their ministry in Israel—Hosea, Amos, and Jonah; and five in Judah—Joel, Isaiah, Obadiah, Micah, and Nahum. It will not be necessary to delay upon the proof that the minor prophets succeed each other in the canon in their true chronological order, which for reasons deemed sufficient is here assumed. Nor need we stop to show that Hosea was a citizen of the ten tribes: the arguments of Hengstenberg and others have set that quite at rest. Nahum, though born in the territory of the ten tribes, is classed with the prophets of Judah, because the former kingdom was in all probability already destroyed when his prophecy was uttered, and it is expressly addressed to Judah, (i. 15.)

This division of the prophets, agreeably to the sphere of their labours, into those of Judah and of Israel, though important

to a correct understanding of their respective ministries, must not be too rigorously pressed. They are in some respects analogous to the circumcision and the uncircumcision as separate fields of apostolic labour, which general division however did not hinder Paul from writing his Epistle to the Hebrews, nor Peter from preaching the gospel to Cornelius. Though politically severed, and though from their diversity of character and circumstances requiring a different treatment from the inspired messengers sent them, the two kingdoms were not entirely distinct. The twelve tribes formed the one people of God, and neither the prophets nor the pious inhabitants of either kingdom recognized the legitimacy of the sinful schism. Pious princes like Hezekiah failed not to assert the claims of the theocracy over both realms, (2 Chron. xxx. 1-11.) It was on the ground of this unity that we find in this period one prophet taken from each of these kingdoms to minister in the other. Amos, like the man of God in the time of the first Jeroboam, (1 Kings xiii.) was sent from Judah to Israel, and Nahum from Israel to Judah. It is for the same reason that Hosea and Amos direct occasional admonitions to Judah, though the main body of their prophecies is addressed to Israel. Isaiah also (xxviii. 1-4, etc.) and Micah (i. 5, 6,) take a like attitude with respect to Israel, the latter even emphasizing his position by including Samaria as well as Jerusalem in his title. It need scarcely be added that no sanction whatever is given by the above division to Maurer's totally unfounded idea that the prophets of Israel taught a different doctrine from those of the rival kingdom, being the pliant tools of those in power, and winking at if not sanctioning the established idolatry of the golden calves.

The prophets of the two kingdoms are distinguished both in the tone and the contents of their respective prophecies. The tone of those ministering in Israel is severely denunciatory. The books of Amos and Hosea are filled with withering rebukes of sin and fearful threatenings of punishment from beginning to end, with but one ray of mercy in the closing verses of the former, and a few interjected gleams in occasional verses of the latter. Jonah had been commissioned before the period of written prophecy properly began, to utter the last promise of

temporal prosperity made to his own generation, (2 Kings xiv. 25,) which had not however its designed effect of winning the people back to God. In the book of Jonah, Nineveh repenting at the preaching of the prophet rises up against obdurate Israel to condemn them; and the sparing of the former stands in silent but unmistakable contrast to the doom which must await the latter. The kingdom of Israel was sunk in apathy and sin, and had reached the very verge of judicial abandonment. Nothing would answer here, therefore, but the language of rebuke and denunciation, which might startle them if possible from their security, or leave the evidence that their doom had been plainly set before them if they perished. Only so much of promise appears in each, expressed in Hosea and Amos and inferentially in Jonah, as is always found in every message of God to men, that he is faithful to his own word of grace, and that the penitent shall find mercy.

The kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, although sinful and needing to be rebuked, had not like Israel openly renounced the true worship of God. They were yet the chosen vessel of God's mercy, from the midst of whom the salvation of the world was to proceed. The tone of the prophets here is accordingly quite different. It is prevailingly consolatory: as compared with the prophets of the other kingdom, or with Jeremiah of the subsequent period when Judah had become far more corrupt, and a large portion of it was on the point of being cast away, it is strikingly so. This enlarged consolation is given both negatively and positively; positively, by the increased space now devoted to promise as compared with denunciation. Exactly one-half of Joel is promissory. Isaiah, besides abundant passages of the most joyful character, some of them spreading over several consecutive chapters in the first part of his book, devotes himself in the last twenty-seven chapters expressly to the work of comfort. The space given to consolation is proportionably large in Micah likewise. The negative consolation is that afforded by the denunciation of their heathen foes and oppressors; for the overthrow of these was in mercy to God's people and in vindication of them, and the breaking down of the ungodly kingdoms of this world is represented to be in order to the transferring of the dominion and power to the

saints of the Most High. This is the entire sum of Obadiah and Nahum, and enters more or less prominently into the predictions of the other three prophets likewise. The prophets of Judah speak of the heathen temporarily triumphing over the people of God, but never fail to add in the same connection that the former shall be ultimately cast down, and the latter shall be finally victorious. This the prophets of Israel never do. Hosea and Amos plainly and repeatedly declare that the ungodly kingdom of the ten tribes shall be overthrown by Assyria and the people exiled, but they give no intimation of the future fall of Assyria itself. Jonah even represents its capital as saved from threatened destruction by a timely repentance, and as an object of tender concern to the Lord. Amos indeed begins his prophecy with a series of seven denunciations against various heathen nations and against the other branch of the covenant people; but as appears from the whole structure of his book, as well as from express intimations, (ii. 6, etc.; iii. 2, etc.,) these portend no mercy to Israel. This prophet is peculiar in constructing thus an *a fortiori* argument of heavier doom. If the heathen and Judah shall be punished, much more shall Israel, whose privileges have been greater than the one, and their trespass heavier than the other.

