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Art. I. PROBLEMS FOR EDUCATED MINDS IN AMERICA
IN THE NEW CENTURY.

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CERTAINLY the college began the advance one hundred years ago. The six colleges which existed at that time exerted, no doubt, as strong an influence over the nation as our three hundred and thirty colleges now do. Around the sources of opinion the communities of liberty grew. The great questions which were then throbbing in the brain, were profound principles, which needed for their solution the very best order of mind. Neither rustics nor novices could have solved them. The leaders then were men of penetrating vision. They looked far into the century. Their power of analysis, their discrimination, their logical acumen, their resources in learning, their clearness of expression, their broad comprehension and wise adjustment of difficult and unlike subjects, were largely the result of superior education. From leaders who were accomplished students, bred either in the college or in the local culture which the college created, came those really sublime plans which now, after a hundred years, constitute *our* foundation for the future.

We now stand as they did, looking out upon a new century, with opening vistas which end we know not where. The young men who go out just now from our institutions, go out to problems perhaps even greater than those which invited the courage and the patriotism of our fathers. It is a new and a grand era of life into which they now step. Their standpoint is that of the college—the standpoint of the *educated mind*.

**Art. II.—THE PERPETUAL AUTHORITY OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT.**

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THE Old Testament has, from the beginning, been assailed by those who deny all supernatural religion. Rightly perceiving that the Old is the basis of the New Testament, and linked indissolubly with it, they have made their thrusts at what they esteemed its vulnerable points, with the view of overturning the entire structure, and burying Christianity beneath the ruins of the former dispensation. It has also been the object of attack from within, as well as from without. It has been assailed professedly in the interests of Christianity itself. By early gnostics, by rationalizing interpreters of later times, by those who assume to speak oracularly as leaders of modern thought, it has been declared to be untenable and indefensible before the march of Christian enlightenment, and its summary abandonment is pronounced essential to the safety of the citadel. It has been claimed that the morality represented or embodied in the Scriptures of the Old Testament is so inferior, and even contrary, to the morality inculcated by our Lord, that the common doctrine of plenary inspiration must be at fault, so far as regards the organs of divine communication prior to Christ himself; that Moses and the prophets cannot in these matters have expressed the mind of God purely and without mistake; their utterances and their writings are not the unadulterated word of God, binding absolutely and unconditionally upon the conscience; but a distinction must be made between that in their teachings which really came from God, and an admixture of human imperfection which arose from their own inadequate conceptions, or their imperfectly sanctified nature.

On the contrary, it was expressly taught by our Lord and his apostles, and it has been from the beginning the common faith of the church, that all the Scriptures of the Old Testament are the Word of God; that they were given by inspiration of God; that the holy men who wrote them spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The Old Testament contains no errors that require correction, no mistakes due to the inadequacy of the organ employed to transmit the divine will.

It precisely represented the mind of God to the people to whom it was given, and for the dispensation under which they lived, as unerringly as the instructions of our blessed Lord expressed the mind of God to those to whom he spake.

At the same time, and upon the same authority, it is maintained that the Old Testament does not contain the ultimate and final form of divine revelation ; it does not make known the truth as fully nor as clearly as it has since been disclosed in the New Testament. It is the infallible word of God, containing the truth and nothing but the truth ; but as compared with the New Testament it is relatively incomplete, for it does not contain the whole truth in that unveiled and developed form in which it has now been made known under the dispensation of the Gospel. This relative imperfection of the Old Testament involves, however, no disparagement of its plenary inspiration ; for it is a necessary sequence from the fundamental fact, that the Most High chose to make his revelation to man a gradual one. It being his sovereign pleasure to communicate the truth to men with growing distinctness and completeness, this revelation must of course be incomplete until the last lessons have been given ; and yet this does not impair the certainty or the accuracy of that which, up to any given time, has been actually taught. There must be remaining obscurities which only the latest and fullest instructions will effectually clear up. And as truth and duty are correlative, every obscurity resting on the truth involves a corresponding inadequacy in the presentation of duty. If now it casts no reflection upon the unchangeable nature of God, that he should unfold his revelation gradually, neither is it inconsistent with the immutability of truth and rectitude, that the sphere of faith and duty should be from time to time enlarged, and that they who took their lessons from the mouth of Christ should be required both to believe and to do what was neither known by nor enjoined upon those who were taught by Moses.

