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ART. I.—*The Inspired Theory of Prayer.*

AS one of the evidences that Christianity, even when most purely conceived as a supernatural power, is preëminently rational, we may reckon the freedom of Christ and the apostles, especially the apostle Paul, in speaking of the manner of its operation. It thus appears that our rational exercises are usefully employed, not only under the influence of saving grace, but upon the work of grace itself. Accordingly, the church has presumed that a just speculative view of the doctrine of justification by faith will promote the saving exercise of faith; and that a definite and rational doctrine drawn out from what the Scriptures teach concerning the atonement of Christ, will be used by the Holy Spirit to help us in receiving and applying the atonement itself. The benefit of the sacraments is undoubtedly increased by a just and reasonable view of the manner of their operation. From the apostle's great pains to give, in 1 Cor. xv., the theory of the resurrection, we might presume that a well-formed philosophical doctrine on that subject, adjusted to the apostle's outline, would help the practical influence of the scriptural view on the mind and heart of the church. In like manner, we may hope that a rational expansion of the suggestions of the Scriptures, and particularly

one important subject is introduced, it should be finally determined before it is laid aside.

The Committee on the Book of Discipline reported the Book as revised and amended, the consideration of which, after a few alterations had been adopted, was referred to the next Assembly.

ART. VI.—*Date of the Books of Chronicles.*

THE historical books of the Old Testament may be variously numbered and classified. It might, in fact, even be made a question, which books are properly so designated. The denomination historical, as distinguished from the legal, poetical, and prophetic books, describes them not absolutely, but as to their prevailing character. Thus Chronicles contains poetical passages, prophecies, and ceremonial enactments; yet, as these are merely incidental and occasional, and do not constitute the main body of the work, it is properly classed among the historical books. So, too, Jeremiah and Isaiah are prophetic books, notwithstanding the occurrence of historical paragraphs, and even chapters. The mixed character of a book might, however, in certain cases, be such as to create a doubt to which of its constituents the greater prominence should be accorded. Thus some have thought that the books of Jonah and of Job should be regarded as historical, since the former is rather the narrative of a prophetic mission than a proper prophecy, and the latter is substantially a history, though in poetic form. But when we consider that the mission of Jonah, turning his back on Israel to preach to Gentiles, who heard his word and were saved, was itself a prophecy of the future, and that the facts in the life of Job only form the ground work of a sacred poem wrought in the very highest style of Hebrew art, the ordinary classification of these books is justified.

Restricting our consideration, then, to those books which are

usually and properly denominated historical, (and excluding the books of Moses,) we have the following twelve, viz.,

Joshua,	2 Samuel,	2 Chronicles,
Judges,	1 Kings,	Ezra,
Ruth,	2 Kings,	Nehemiah,
1 Samuel,	1 Chronicles,	Esther.

In the ancient catalogues of the canon, the two books of Samuel are commonly combined into one, so the two of Kings, and the two of Chronicles; the number is thus reduced to nine. Some of these catalogues make a still further reduction to seven, by reckoning Ruth an appendix to Judges, or a part of it, and Nehemiah as forming one book with Ezra.

Adopting, however, the more familiar number twelve, we may divide these books into two equal classes in respect to the official character of their writers. They are in our English bibles, which follow in this the order of the Septuagint and the Vulgate, arranged together in chronological succession. In the Hebrew Bible, on the contrary, they are parcelled between two of the leading divisions of the canon, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. Six books are classed as Former Prophets, to denote that, though of an historical character, they were written by prophets. These are,

Joshua,	1 Samuel,	1 Kings,
Judges,	2 Samuel,	2 Kings.

The remaining six are found in the Hagiographa, or that portion of the Old Testament which was written by men who, though inspired of God, were not prophets in the strict and official sense. We have, therefore, the authority of tradition, so far as that is expressed in the Hebrew arrangement of the canon, for believing this to have been the case with

Ruth,	Ezra,	1 Chronicles,
Esther,	Nehemiah,	2 Chronicles.

Dr. Addison Alexander was in the habit of combining the books of Moses with the twelve historical books, and then dividing the whole after the analogy of the former into three pentateuchs. This ingenious and convenient distribution can

be best exhibited in his own words, here quoted from one of his manuscript lectures:

“Of these seventeen books, two are not so much continuations of those earlier in date, as parallel, collateral, and supplementary. These are the books of Chronicles, excluding or postponing which we come to a residuum or minimum of fifteen books, composing a continuous unbroken series. As an aid to the memory, these fifteen books may be grouped or classified in three pentateuchs, or groups of five, each containing one great division of the history. The first, that which usually bears the name of Pentateuch, comprises the whole history from the creation to the death of Moses. The second, which includes the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and 1 and 2 Samuel, carries on the narrative until the close of David’s reign. The third, composed of 1 and 2 Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, brings it down to the close of the Old Testament canon, after which we are dependent upon uninspired but authentic writings, till we reach the threshold of the gospel history. Each of these pentateuchs contains one book, which although necessary to complete the series, is rather of an episodic character. Such a book, in the first Pentateuch, is Leviticus, containing very few events, and chiefly occupied with legislation; in the second, that of Ruth, belonging strictly to the history of David’s family; in the third, that of Esther, which relates to a remarkable deliverance of the Jews in Persia.”