The contents of these books may be considered under the two heads of things nearer at hand, and those more remotely future. To the former belong the existing state of affairs, and the consequent fortunes of the two kingdoms; to the latter, the revelations respecting the Messiah. In portraying national sins and unfolding the proximate future, the prophets are led to confine themselves for the most part to that which directly related to the respective kingdoms in which their ministry was exercised. The range of prophetic vision granted to those of the one realm, was thus quite distinct from that afforded to the other, the spirit of inspiration in each case opening up just such glimpses into futurity as were appropriate to the hearers addressed, and would suggest or convey to them the lessons they required. It is a simple consequence of the fact just stated, and not of any difference in the grade of prophetic power, that the vision of the future possessed by the prophets of Judah, was so much more extensive than that of their

colabourers in the sister kingdom. To the ten tribes it was revealed that the house of Jeroboam should be cut off, the kingdom itself destroyed, and the people carried into exile to Assyria. This terminated their distinct existence, and summed up God's dealings with them as his people. From this time onward, therefore, until the period of returning favour under the Messiah, all is left blank in the prophetic picture. It is only incidentally that the facts are disclosed of Judah's miraculous preservation from the power which should overwhelm Israel, Hos. i. 7, and of a subsequent burning of their cities, Hos. viii. 14, Amos ii. 5, though it is not said by whom this desolation should be effected, nor even whether it should be by the same or by another power. It is also in subordination to the main theme already stated, that the overthrow of several of the minor heathen states contiguous to Palestine is predicted, Amos i. 3—ii. 3, without, however, any distinct announcement of the agency by which it was to be accomplished.

Judah, on the other hand, was to be preserved as the people of God until the coming of the Messiah, and was to be brought successively into contact with some of the mightiest kingdoms of the earth. Accordingly her prophets are enabled to take possession of the wide field thus spread before them, and to adapt the lessons to be drawn from it to the uses of their contemporaries. They foresaw the Assyrian invasion and its miraculous defeat, the Babylonish captivity and the deliverance from it, and even sketch the heathen oppressions to be experienced between this and the coming of Christ, Micah iv. 10—v. 2. And upon the sphere of the world they beheld the overthrow of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Syria, and Tyre, not to speak of the fate of inferior nations.

The difference between these two classes of prophets is no less marked in regard to their Messianic predictions, and it arises from the same cause. Inasmuch as the primary design of these predictions is to suggest spiritual lessons for the contemporary generation, it follows as a natural consequence that they take their point of departure and their peculiar form from things then existing, and exhibit the period of the Messiah under such aspects as contrast most strongly with the evils of the present. The prophets of Israel are strictly confined to

this view of the subject. The evils experienced or apprehended in that kingdom were these five, viz. their apostasy from God and consequent abandonment by him, the schism from Judah and the house of David, the coming exile, the reduction of the numbers of the covenant people by their threatened excision, and the hostility of the heathen. The Messianic period is accordingly depicted under five particulars as affording the antidote to precisely these evils, their return to God and inalienable reception into favour, their union with Judah under a prince of David's line, their restoration and perpetual settlement in Canaan, Israel's vast multiplication, and the incorporation of the heathen into the kingdom of God.

The prophets of Judah were charged with the instruction of a people who were to endure to the coming of Christ, from the midst of whom he was to arise, and who needed a special preparation for this their high prerogative among the nations. Besides, therefore, presenting the blessings to be introduced by the Redeemer as a specific remedy for evils then felt or apprehended, they were led to take occasion from these to unfold more fully his person and work, and to present abundant criteria by which on his appearance he might be recognized. In addition to all that was revealed to the prophets of Israel, they speak of Messiah's divine nature, his birth of a virgin at Bethlehem, his life of suffering and sorrow, his atoning death, his priestly and prophetic offices, and the glories of his universal reign, when all mankind should flow to Zion, wars should cease, the harmlessness of paradise return even to the irrational creation, and every disease and infirmity and even death itself be banished or destroyed.