And our Lord himself said to his disciples, at the very close of his earthly ministry : " I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." Christ's own personal instructions are here stated by himself to be incomplete, and requiring to be supplemented by what the

Holy Ghost would reveal to his apostles after his departure ; but this argues no imperfection or want of absolute truth in what our Lord did see fit to teach. And after all the disclosures made by the Spirit of inspiration, every thing is not unfolded to us now which shall be unfolded in the future world. The realm of truth and duty will then have an enlargement beyond anything that we can now conceive.

It may not be possible for us to comprehend all the reasons why the revelation of God has been thus gradual. But there are some determining considerations which lie upon the surface, and which may be referred to here, because they will help us to a juster view of the relation which the Old Testament sustains to the New.

It would have been premature to bring into full and developed operation God's great plan of saving mercy before the need of it had first been demonstrated in the actual experience of mankind. If the amazing scheme devised for the recovery of lost man had been set in full operation immediately upon the fall, if the Son of God had at once become incarnate, and wrought his work of expiation, and the gospel had been preached in all its completeness to Adam, and attended with the mighty power of the Spirit sent down from on high, and the whole race had been redeemed from the outset, it would never have been known from what depths of degradation and woe man had been rescued, nor how impossible it was for him ever to have delivered himself. The dismal experience of many long centuries, during which the nations were left to walk in their own ways, was needed to show that, in spite of all that civilization and philosophy and the refinements of art and the productions of genius could effect, man was hopelessly depraved, and the regeneration, whether of the individual or of the race, could only be effected by a divine interposition. The development of the fact, that the world was in absolute and perishing need of the gospel, required a protracted period, so that the actual coming in of the gospel must, during all this while, be deferred.

As the work of redemption by the Son of God was to be itself postponed for this long interval, so must any full and adequate disclosure of what this work was to be, not only because the demonstration of the need must precede the statement as

well as the introduction of the only available remedy, but because mere verbal lessons are of small account unless the objects to which they relate are present to the mind. Words are barren and empty, if there is nothing to suggest the ideas which they are intended to convey. It were idle to speak to the blind of colors, or to the deaf of sounds. God does not teach men in this unmeaning way. When, for example, he would instruct us respecting his own nature and attributes, he not merely tells us in words of his almighty power and infinite wisdom, but he sets before us in the works of his hands that which lifts us to some conception of what these words signify. Gospel doctrines are based upon and interwoven with gospel facts, and the former cannot be intelligibly communicated without a prior knowledge of the latter. In order that the truth respecting the person and work of Christ should be properly conveyed to the minds of men, he must first make his appearance among them.

But while the full light of the gospel could not shine upon men until the advent of the great Redeemer, the world was not to be left absolutely without light and without hope during all this long and dreary interval. A course of training and of preparation was instituted from the very beginning, with a double end in view. One was, by a progressive scheme of instruction, to prepare the minds of men by degrees for the comprehension and the reception of the gospel when the time for its open promulgation should arrive. The other was, to bless and save those who should live before the gospel came. The means necessary to accomplish both these ends were the very same; the saving truths of the gospel were to be lodged in men's minds in advance, and they were to be familiarized with them by repeated inculcation. In order to this, the identical truths, which were to have their highest embodiment in Christ and in his work of grace and salvation, were exhibited beforehand to men in elementary forms and in outward visible applications. By a comprehensive system of symbolic representation, evangelical truths were shadowed forth by the prominent events in the sacred history, by prominent personages, and by legal institutions. All was divinely conducted and divinely appointed, and religious ideas found constant embodiment in the most varied forms in the experience of successive

generations, that thus the minds of men might be thoroughly imbued with them, both in order to their own individual salvation and to the preparation of the world for the acceptance of the gospel, when the fulness of time should arrive. And this was, to a certain extent, accomplished, notwithstanding the fact, that all the while a veil necessarily lay over the truth, the conditions not being yet in existence which were requisite to its exhibition with the clearness and amplitude that belongs to it in the gospel.