Another simple and serviceable division of these books may be obtained by reducing the number from twelve to nine, in the manner already described as current in the ancient church and synagogue. They will then consist of three groups of three, representing the three great periods of the history, the shorter periods being covered by the single books, and the second and longest, by the three double books. This yields the following scheme:

Joshua,	Samuel,	Ezra,
Judges,	Kings,	Nehemiah,
Ruth,	Chronicles,	Esther.

The first three relate to the period of the Hebrew commonwealth, or of the pure theocracy under Joshua and the Judges;

the next three contain the history of the monarchy, its institution by Samuel, with Saul as the first king; its culmination and splendour under David and Solomon, and finally its decline and overthrow. The last three belong to the period subsequent to the captivity, which was one of foreign domination. In each of these groups the first two members cover the entire period to which they relate; the third being supplementary, and recording additional facts, which did not fall strictly within the scope of the preceding. Thus, Ruth belongs to the period of the book of Judges, Chronicles passes afresh over that of Samuel and Kings, while the events recorded in Esther belong to the time included within the book of Ezra.

A characteristic common to all these books, with the exception of Nehemiah (ch. i. 1,) is, that they are anonymous. This is the more remarkable from the contrast with the books of the prophets, every one of which has a title prefixed, declaring the name of the author. The same fact recurs again in the Gospels and Acts of the New Testament, as contrasted with the Epistles and Revelation. The names of the writers are prefixed to the latter, with the exception of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it is easy to conjecture a special reason for the omission. The former are without titles, so far as their proper text is concerned, though a steadfast and well-accredited tradition has preserved to us the knowledge of their authors.

‡ The reason of this singular difference is doubtless to be sought in the nature of the case. The personality of the prophet was of the utmost importance. He claims to be a messenger sent from God, and the only voucher of the truth and authority of his declarations and injunctions is the certainty of his divine commission. An anonymous book of prophecy would, therefore, be without the requisite necessary to establish its own validity. The credit of the historian, on the other hand, rests less upon the weight attached to his own person, than upon the general recognition of the truth of his testimony by those amongst whom he lived, and who were equally cognizant of the facts with himself, or had access to the same sources of information. That these books were, upon their original publication, accepted as a true history, and that they have always

been so regarded since that time, sufficiently entitles them to our confidence in their veracity and accuracy.

This impersonality of the sacred history is the cause of another phenomena equally pervading. The events recorded are viewed in their purely objective character; the personal relations of the writer sink completely out of sight. Accordingly the inspired historians speak of transactions in which they took part themselves, precisely as if they were narrating the acts or the experience of others. They use the third person of themselves; they detail with the same artless simplicity things worthy of praise and of censure. Thus the author of the Pentateuch speaks of Moses just as he does of Joshua or any other of his contemporaries, and neither shrinks from saying, on the one hand, that he was meek above all men on the face of the earth, nor, on the other, from detailing how he spoke unadvisedly with his lips, and incurred the sentence of exclusion from the promised land. It is different with the prophets. In delivering their messages from God, they are not mere disinterested reporters, but are fulfilling their personal commission. It hence becomes of moment, not only that the message is correctly given, but that it is given by him who was specially entrusted with it. Accordingly we find that Daniel, Isaiah, and other prophets, in the historical chapters or sections of their books, speak of themselves in the third person, after the manner of historians, while in the properly prophetic chapters the first person is as regularly employed. The principal exception to the above remark is found in Ezra (vii. 28, viii. 1, etc.,) and Nehemiah, who betray themselves by the use of the first person, as Luke does occasionally in the Acts of the Apostles.

In the absence of any express testimony, concerning the date and authorship of the several historical books of the Old Testament, we are left to such incidental evidence as we are able to gather, chiefly from internal sources. This sort of evidence, however, if sufficiently clear and unambiguous, is always held to be the most satisfactory and convincing. It has this peculiar advantage, that it is not testimony delivered of set purpose to establish a particular end, but it is involuntarily given, in allusions and expressions, by which a writer betrays, without intending

it, the circumstances and the time in which he lived. It is thus lifted above all suspicion of intentional fraud or deception.