We turn now to the mutual relations of the prophets of Israel. Hosea occupies a place among them which may for prominence be likened to that of Isaiah in the corresponding period in Judah. His ministry is the longest on record, and affords a rare instance of constancy in almost hopeless circumstances, being exercised for sixty years or upwards in the midst of an apostate and deteriorating people, and continued perhaps to the very downfall of the kingdom. The book of Amos records a mission, probably a brief one, from Judah to Israel, and that of Jonah one from Israel to Nineveh. They each clothe

their instructions more or less in a figurative dress. Hosea employs allegory, chapters i. and iii, Amos emblematic visions, chapters vii.—ix, and Jonah a symbolical action. The disclosures of Hosea bear exclusive relation to Israel, those of Jonah to the heathen, those of Amos to both. Here, as in the case of all the prophets, the disclosures made respecting the heathen were designed not for their own benefit or instruction, but for that of Israel. The covenant people were the exclusive depositaries of divine revelation, and the sole theatre of prophetic ministries under the former economy. Prophecies respecting foreign nations were not in general made known to those nations. And where these ordinary limits of prophetic agency appear to be overstepped in individual instances, as in this of Jonah, this is an index to the future rather than the establishing of a new order of things in the present. No permanent mission was established at Nineveh; the extraordinary success of the prophet's preaching was followed by no subsequent labours, and we hear of no evidences or fruits of piety there afterwards. The effects upon the inhabitants of that city were without doubt quite evanescent. Everything goes to show that the divine purpose in Jonah's mission was to incorporate an idea in the progressive scheme of revelation, the time for whose full development had not yet arrived. The word of God, which Israel refused, should one day be preached to the heathen, and they would hear it. This enables us in some measure to understand how Jonah could urge the mercy of God as a reason for his having at first fled to Tarshish, iv. 2, and why he subsequently repined at the sparing of Nineveh. He could not bear to see the divine favour transferred from the children of Abraham to the heathen Ninevites; the latter penitent while the former continued obdurate; the latter spared while the former were hastening on to judgment. The conduct of the prophet is the less to be wondered at, since even in New Testament times it required repeated revelations to prepare the church for the passing away of Old Testament restrictions, and for the reception of the heathen into the church upon equal terms with the Jews. The book of Jonah is accordingly a practical prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles.

Amos, in the beginning of his prophecy, reveals God's justice

as a universal ruler in punishing heathen nations for their sins, and at the conclusion, ix. 12, intimates his mercy by expressing the same truth with Jonah, but in a different form. The theocracy shall extend its conquests over surrounding nations, and they shall be called by the name of the Lord. Of all this Hosea says nothing; his prophecy is confined to the covenant people, the justice of God in the judgments of the present, his mercy in the returning favour of the future. And yet with this evident distinction in the functions which these prophets were severally called to discharge in the unfolding to Israel of the plans of God, and while the phases of the truth which they respectively present, as viewed with Old Testament eyes, are quite distinct, the prophecies of Hosea, as contemplated from the point of their fulfilment, will be seen to involve in fact, though not in form, the same mercy to the Gentiles which it was given to Jonah and Amos unambiguously and in explicit terms to announce.

We find predicted by Hosea i. 10, 11; ii. 1, 14-23; iii. 5; xi. 11; xiv. 4-8, the first four of the five Messianic blessings already spoken of as revealed to the prophets of Israel. It is agreed by all that these met a partial fulfilment before the coming of Christ, when descendants of the ten tribes joined themselves with the exiles of Judah, returned after the Babylonish captivity, under the lead of Zerubbabel, a prince of the house of David, and with a new zeal for the worship of God, were established in the promised land. Accordingly we find the twelve tribes spoken of as still existing in repeated passages of the New Testament; and that the genealogies of all the tribes were still preserved distinct appears from the statement that the apostle Paul belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, Rom. xi. 1, and Anna the prophetess to the tribe of Asher, Luke ii. 36. But it is manifest that this event cannot be regarded as a complete accomplishment of these predictions, for it does not exhaust the terms employed in any one of the particulars. There was then no complete conversion of all Israel to God, and betrothal of them to him in faithfulness for ever. And although the schism was entirely healed, so that after the captivity there were no more rivalries or animosities between Israel and Judah, and in feeling they became one people, still the

entire body of these two sections was not united under Zerubabel, and even he was not a king. All Israel, moreover, did not come up out of exile, nor were they swelled to such countless multitudes as the sand of the sea. It becomes a question, therefore, in what events are we to look for the accomplishment of that residue of these prophecies, which was still unfulfilled at the coming of Christ? To this question in the case of these and like predictions two answers have been returned, viz. that their accomplishment is to be sought in the line of the natural descendants of Israel, or in that of their spiritual seed. According to the former view, the lineal descendants of the ten tribes shall be as numerous as the sands of the sea; shall be converted to God, and made once more his people; shall be restored from their wide dispersions to the land of Palestine; shall be united to the lineal descendants of Judah, and the old theocratic kingdom restored, with a son of David on the throne, which must then be a personal reign of the Lord Jesus, on an actual throne in Jerusalem, as king of the chosen people. For there is no scriptural warrant for believing that any other descendant of David shall ever again sit upon a throne. According to the other view, the Israel contemplated in these promises are to be counted, not in the line of natural descent, but of spiritual succession.

That this latter is the only admissible view may be argued in the first place from the fact that Israel as God's people, in the sense of the Scriptures generally, and of the promises in particular, never was exactly coextensive with Abraham's natural descendants. From the beginning some of his natural descendants were excluded, and others not descended from him were included. Ishmael and the children of Keturah were cut off, and the descent counted in the line of Isaac. Esau was cut off, and the succession limited to the line of Jacob. At the same time provision was made for giving the seal of the covenant to those born in Abraham's house, or bought with his money, though not of his seed. This is doubtless one of the items to be taken into the account in solving the problem of the immense multiplication of the people in Egypt; the retainues of the several patriarchs were mingled with their seed. Mention is also made of a mixed multitude going up with Israel out of

Egypt. The provision was inserted in the law of Moses that strangers might join themselves to the Lord's people, and by receiving the rite of circumcision, and observing the requisitions of the covenant, might be as those born in the land; and this was practised at every period of the history. On the other hand, those of the natural Israel who violated the provisions of the covenant, were to be cut off from among their people. This excision and incorporation might take place on a small or a large scale, in the case of individuals or of whole communities. Hosea threatened the ten tribes with this excision, i. 9, "Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God." They failed to take warning, and the excision was actually effected. The line of the covenant people was thenceforward continued in Judah only, 2 Kings xvii. 18. At the Babylonish exile there was another narrowing down, the corrupt mass of Judah itself was cast off, and such as returned out of the captivity to the holy land had alone a right to be entitled the people of God. When Christ came, another large excision took place. The unbelieving Jews rejecting him were rejected by him, and thenceforward formed no part of God's true people. The real Israel were they who, from among the nominally covenant people, received Christ. These were the true seed of Abraham. All others were apostate, and had no more right to be considered a part of Israel than the descendants of Ishmael or Esau. It is in the faithful few that the true line of the succession is be sought. At the same time their numbers were swelled by immense accessions from believing Gentiles, who were incorporated with them, and thus the continuity was preserved. God had not one people under the Old Testament, and a different people under the New Testament. It is one and the same people. It was Israel then, it is Israel still, not by a figure of speech, but by regular, continuous, legitimate succession. And the law of their constitution is still the same that it was at the beginning, "believers and their seed," with the provision now as then that the natural descendants failing to comply with the terms of the covenant, are to be excluded, while the stranger who takes hold of the covenant, may be incorporated amongst them. In the light of the history of the case, then, believers in Christ are the Israel of the Scriptures.

A second proof of the same position may be drawn from the abundant and explicit testimony of the New Testament. The doctrine pervades all the writings of the Apostles, that the Christian Church is not a new body recently formed, but is the legitimate continuation of the Old Testament Israel. All that they say upon this point cannot here be cited, but some of the most striking passages are the following: Gal. iii. 7, They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham: iii. 29, If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise: iv. 22-31, Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children, answered to Hagar, who was cast out with her son; Christians correspond to Isaac, the child of the promise. Rom. ii. 28, 29, He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, but he who is one inwardly: iv. 11, 12, Abraham is the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, and the father of them that are circumcised only in case they walk in the steps of his faith: iv. 16-18, The promise to Abraham that he should be a father of many nations, is explained to mean the father of all us Christians: ix. 6-8, They are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: chapter xi, The truth of the promises to Israel is preserved in the existence of a believing remnant after the excision of the blinded mass, the grafting in of Gentile branches upon the original olive tree, and the ultimate salvation of all the natural descendants. Eph. ii. 12-20, In their unconverted state the Ephesians were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise; but in Christ Jesus, from being afar off they are brought nigh, made fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God: iii. 6, Gentiles are in Christ fellow-heirs, of the same body, and partakers of the promise. Phil. iii. 3, We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus. Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9, Unbelieving Jews say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan: vii. 4, Those protected from divine judgments by the seal of God in their foreheads, i. e., God's elect people (his redeemed, xiv. 3,) are an hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel: xi. 8, The city, where our Lord was crucified, is spiritually called Sodom

and Egypt: chapter xii, The woman, who bare the man-child, i. e., the Messiah, is Israel, the church of God in both dispensations; and verse 17, her seed are they which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ: xxi. 9-12, The Lamb's wife, i. e. the glorified church, is the holy Jerusalem, bearing on its gates the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. In the judgment of the inspired authors of the New Testament, then, believers in Christ and not the natural descendants of unbelieving Jews or Hebrews, constitute the Israel of God in the sense of the promises.

In the third place, that Israel has this sense in the predictions of Hosea, which are now in question, is determined by the interpretation put upon them by two different apostles. Both Peter (1 Peter ii. 9, 10) and Paul (Rom. ix. 25, 26) cite them in proof of the calling of the Gentiles. Although it could not be fairly claimed that the sense of the original passage must be limited to the application thus made of it, it must certainly include it within its proper scope.