In the application of these internal criteria, it becomes necessary, first, to fix the limits and determine the constitution of each work separately. Are the twelve historical books so many distinct works, each of which is capable of being, and must be, investigated by itself? Opinions here have been far from accordant, and yet it is manifest that an error at this point would vitiate the most carefully formed conclusions. If the opinion expressed by Bertheau,* were correct, that all the books from Genesis to 2 Kings compose together one continuous and connected treatise, the theme of which was the sacred history from the beginning of the world to the Babylonish exile, of course our judgment respecting the date of the earlier portions of the canon would be materially different from that which would otherwise be entertained. Now it is a fact, that the histories of the Old Testament are consecutive for the most part, one taking up the narrative where its predecessor ends. Several of the books are, besides, linked in a formal manner at the beginning with the close of the one before them, thus showing that in the intention of their authors they are to be regarded in the light of sequels, or continuations. Thus the Pentateuch ends with the death of Moses; the book of Joshua connects itself directly with this by beginning, "Now, after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass," etc. This book ends with the death of Joshua, whereupon Judges begins, "Now, after the death of Joshua, it came to pass," etc.; and then, after a few preliminary statements necessary to a correct appreciation of what follows, it, as it were, begins afresh and makes its connection with the book of Joshua still more intimate and apparent by repeating ii. 6—9, the verses which conclude the life of Joshua, (Josh. xxiv. 28—31,) and attaching the following history to them. So Samuel begins where Judges leaves off, and Kings takes up the closing days of David, where Samuel drops them. It may be observed further, that the historical books commonly begin with the conjunction *and*, for which our translators have substituted the word *now*. This simple con-

* Das Buch der Richter und Rut, Erklärt, p. xxvii.

nective serves to intimate that the book so beginning is not a beginning *de novo*, but a resumption of a theme which had previously been treated elsewhere—a continuation of the same inspired record with the books which go before. This is the case even with Ruth and Esther, which do not directly continue the narrative of any preceding book, but nevertheless exhibit the initial and expressive “*and*,” thereby declaring themselves to be additions to the inspired history previously put on record.

A certain measure of formal and external unity is thus given to the entire Old Testament history, which is rendered yet more striking and impressive by the inner spiritual unity which likewise pervades it. The same great ideas animate the whole; the work of preparation for the coming of the Son of God and the Son of man, rolls steadily forward, one divine plan developing in majestic grandeur from first to last. And the spirit of the historians is one throughout. We everywhere meet the same lofty appreciation of the task of Israel, the same abasing of the human, and exaltation of the divine, the same theocratic character estimating everything, not from a merely national or worldly point of view, but from its bearing on the kingdom of God.

All this it is most interesting to note, as showing the oneness of its divine subject and its divine author. But a further examination will soon show that this is a unity in the midst of diversity. It is the work of one overruling and directing Spirit, but wrought by a number of human agents. These various works, though fitted thus together, are yet palpably distinct, as shown by the completeness of each taken singly in its theme and in its execution, and by the diversity of plan prevailing in each. It would require an analysis of each of these books, and an investigation of its plan and structure, to exhibit this in detail. This cannot of course be attempted here. It is sufficient for the purposes of this article to remark, that 1st and 2d Chronicles are not two separate and independent works, but form together one production. This is shown by their unity of plan and the close connection of the parts, and from the incompleteness of either if sundered from the other. It is further certified by the express testimony of tradition. These two books, like the two of Samuel and the two of Kings, were anciently

reckoned one. They were so regarded and spoken of by the Jews; they are so in Hebrew manuscripts. The division was introduced by the Septuagint translators, but was never recognised in the original text, until the time of Bomberg, when it was admitted into printed editions of the Hebrew Bible; and here its modern character still appears, in the circumstance that the masoretic notes occurring at the end of every book, are not found at the end of First, but only of Second Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles.

It may be further remarked, that Chronicles forms a complete work, and is not merely the earlier portion of an historical treatise, of which Ezra is to be regarded as the later and concluding portion. The apocryphal 1 Esdras combines them, as though they were one continuous production, and the identity of the closing verses of Chronicles with the opening verses of Ezra has been thought to indicate that they were originally one, but have been divided in the same way that the two books of Chronicles themselves were divided. But whatever may be the significance of the facts just referred to, they cannot establish the original oneness of Chronicles and Ezra. There is no ancient testimony in its favour; and they are so distinct in plan and method that they must have been independent works.

It has been intimated that the constitution of these various works must be inquired into, as well as their individual extent, as preliminary to a settlement of their date from internal criteria. Are they, as they now stand, the productions each of a single author, so that all its parts date from the same period? or are they to be in each case parcelled among a variety of authors belonging to different ages? A book constituted as the Psalms, for example, must not be dealt with as though it were the production of a single writer. The clearest proof that any given number of the Psalms were prepared by David, would not establish his authorship of the rest, nor the collection of the whole by him. Or, if the hypothesis could be established of the successive compilation of certain books, as some have argued for it in the case of Kings, supposing that different prophets, Isaiah among the rest, wrote portions of it, bringing the narrative down, step by step, until at length it was completed; this would also preclude the possibility of arguing with any con-

fidence from criteria found in one part to the date of any other part or section. Each distinct portion must then be settled, if it can be settled at all, by its own distinct evidence. Or again, if a work be not so much an original production as a compilation from works previously existing, there will be need of caution in distinguishing what belongs to the author of the work before us, from what belongs purely to those writers from whom his materials are drawn, or his extracts are made. Thus, for example, where it is said by the writer of the book of Joshua, that the stones set upon the bed of Jordan are there *unto this day*, Josh. iv. 9, and that Rahab dwelleth in Israel *unto this day*, Josh. vi. 25, we are warranted in inferring that when that book was written those stones were still there, and Rahab was still living; for Joshua is demonstrably one continuous production of a single writer. But it could not be similarly inferred from 2 Chron. v. 9, that Chronicles was written while the ark was still in the most holy place, and consequently the temple was still standing, for this work is professedly compiled from preëxisting writings, whose language it here simply transfers. The work from which that extract was made, was written while the facts were as it describes; but things had changed before Chronicles itself was prepared. If now the question were as to the sources of Chronicles, and what could be learned respecting their character and date, every thing should be carefully collated, which could be shown to belong to them in their original form, and to have been simply extracted without material alteration. As, however, our present question concerns not them, but Chronicles itself, we must draw our inferences from what betrays the author of this production in its present form. The principal criteria which can be relied upon for this purpose are the following, viz.

1. The furthest limit to which the history is continued. Of course the book is subsequent to the latest event which it records; this is the edict of Cyrus, in the first year of his reign, for the restoration of the Jews from captivity. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.

2. The limit of the genealogies. The line of David (Chron. iii.) is, on account of the special interest attaching to it, continued to a further point than any of the others; the proba-

bility is that the writer brings it down to his own time. In vs. 19—21, he mentions Zerubbabel who came up (Ezra ii. 2) with the first colony of returning captives, gives the names of his children, and of the children of Hananiah, and of his sons, the grandchildren consequently of Zerubbabel. The latter part of verse 21 is obscure; after mentioning the names of Zerubbabel's grandchildren, these words follow: "The sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah," and then the descendants of the last named Shechaniah are traced through four generations. Who this Shechaniah and the other persons named with him are, is not said. Some are disposed to give the verse up as unintelligible, and think it an interpolation, or hopelessly corrupt. Others, with the view of bringing down the composition of Chronicles to the latest possible period, make Shechaniah, without a particle of justification from the text of the passage, to be a son of Zerubbabel's grandson previously named, and then claim that we have here the descendants of Zerubbabel traced to the seventh generation, and, consequently, Chronicles cannot have been written until the seventh generation after the return from exile. This conclusion is utterly unwarranted, however. The fact of the case appears to be, that the names introduced at the close of verse 21, without explanation, are the names of other prominent and well-known families connected with the line of David's descendants, parallel to, but not descended from, the family of Zerubbabel. As we cannot identify the heads of these families, and have no means of ascertaining precisely when they lived, they can afford us no criterion of date, unless, as has been suspected, though it cannot be rigorously proved, the Hattush, verse 22, is the same with the Hattush mentioned Ezra viii. 2, as having gone up with Ezra from the captivity in the reign of Artaxerxes I. (Longimanus,) 78 years after the return of the first colony. In that case the genealogy there continued to the grandsons of a brother of Hattush, brings us down to the grandsons of a contemporary of Ezra, a record which could readily be made in the lifetime of Ezra.

3. A criterion of doubtful weight has been sought in the list of names, 1 Chron. ix. 17, 18, and the statement there made respecting them. Certain persons are mentioned as porters, of

whom it is said that they “*hitherto* (עַד הַיּוֹם) *until this time,*) waited in the king’s gate eastward.” Some of these same names reappear, Neh. xii. 25, 26, as porters keeping ward at the threshold of the gates in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. The only question is, whether the identity of names in two or three instances is sufficient to establish the identity of persons: if so, the time of the writer is fixed contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah.

4. The mention made of *Darics*, 1 Chron. xxix. 7, (“*drams,*” Eng. ver.) also points in the same direction. The “*daric,*” as is well known, was a Persian coin, and the mention of it in this passage shows that it must have been well known to the Jews at this time, and current among them. They must consequently have been under the Persian government at the time this book was written. This positively refutes the idea that it was written after the Persian empire had been overthrown by Alexander, and the Greek empire had usurped its place, or later still, in the time of the Maccabees, because then Greek coins had been substituted for the Persian, as appears not only from the nature of the case, but from the Apocryphal books which belong to this period, Tobit v. 15, and 2 Macc. xii. 43, where the reckoning is in Greek *drachmas*.

The attempt has been made to convert the mention of this coin to a directly opposite use, and infer from it a date long posterior to the time of Ezra, for the following reasons, viz.

(1.) The word occurs in the enumeration of the sums contributed during the life of David for the building of the temple. This, it is said, betrays gross ignorance on the part of the writer, that he should have supposed this coin to have been in circulation in David’s days; such a blunder could only have been possible when the origin of the coin was no longer known. But admitting that this was the meaning of the writer, the force of the argument is not very apparent. How is such a blunder impossible in the days of Ezra, and yet possible a few generations after? It might prove the writer an ignoramus, but surely does not prove when he lived. It is, however, perfectly gratuitous to fasten such a blunder on the writer. He mentions “ten thousand darics” not as the denomination of coin in which these sums were contributed in David’s days, but

as the gross amount. It was the coin current at the time of the writer, and the amount so stated would be better apprehended by his readers. It is as if an American writer, in giving the amount of the national debt of Great Britain, should reckon it in dollars: it surely would be no fair inference from this, that he was not aware that the British currency was not dollars, but pounds sterling. He merely states a foreign sum in a familiar currency.