Other arguments might be brought from parallel passages in the prophets, and from difficulties which beset the general scheme of interpretation here opposed. Thus the closing chapters of Ezekiel show us to what lengths those must be prepared to go, who see in the Israel of the Old Testament only the natural descendants of the patriarchs, and in its Canaan only the physical territory of Palestine. They must allow that the temple is to be rebuilt, and the ritual restored, which the New Testament declares to be among the shadows that have for ever passed away, and could be only resumed again to the prejudice of that perfect priesthood which it was temporarily instituted to prefigure. What has been already said, however, is sufficient to warrant the conclusion that the Christian church, considered as the body of believers in Christ, is the legitimate heir of the promises made to Israel; and it is to that church, not to the natural descendants of the ten tribes, that these promises are to be fulfilled. This is not expecting a promise to be fulfilled to one subject, when it was really made to another. It is not taking a prophecy out of its literal and imposing upon it a spiritual interpretation. It is not that Israel was typical of the Christian church; but it is that the Christian church is

Israel in the sense of the Bible, in the sense both of the Old and of the New Testaments. This is what the Holy Ghost intended in the promise. This is its proper and real meaning in its strict and literal acceptation. Israel was a church as well as a nation. It was as the people of God, that is, as a church, that they were contemplated in the promise; and that church is now perpetuated in believers in Christ.

But how are the four promises which we are discussing to be fulfilled to the Christian church? The first declares that they who had not been God's people should become his people, and be blessed with his perpetual love and favour. The last, that true believers shall be as numberless as the sands of the sea. To the other two we must apply that principle so constantly exemplified in prophecy, that the events of the future are represented under the forms of the past and the present. The schism between Israel and Judah is the great standing type of divisions among the people of God. These shall be done away, and all that interferes with or mars their unity shall cease. The kingdom of David, under which they are to be united, no longer requires a visible throne nor an earthly capital. The royal Son of David sits upon his everlasting throne in the heavens. And as to the remaining promise, Palestine derived its significance under the old economy from its being the seat of God's worship and of his visible kingdom. There was the temple with the special presence of Jehovah in the midst of it: there only could acceptable sacrifices be offered. To be cast out of this land was to be expelled from the place where God was, to be debarred from the public exercise of his worship, to lie under his frown. To be brought back to this land was a symptom of being received again into favour, and being reinstated in the possession of all the privileges of God's house. Under the present dispensation there is no such local seat of the true religion. To worship in Jerusalem is now nothing: everything lies in the worship in spirit and in truth. Every land may now be a Canaan to the believer. To come back from exile to the Lord's land, is from a state of distance and separation to come into the possession of the true worship of God and the privileges of his kingdom. The promise assures us that this shall be accorded to all true believers.

It has sometimes been objected to this view of the subject, that the threatenings against Israel are understood in their literal sense, and applied to the natural descendants of Israel, while the promises that these threatenings should in future days be reversed, are understood in a different sense, and applied to the Christian church. If exile is threatened, it means that the natural descendants of Jacob should be carried away from Palestine: when a return from exile is promised, ought it not then to mean that these natural descendants should be brought back to Palestine? But this is no more the case here than it is in all analogous passages in the Scriptures. The visible church or people of God has always contained two dissimilar classes—those who are truly his, and those who are only such by profession and in outward appearance. Threatenings against the church are always intended primarily and mainly for the impenitent and unbelieving portion; and on the other hand the promises are for the believing portion. If the evils or blessings are of such a nature that they respect an aggregate body, it must be dealt with in the mass, according to its prevailing character. If expulsion from the Lord's land is threatened, it must naturally be executed upon transgressing portions of his visible kingdom; and as it took place during the former dispensation, it was fulfilled in a form appropriate to that dispensation, their actual removal from the land of Palestine. If a return from exile is promised, it is as naturally to a believing portion that this is to be fulfilled; and in so far as it met its fulfilment in the Old Testament times, it was in the form appropriate to that dispensation, an actual coming back from the profane land of their captivity to the Lord's land. But in so far as it is accomplished under the New Testament, it must be to those who are now what the natural seed once were but are no longer, the Lord's people, and in a form which has already been shown to be the only one adapted to the present dispensation.

Have then the natural Israel no part in these promises made to their fathers? Undoubtedly they have. They are nothing but dead branches now, and have nothing to hope for so long as they continue in their unbelieving state. But they shall be grafted again into their own olive tree, and shall then partake

of the root and fatness of the olive. They are not the children of Abraham now, and are as truly aliens from the commonwealth of Israel as any Gentiles ever were. But when they believe in Christ, they will become children of Abraham by faith in him, just as those of any other nation do, and then they will, like others and precisely as others, become heirs in full of these promises; not because they are Jews, nor any more for being Jews, but because they are believers in Christ.

But shall not these promises have a literal fulfilment in their case, which they do not have in the case of others, at least in so far that they shall be restored to the land of Palestine? In reply to this, the following considerations embrace what we consider of chief consequence. The ten tribes, of which Hosea mainly speaks, are wholly lost; all efforts to rediscover them have so far failed, and there is no reason to expect better success in the future. The providence of God by thus obliterating them from among the nations, has rendered such an event as a restoration to Palestine in their case at least, if not impossible, yet to the last degree improbable.