(2.) It is said that the "daric" derives its name from Darius Hystaspis, and that some time must have elapsed before it could have found circulation in Judea. Admitting this statement, however, it does not prove the purpose for which it is alleged. Darius Hystaspis ascended the throne of Persia sixty-three years before Ezra came with the band of colonists that he brought up from captivity. The coin had, undoubtedly, circulated by that time into all parts of the empire. It has been admitted that the "daric" derived its name from Darius Hystaspis, because that is the opinion of Grote, Böckh, and other able antiquaries, and it is of no material consequence to us to dispute it. It ought to be added, however, that some eminent scholars, *e. g.*, Prideaux, Keil, Hengstenberg, and others, are not disposed to make that admission, and it does seem, upon an examination of the case, as though it rested upon a very slender foundation. The only direct testimony to the point is that of Hesychius, the Alexandrian grammarian and lexicographer, who lived probably as late as the end of the fourth century after Christ. He says, "Darics were so called, *as some say*, from Darius, king of the Persians." A passage in Herodotus is also appealed to, in which he speaks of Darius Hystaspis introducing a new and pure coinage, but without saying that darics were first coined by him, or derived their name from him. On the other hand, Suidas, Harpocration, and a scholiast upon Aristophanes, unite in saying that the darics were so named, not from Darius Hystaspis, but from an older Darius. Xenophon also, in more than one passage, speaks of "darics" in the time of Cyrus, of course before the time of Hystaspis. Consequently, the scholars above referred to are of opinion that the "darics" either received their name from Darius, the uncle and predecessor of Cyrus, spoken of in

Dan. ix. 1, xi. 1, as Darius the Mede, or else that *Darius*, which is the Persian word for *king*, was a general title of the Persian monarchs, and that *daric* consequently means simply the *royal coin*, and is not derived from the name of any particular monarch; so that the origin of it must be left undetermined. Whatever view be taken of this question, however, our conclusion from the occurrence of the word remains undisturbed: a book in which money is reckoned by "darics" must have been written during the time that the Jews were under the Persian rule; and the Persian empire was overturned within a century after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

5. Another word occurs twice in this same chapter, which affords another probable argument of date, viz., בְּרִירָה 1 Chron. xxix. 1, 19, as applied to the temple. This is the word constantly applied in Esther, Daniel, and Nehemiah, to the castle or fortified palace of the Persian monarchs in their capital city Shusan. Nehemiah, in two instances, (ii. 8, vii. 2,) uses this word of a structure in Jerusalem which he erected, but which he in the former passage expressly distinguishes from the temple proper. He means by it the fortification connected with the temple, called at a later period the tower of Antonia, and which Josephus calls *βασις*, by transferring this Hebrew word to the Greek. Now, it is a plausible opinion that the use of this word in the manner referred to in the books of Chronicles, proves them to have been written before the erection of this tower by Nehemiah. After that tower was constructed and called בְּרִירָה, the temple could not have been called by that name without danger of misapprehension and mistake.

6. The history of the canon shows that this book cannot belong to a later period than that of Ezra and Nehemiah, because it is the unanimous tradition of the Jews that the canon was collected by Ezra: Josephus expressly declares that no addition or alteration was made in the canon from that time onward. It is impossible that such statements could have been made, if a book so large as Chronicles had been added at a later period, and especially so late as the time of the Maccabees, to which some critics would refer it.

*7. The last verses of Chronicles are repeated as the opening verses of Ezra. This is an evident proof that Chronicles was

written before the book of Ezra, and as there is every reason to believe that the latter was written by Ezra himself, Chronicles cannot have been written later than the time of Ezra. Some critics have endeavoured to get rid of this argument by alleging that these verses are taken from Ezra by the author of Chronicles, and not from Chronicles by Ezra, and that consequently Chronicles must have been written after Ezra and not before it. It is apparent, however, from a simple inspection of the passage, that this supposition is devoid of all probability, and for the following reasons. (1.) Ezra adopts these verses at the beginning of his book for the sake of linking his narrative with the history that preceded; just as the writer of the book of Judges borrows a few verses, (ii. 6-10,) from the close of the history of Joshua for the same reason. (2.) The book of Ezra begins with the conjunction *and*; this *and* is natural in the connection in which it occurs in Chronicles xxxvi. 22, but is inexplicable at the beginning of a book, unless as implying a connection with the antecedent history. (3.) The reference in these verses to the prophecy of Jeremiah contains an allusion to the antecedent verse (ver. 21,) in Chronicles, where that prediction is spoken of.

The conclusion from the arguments now recited is, that the books of Chronicles *must have been written in the life-time of Ezra*. To this various objections have been brought:

1. The first is derived from the statement made 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, that the desolation of the land and captivity in Babylon lasted seventy years. This, it is said, is a palpable error; from the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, B. C. 588, to the edict of Cyrus restoring the Jews to their own land, B. C. 536, was only a period of fifty-two years. It could not have been reckoned to be seventy years by a person who lived just after the close of the exile. This error could only have arisen centuries afterwards, when the exact chronology of the period was forgotten or lost sight of, and it was inferred from the prophecy of Jeremiah that this must have been the duration of it. In reply to this it may be said, (1.) That Jeremiah expressly predicted, (Jer. xxv. 11, xxix. 10,) that the captivity at Babylon should continue seventy years; and if he was a true prophet that must have been its duration.

It has been said, indeed, that this is merely intended by Jeremiah as a round number, and that it is not the custom of the prophets to foretell the exact dates of the events which they predict. But there are numerous other instances in which exact dates are given in predictions, *e. g.* Isa. vii. 8, "Within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people;" xvi. 14, "Within three years, as the years of an hireling, (*i. e.* exactly measured, neither more nor less,) and the glory of Moab shall be contemned;" xxi. 16, "Within a year, according to the years of a hireling, all the glory of Kedar shall fail." Daniel (ix. 24) predicts that there will be seventy weeks of years to the coming of the Messiah. It is also plain that Daniel (ix. 2) expected the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prediction in seventy years. (2.) His prediction is represented as fulfilled, not only by the author of Chronicles, but by Ezra (i. 1) who certainly must have been conversant with the facts. (3.) The prophet Zechariah, who lived just after the exile, expressly says, in two passages, (i. 12, vii. 5,) that the exile lasted seventy years. So that if the reckoning were based on an error, it was an error current in that generation which returned from exile, and not one that arose at a later period. (4.) It can be shown that it is correct. The beginning of the exile is to be reckoned, not from the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, but from the third or fourth year of Jehoiakim, when the city was first taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and the first deportation made, Dan. i. 1, B. C. 606. The exile began with the carrying away of the first captives, and ended with the decree of Cyrus, and the return of the first colony from exile; and the interval was precisely that which Jeremiah had predicted. The carrying into exile was one of successive acts of deportation, just as the return was by successive colonies, at distant intervals; but if we reckon from the beginning of the one to the beginning of the other, we shall have exactly seventy years. Or, if the destruction of the temple be made the point of beginning, and we reckon from that until the temple was once more rebuilt, we shall have again seventy years.

2. The mention of Satan, 1 Chron. xxi. 1. The objection is that the Jews received their idea of Satan from the Persian

doctrine of Ahriman, an evil principle independent from the good, and warring against him.

But (1), even were it to be admitted that the Jewish notion of an evil spirit were derived from this source, it would not answer the purpose for which it is here alleged, of proving a date later than Ezra. The people were at this very time under Persian rule, and were already open to all the influence which we can suppose to have been exerted from that quarter.

(2.) Satan is not only similarly mentioned, Zech. iii. 1, in a book belonging, as is confessed, to this same period, but in the far older book of Job i. 6, etc. And not to mention other proofs of the same thing, the doctrine of an evil spirit is implied in the very first chapters of Genesis, in the account of the temptation and fall of our first parents.

(3.) The Persian notion of an original and independent principle of evil, is, besides, so different from the scriptural doctrine of Satan, a dependent spirit, created holy, but fallen through his own fault, that their common origin is not supposable; even if the very conception of an immediate divine revelation in the Scriptures did not preclude the idea of borrowing tenets from Pagan nations.

3. The manner in which "fasting" is spoken of, 2 Chron. xx. 3. Jehoshaphat, at a time of extreme peril, sets himself to seek the Lord, and with this view proclaims a fast. Now, it is alleged, that when fasting is spoken of in earlier books, it is merely in token of grief; that the idea of the meritoriousness of fasting, and other ascetic practices belongs to a period much later than the exile. But, apart from the fact that this objection tacitly assumes that the writer has falsified the history for the sake of introducing his own ideas into it, the idea of fasting which we find here, is the same which appears universally in the Scriptures. In Judges xx. 26, the children of Israel wept and fasted, as an act of humiliation before God, and to obtain his favour. So in the public humiliation at Mizpeh in the days of Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 6. David (2 Sam. xii. 16) fasted during the sickness of his child; and that this was not purely from grief, but as a means of obtaining the Lord's favour, appears from verse 20, that upon the death of the child he again ate bread. The prophets also speak of it in the same way, Joel ii.

12, "Turn ye to me with all your heart, and with fasting," &c. Jer. xiv. 12, "When they fast, I will not hear their cry." And during the distresses of the exile, and the period that followed, fasting appears to have been observed with special frequency and strictness, so that this is just the time when we would expect unusual stress to be laid upon that observance; thus Dan. ix. 3, x. 13; Zech. vii. 5; Ezra x. 6; Neh. i. 4.