As to the descendants of the Jews, the New Testament predicts their conversion, and that this shall be an occasion of new life to the Gentile churches, but no where intimates that they shall be brought back to Palestine. In the absence of any authority from our Lord or his apostles to the contrary, it is quite possible to explain the prophecies of Hosea, as we have seen, and all analogous predictions of other prophets, without the necessity of assuming a literal return. It is nevertheless a most remarkable fact in providence, and one without a parallel elsewhere, that the Jewish people have been preserved distinct from all others for so many ages; and that Palestine has been kept, too, to so great an extent unoccupied, containing no such population as it is capable of supporting: and that there is no insuperable barrier to their literal return, supposing that to be the purport of these prophecies. It will be wisest and safest, as it appears to us, to reserve our decision of the question, whether it is the will of God actually to accomplish this return, until the event shall disclose it. The prophecies may all be satisfactorily fulfilled, so far as we can see, without this. And yet if this were to take place, it would be God's

own comment upon the meaning of his predictions, and show that this was intended to be included. It is here as it is in regard to a multitude of other prophecies, those for example which relate to the first advent of our Lord. It would have been impossible to distinguish accurately before the event, what was intended literally from what was only to be understood figuratively. Who could have known beforehand from Zech. ix. 9, that Christ would make an actual entry into Jerusalem upon an ass, and that this was not merely a figurative representation of his general meekness and lowliness? And who could have known from Ps. xxii. 18, that the soldiers who crucified Jesus would actually cast lots upon his vesture, and that this might not have been intended merely to convey the general idea that he would be treated with extreme hostility? The event, however, has set the question at rest with regard to the meaning of these passages: and if we are content to wait patiently, it will do the same with the passages now before us.

It appears, therefore, that while Hosea does not in form, as the other prophets of the kingdom and particularly Jonah, reveal the participation of the heathen in the blessings of the covenant, which was for those who lived under the old Testament a real diversity, still in the range of their fulfilment his prophecies do in fact cover the same ground, the distinction between Jew and Gentile being done away in Christ. It remains to define the relation of his predictions to those of Amos having respect to the covenant people. Here they are in substance precisely coincident, both revealing with equal distinctness what have already been stated to be the prophetic lessons of this period for Israel, the fall of Jeroboam's house, the overthrow of the kingdom, the exile of the people, and the several Messianic blessings. There is, however, a marked distinction in the point of view from which they respectively contemplate their theme. Hosea's leading idea is, that Israel in their sin and apostasy from God, are grossly offending against the most tender love. Hence the allegories of chapters 1 and 3, (whether they be parables, or a literal record of events in the prophet's life,) setting forth the relation of Israel to God under that of the marriage bond, and thus stamping their sin

as a flagrant and shameful violation of most sacred obligations, a repudiation of their own solemn engagements, and an outrage upon the tenderest affection. Hence Israel's immorality, idolatry, and sinful seeking of aid from heathen powers, are uniformly throughout the book represented under the same image of a wife unfaithful to her husband's love. Hence, too, the frequent upbraiding of the transgressing people, by recitals of God's acts of mercy to their fathers. Hence the unequalled tenderness of his expostulations, vi. 4—xi. 8, and the assurance of God's readiness to anticipate the first symptoms of return to him, xiv. 4. On the other hand, the main thought of Amos is, that Israel is worse than other nations. Hence the brief introductory woes against the heathen and Judah, to pave the way for the more prolonged and heavier denunciation of Israel, which is mingled with no such tenderness as that of Hosea, and relieved by no exhortations, expostulations, and promises, save the few Messianic verses at the end.

In some minute details Amos discloses facts of the proximate future not revealed to Hosea, viz. the dreadful mortality which was to prevail during the final siege of Samaria, vi. 9, 10, and the fate that awaited Amaziah, priest of Bethel, and his family, vii. 17: An intimation of greater consequence in the unfoldings of the divine scheme of revelation, which is peculiar to Amos, is that, ix. 14, of the fallen condition of the house of David at the time of Messiah's appearing; this is the earliest prophetic announcement of a fact more fully unfolded by the prophets of Judah in this and subsequent periods. As a counterpoise to this it is peculiar to Hosea to present, xiii. 14, the germ of the doctrine of the resurrection. The power of death shall be broken, and death itself destroyed by the redeeming love of God. The prophet does not expand this thought to the full extent of the New Testament doctrine upon the subject. He does not even dwell upon it long enough to show whether he fully comprehended himself all that is involved, and whether in his intention and in the connection in which it stands, it denotes the deliverance of those who have already fallen under the power of death, or the rescue of such as were threatened by it, or a deliverance of the nation from impending ruin presented under this figure. Be this as it may, the thought is expressed

of a triumph over death and the grave, effected on the behalf of his people by the love and grace of God. And it is from this very point and under this same aspect that Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel develop the doctrine of the resurrection. The apostle Paul also in 1 Cor. xv. presents this as the last and most glorious of the Redeemer's triumphs, citing verse 55 with a burst of exultation—this very passage from Hosea as the climax of his whole discussion.