4. The position of Chronicles as the last book in the canon, instead of standing in the second division of it, along with Samuel and Kings, is also alleged as evidencing the lateness of its date. If this book was in existence when the canon was first collected and arranged, why, it is asked, was it not put along with Samuel and Kings? Why does it stand in a subsequent and entirely different division of the canon, among the Hagiographa, and that, too, the very last book of the Hagiographa? Does this not make it probable that it was not written until long after the other Scriptures were gathered and definitely arranged in a fixed order, which could not be disturbed, so that it was just only possible to add it at the end? We answer, not at all. The distinction between the second and third divisions of the canon is, as has been stated in a previous part of this article, that the second division, called Prophets, consists of books written by those who were by profession, and technically, prophets; those in the third division are written by men equally inspired, but who were not in the strict sense of the word prophets. This is, doubtless, the reason, though we have not the means of showing it in this particular case, why Samuel and Kings are in the second division of the canon; they were written by prophets. Chronicles, on the other hand, belongs to the third division, because it was written by an inspired man who was not a prophet. Its being placed among the Hagiographa has nothing to do with the time when it was written. Neither does its standing as the last book in the Hagiographa prove it later than all the other books in this division of the canon. The contrary is certain in one case at least. It was certainly written before the book of Ezra, as has been shown already, although it stands after it. The fact is, that the Hagiographa are not arranged upon a chronological principle; the Lamentations of Jeremiah stand before Eccle-

siastes, written by Solomon; Esther stands before Daniel, though written after it; and Psalms stands first in the series, though some Psalms contained in the book were not written until after the exile. And those who make use of this objection, do not themselves entertain the opinion that the books of the Hagiographa are arranged chronologically. The objection is therefore palpably devoid of all force.

5. It is alleged that the writer of the books has made mistakes in some of the names which he records, that can only be accounted for in case the books from which he drew his materials were written not in the old Jewish letter, but in the more modern square character; whence it is inferred that these books could not have been written until after the square character was introduced among the Jews. The ground of this allegation is, that certain names are written differently in Chronicles from that they are in Kings, and in earlier books of the Bible; and it is assumed that this difference has arisen from mistaking similar letters: thus \daleth for κ , Gen. x. 3, Riphath is in 1 Chron. i. 6, Diphath; Gen. x. 4, Dodanim is in 1 Chron. i. 7, Rodanim; \daleth for κ , Zabdi, Neh. xi. 17, is Zichri, 1 Chron. ix. 15; \daleth for κ , Harodite, 2 Sam. xxiii. 25, is Harorite 1 Chron. xi. 27; and as the letters thus confounded or interchanged are nearly alike in the more modern or square Hebrew character, the inference is that this was the one in use when the interchange was made and the book written.

But (1.) This objection assumes that whenever the same name appears in two divergent forms, one of them is erroneous, whereas both forms may have been in actual use; this we know to have been the case with regard to some names of frequent occurrence, as the name of *Hiram*, king of Tyre, (so called in Samuel and Kings,) is in Chronicles constantly spelled *Huram*, 2 Chron. ii. 3, etc.; the regularity with which this occurs forbids the supposition of its being a mistake—so the name *Nebuchadnezzar* is also spelled *Nebuchadrezzar*, Jer. xxxix. 1, &c., and *Joshua* is also *Jeshua*, Neh. viii. 17.

(2.) It is assumed that the mistake is always in the book of Chronicles, and always made by the author of the book himself. If a textual error must be assumed, as is not improbable in a few cases, why is it necessarily the book of Chronicles that

is wrong, and why may not the error in Chronicles, or in the parallel narrative, as the case may be, be with greater likelihood imputed to subsequent transcribers? Errors of transcription might very easily arise and be perpetuated in these long lists of names otherwise unknown.

(3.) This objection may be met on its own ground, by the fact that some changes of proper names are more easily accounted for if the old form of the letter was current; thus there is an occasional interchange of ך and ם, which bear no resemblance in the modern square letter, though it is supposable they might be mistaken for one another in the old letter. *Ain*, Josh. xxi. 16, is Ashan, 1 Chron. vi. 44, (Eng. ver., v. 59,) &c. And it should be observed that ך and ך are quite as much alike in the ancient as in the more modern form of the letter; so of some other letters. Also some names are altered by an interchange of letters which are not alike in either the ancient or modern form of the letters.

(4.) The objection proves too much, and consequently proves nothing. No one has ventured to assert that Chronicles is of later date than the time of the Maccabees. But the coins struck in the days of the Maccabees show that the old letter was then in use; and it is probable that the existing form of the letter did not become current until near the time of Christ. If the objection proves anything, it proves that Chronicles was not written until near the time of Christ. But it is well known not only to have existed, but to have been translated into Greek in the LXX. long before that time.

6. The character of the language in the book is said to betray a very late date. This is urged both on the ground that it contains many Chaldæisms, whether in grammatical forms, or in the use of words of Chaldee origin, different from the Hebrew words employed ordinarily by older writers to express the same idea, and also on the ground of the larger use of the vowel letters, the *scriptio plena* being employed where older writers have the *scriptio defectiva*. What is alleged respecting the language of this book, is true to a certain extent; but this is satisfactorily accounted for by assuming that it was written shortly after the termination of the exile. The Hebrew was inclining to the Chaldee even before the exile.