It should be observed further, in relation to this passage, that the prophets, even when predicting events that lie at the conclusion of the present dispensation, do not ordinarily forsake the bounds of Old Testament thought. They speak of the new heavens and new earth, of the convulsions that shall shake the frame of nature, of the sun and stars withdrawing their light, and straightway join with it something that belongs to the existing order of things. It does not follow from this that their predictions do not relate to the events which their words seem properly to describe, but are mere figures or symbols of things much nearer at hand. This conclusion can often only be reached by emptying their expressions of their manifest import, and converting them into the language of strained hyperbole. The fact is, that while glimpses of the magnificent events of the ultimate future were afforded them, these were mere glimpses; the time had not come when these objects were to be presented in all their relations and proportions, with the clearness and fulness with which they are unfolded now. The prophets stood on Old Testament ground, and could not anticipate more than it was in God's plan then to reveal. But we have on this account no right to rob them of their grandest disclosures, or to reduce them to mere figures of speech, because the events that are to usher in eternity are set in a framework borrowed from the things of time.

We have now arrived at our last topic, the structure of the book of Hosea, to which we must devote a brief consideration. In the opinion of some it is a collection of different discourses or portions of them, as they were orally delivered by the prophet at various periods of his ministry. Thus Maurer divides

it into thirteen such discourses, which he distributes as follows, viz.

1. Chapters i.—iii, reign of Jeroboam II.
2. ix. 1—9, “ “
3. ix. 10—17, “ “
4. xii. 8—15, “ “
5. Chapter iv, succeeding interregnum.
6. Chapter viii, reign of Menahem.
7. v. 1—vi. 3, reign of Pekah.
8. vi. 4—11, “ “
9. Chapters xiii, xiv, succeeding interregnum.
10. Chapter vii, reign of Hoshea.
11. Chapter x, “ “
12. Chapter xi, “ “
13. xii. 1—7, “ “

Bertholdt, who makes of it fourteen discourses coinciding in the main with the division into chapters, assigns chapters iv, xii, vii, viii, x, to the first interregnum; chapters i.—iii. to the reign of Zachariah; chapters v, vi. to the reign of Pekah; chapter xiii. to the second interregnum; and chapters ix, xi, xiv. to the reign of Hoshea. Sebastian Schmidt makes ten discourses, and Dathe seventeen. Stuck finds three distinct discourses at the beginning of the book, and two at the end, with a body of disconnected fragments making up the intervening portion.

These conflicting divisions and many more of the same kind are based upon supposed allusions in the course of the book to particular events of determinate date, whereupon the passages in which they occur are erected into distinct discourses, delivered shortly after the events referred to. But these criteria are for the most part precarious and imaginary, as is shown by the endless diversity in the results to which they lead. They are commonly descriptive of a general state of things, rather than of any single events; or if this latter were the case, it is scarcely to be expected that it could be identified with facts mentioned in a history which despatches the entire term of Hosea's ministry in little more than a single chapter; or supposing the allusion made and the event identified, it still does

not necessarily follow that the passage containing it must belong to a separate discourse pronounced just after its occurrence.

Another serious objection to this view is the confusion which it assumes to exist in the book, discourses from every period of a long ministry being jumbled together in the utmost disorder. It becomes especially objectionable when pressed to the length of supposing that we have only fragmentary remains of scattered discourses, put together after the prophet's death, by some compiler as he chanced successively to light upon them. There is no reason to believe that any of the books of the prophets owe their present form to another than the prophets themselves, but on the contrary there are good reasons for the belief that they in every case wrote out and published their own predictions. Even at the hands of a sensible compiler, the confusion here supposed to exist would be inexplicable, but as proceeding from the author himself it is utterly inadmissible. This particular difficulty is escaped by those who assume a chronological order in the discourses. Thus Lightfoot places the first four chapters in the reign of Jeroboam II, the next two at the end of Pekah's reign, or in the following interregnum, and the last eight in the reign of Hoshea. And Dr. Wells, as quoted by Bishop Horseley, presents the following scheme of five discourses:

1. Chapters i.—iii, reign of Jeroboam II.
2. iv. 1—vi. 3, thence to the death of Pekahiah.
3. vi. 4—vii. 10, reign of Pekah.
4. vii. 11—xiii. 8, reign of Hoshea.
5. xiii. 9—xiv. 9, prophecies of restoration from the captivity.

Even thus, however, arbitrary assumptions must be made of allusions which are not evident, and of facts which are not recorded. Van der Hardt has quite outstripped all competition in ingenious absurdity, by distinguishing twenty-nine discourses of a single verse and upwards, the historical occasion of each of which he defines in regular order from the reign of Jeroboam II. to the fall of the kingdom. A principle which can lead to such results can scarcely be accepted by sober minds.

Another objection, and it is a fatal one to this view, however modified, is that no such partition of the book is possible as

would separate it into these distinct discourses. They are distinguished by no diversity of occasion or of theme: they are marked by nothing which has the appearance of indicating the beginning or close of separate portions.

A second class of interpreters abandoning the idea of sections composed at different times, have sought to establish a topical or logical division in the treatment of a general theme. Thus one of the old writers finds the theme propounded, chapter i., its explication, chapters ii.—xi., objections refuted, chapters xii. xiii., and the conclusion, chapter xiv. Carpzov divides all after the opening allegorical chapters into two parts thus: chapters iv.—x. legal, chapters xi.—xiv. evangelical. There is, it is true, a transition from denunciation in the beginning to mercy at the close, but these cannot be separated in the manner here proposed. Ewald divides these chapters into three parts:

1. iv. 1—vi. 11 a—charge of sin, first against the people generally, chapter iv., then against particular classes, v. 1—vi. 11 a.

2. vi. 11 b—ix. 9, denunciation of punishment.

3. ix. 10—xi. 11, and xi. 12—xiv. 9, two retrospects of ancient and better days, joined with consolatory hopes for the future.

But the distinction here made is unfounded. Charges of sin are as prominent in the second part as in the first; there are denunciations of punishment in the first as well as in the second; and both extend into the third.

The simplest view of the book, and that most accordant with the phenomena which it exhibits, appears to be that which supposes the prophet in the later years of his life to have committed the substance of his previous predictions to writing, in so far as they were adapted to the permanent use of the people of God. How far he may have retained in this abstract the language and form of earlier discourses, we have no means of ascertaining; and it would be of little advantage to us if we had. The form of the prophecy in our possession is the only one with which we are concerned, and is not only equally authoritative with the prophet's oral discourses, even if they could be certainly restored, but was prepared under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, with a special view to the wants of the

church in all times to come. Such a summary of his prophetic career might easily include allusions to particular events, or to the general state of things at various periods of his ministry; so that their occurrence, where they really are found, is upon this hypothesis readily explained. The mention, x. 14, of Shalmaneser's first invasion, in the reign of Hoshea, shows that the book must have been written after that event.

The only distinction that he seems to have preserved in his ministrations is that of his earlier and his later prophecies. In i. 2, what follows is announced as "the beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea;" and the opening chapters contain nothing inconsistent with the idea that the people are contemplated as in the enjoyment of external quiet and prosperity, as was the case in the reign of Jeroboam II. The prediction, i. 4, of the fall of the house of Jehu, likewise implies that when originally uttered, that house must still have occupied the throne. After the fourth chapter the tone changes, and the prevalence of crimes of violence, the frequent regicides, the low state to which the kingdom was reduced by foreign invasion, their alternate and unavailing reliance on Assyria and Egypt, plainly depict the state of things after Jeroboam's death, when successive usurpations and periods of anarchy followed to the close of the kingdom.

In consequence of these facts, and of the intrinsic difference of the portions themselves, the book is commonly divided into two parts respectively, embodying the substance of Hosea's earlier and his later ministrations.

1. Chapters i.—iii, predictions in allegorical form.
2. Chapters iv.—xiv, predictions in literal terms.

Ewald has proposed a division differing from this only in transferring the third chapter to the second part. Each portion of the book will then consist of an allegory, with an added expansion or enforcement of the same essential ideas in literal terms. The two allegories, chapters 1 and 3, begin with denunciation and end with promise. The intervening chapter 2 does the same. The last eleven chapters form a continuous composition, throughout the whole of which the prophet dwells upon his main theme, surveying it in every light, and directing his treatment of it not by any artificial division, but by the law of

spontaneous association, which brings prominently forward the most impressive features of his subject, and leads him to return to them again and again. The distribution is that of the poet rather than of the logician. The natural flow of his thoughts creates certain pauses and transitions, which cannot be better indicated perhaps than by following what appears to be the most obvious suggestion of the book itself. The severe denunciations of the people's crimes, and of the wrath which they had incurred, which constitute the body of the prophecy, is interrupted three several times by exhibitions of the mercy and love of God, which, though sorely wounded, still yearned over them with incomparable tenderness. We thus arrive at three sections, framed after the analogy of the previous portions of the book, each beginning with a threatening and ending with a promise. These promissory passages (vi. 1-3, xi. 8-11, xiv. 1-9) are progressive in length, and form a climax in thought. The first contains simply an exhortation and a conditional promise, declaring that the speedy return of God's favour was as certain to follow upon repentance as the sun to rise or the rain to fall in its season. In the second, God's persistent love revolts at the utter destruction to which the people were dooming themselves. The third combines the preceding while it goes beyond them both. Israel is not only exhorted to penitence, but is actually seen and heard exercising it. And God's love, no longer struggling with the stern demands of his justice, is freely restored to his repentant and obedient people, with all the blessings that flow from this reconciliation with their Maker and Redeemer. With this blissful prospect the book closes.

Our discussion has led us so far, that we shall not now undertake to characterize the Commentary on *Hosea*, named at the head of this article, further than to say, that it is one of ability and learning, though the author is unfortunately no believer in divine inspiration. His exposition is commonly sober and judicious, and, with the general caution already given, may be of service in the study of the prophet.