During their captivity the Jews were placed among people speaking the Chaldee; and the Hebrew was either then, or shortly after, supplanted by the Chaldee as the language of the people. The language of Chronicles is on a par with other writings of the same period. It is even purer than some of them, *e. g.*, Ezekiel: Ezra and Daniel, belonging to the same period, are partly written in Chaldee. As to the full and defective mode of writing the vowels, there was no fixed usage at any period of the language; it was in many cases optional to write or to omit the vowel letters, the same word being differently written in the same connection. The general fact is that, on the whole, there is a greater tendency to their employment in the later than in the earlier writers; but this is not the case in Chronicles to a greater extent than in other contemporaneous writings.

It has even been alleged that the writer of Chronicles shows that Hebrew was no longer well understood by his readers, by substituting easier and simpler expressions for those more difficult and obscure; and that he sometimes reveals his own ignorance of the language by himself mistaking its meaning. It is, however, a pretty bold assumption in a modern critic, that he understands the Hebrew better than the author of this book. And the composition of a work in Hebrew has no parallel at a later date than the period immediately following the exile.

7. It is said that the spirit of hostility to the kingdom of Israel revealed in this book, is such as did not exist until the split between the Jews and Samaritans became irreconcilable, and the hatred between them reached its highest point, which it did not do until the Samaritans had built their own temple on Gerizim, in opposition to that at Jerusalem.

This objection is, however, built upon such baseless assumptions, that it is difficult to understand how it could ever have been seriously urged. (1.) There is no hostility to the kingdom of Israel in this book more than in other books of the Bible. It speaks of their schism and their apostasy from God with abhorrence, but these are spoken of elsewhere in similar terms, so that it is nothing peculiar to this book. And if there were evidence of an unusual degree of hostility, as the objection assumes, it would rather be an argument of earlier than of

later date; for the longer we assume the book to have been written after the kingdom of the ten tribes had been overturned and its members carried into exile, the more we might suppose that the bitterness and rivalry, felt so long as the kingdom existed, would have been allayed. (2.) At any rate, bitterness toward Israel has nothing to do with bitterness towards the Samaritans. This objection substitutes the Samaritans for the kingdom of the ten tribes, as though they were identical. But the Samaritans were not Israelites; they were the descendants of heathen colonists introduced into that territory, as appears from 2 Kings xvii. 24. (3.) Even if hostility to Israel was implied in this book, and this was identical with hostility to the Samaritans, this would be no proof of later date. The rise of the Jews' hostility to the Samaritans is, by the objection, referred to a period long subsequent to the exile, when there is the most abundant evidence of this hostility immediately upon the return of the Jews from their captivity. When the Samaritans found that the Jews would not recognise them as Israelites, nor allow them to take part in rebuilding the temple, they did everything they could to hinder them, and the most bitter feud sprang up between them. Ezra iv. 1—5, &c.

8. The last objection to referring these books to the time of Ezra is drawn from what has been styled their mythological character and Levitical spirit. By a mythological spirit, these objectors mean a disposition to record the supernatural. But there are actually fewer miracles recorded in these books than in the books of Kings. So that, even on the infidel hypothesis that miracles are mere legendary fictions, the record of them creates no reason why Chronicles should be referred to a later period than the other books of the Old Testament, many of which record far more, and those of a more stupendous character, than are to be found in these books.

By a Levitical spirit, is meant a high regard for, and earnest attachment to, the ceremonial institutions of Moses. And this does certainly characterize these books in a remarkable degree. There is no subject upon which the writer dwells at greater length, or with more evident interest, than in what he details respecting the public worship of God, the regulations made by pious princes concerning it, and the measures taken for its

restoration, after periods of idolatrous neglect. But the revived interest in religious worship which marked the period immediately following the exile, makes us look to it as above all others the time in which we would imagine such a book as this to have been written. After the long interruption of the exile, the people, sifted and purified by suffering, turned with an eagerness almost surpassing that of any previous period, to the law of Moses, and their ancestral worship. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah bear abundant testimony to the zeal and earnestness with which everything relating to the ritual service was sought out and attended to. The spirit of this book is in this respect precisely the spirit of the returning exiles.

There is no valid objection, consequently, to the conclusion which we have before reached, that the books of Chronicles were written in the time of Ezra. Is it possible to go beyond this and identify the author? The current tradition among the Jews, and the opinion universally entertained by Christian writers down to comparatively modern times is, that Ezra was himself the author of these books, as well as the one that bears his name. Some able students of the Scriptures have been disposed to favour the hypothesis that the books of Chronicles and that of Ezra originally and properly constituted one book, and that the existing division is unauthorized, and ought not to be regarded.

There is much more to favour the hypothesis, that they are distinct works by the same author. (1.) This, as has just been said, has the sanction of tradition. (2.) The identity of the closing verses of Chronicles and the opening verses of Ezra, though, of course, not in itself conclusive, yet agrees very well with this view of the case. (3.) Its probability is further increased by a striking similarity, which has been observed, in style, in the use of words in peculiar senses, and in favourite forms of expression between the books of Chronicles and the book of Ezra. While, therefore, it cannot perhaps be rigorously proved that Ezra is the author of Chronicles, this may be regarded as at least an ancient and not improbable opinion.