A further result of this preliminary shading of the truth was its enfeebled power over the heart and the life. The general forms of a landscape may be revealed by the twilight, but its individual features will not stand forth with the same distinctness as when bathed in the searching light of day. So the main outlines of human obligation to God and man are set forth in their true and unchanging reality in the Old Testament; but there are many details which are not specifically announced, nor put into the shape of formal enactments, for the regulation of human conduct. And especially in regard to civil and social usages, much was allowed to shape itself under the guidance of controlling principles, as their application would come to be seen. The correction of existing evils and abuses of a public nature was left to be gradually effected by instilling those sentiments and that sense of obligation which would silently undermine them, instead of the futile attempt being made to effect their instant extirpation by positive enactments. This is what our Saviour means when he says that Moses did not impose certain restrictions upon the people on account of the hardness of their hearts. If right principles are first established, all the rest will follow in healthy development. Life, to be solid and true, should be a growth from within, not constrained into rigid forms from without.

We are now prepared to approach the question of the perpetual obligation of the Old Testament, a question which admits of a ready answer on the basis of the principles now laid down. The Old Testament is the New in undeveloped germ or embryo. Its form is temporary, because it belongs to a preliminary stage of instruction; the truth was not yet unfolded to its own proper dimensions, and was set forth in emblems and elementary applications. But, in its essence and its true

intent, it abides and is eternal. It was not abolished and superseded by the New Testament, but merged and perpetuated in it. The animal which has burst the shell that cramped its expanding life, and formed another better adapted to the new stage of being upon which it has entered, is not a different animal from that it was before. The youth grown up to manhood has altered in very many respects, but he is the same identical person, nevertheless. The New Testament is new only in being a larger and freer dispensation of the very same grace which had been revealed only less clearly and fully from the beginning. There is the same God, demanding the same exclusive worship and homage of the heart, the same law of holiness and love, the same Redeemer expected or arrived, the same method of salvation by faith in the divine promise of pardon through expiation. The Apostle Paul declares that he said none other things than those which Moses and the prophets did say should come—Acts xxvi: 22; that the gospel doctrine of gratuitous salvation is witnessed by the law and the prophets—Romans iii: 21: that Abraham was justified by faith, and David describes a righteousness without works. It is the ever recurring doctrine of the New Testament, that the Israel of God is perpetuated in those who are his true people, in living union with the Lord Jesus Christ; that believers in Christ are the children of Abraham and heirs of the promises made to him; that Christ is the true high-priest and minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man; that all who belong to Christ are priests unto God, and have access through the rent veil to the mercy seat, or throne of grace, and are privileged to draw near with their bodies washed with pure water, and offer incense and the sacrifice of praise to God continually, and to present themselves a living sacrifice unto God. These are not mere figures of speech, borrowed from something wholly different from that to which they are applied, and merely adapted to New Testament objects. But the identical things are continued in their true spirit and intent; the real heart and substance of all that the ancient people of God possessed and valued is preserved unchanged.

It may hence be seen, that the inspiration of Moses is not discredited by the fact that he affirms, in language repeated from the mouth of the Most High, the perpetuity of the gifts

made, and the ordinances enjoined, under the Old Testament. Thus—Gen. xvii: 7—God declares his covenant with Abraham, and with his seed, to be an everlasting covenant, and ver. 8 gives the land of Canaan to him and to his seed for an everlasting possession. So Gen. xviii: 4. So the children of Israel are directed to observe the passover by an ordinance forever—Ex. xii: 14, 17. There is likewise a perpetual injunction respecting the care of the lamps upon the golden candlestick—Ex. xxvii: 21; respecting the priest's wearing the sacerdotal dress—Ex. xxviii: 43; and washing at the laver—Ex. xxx: 21; respecting the shew bread—Lev. xxiv: 8, 9; the meat offering—Lev. vi: 18; and the prohibition of eating either fat or blood—Lev. iii: 17.

This language might, indeed, be abundantly justified, if we were to look no further than the outward form, which is confessedly temporary, and was to pass away with that dispensation to which it belonged. For the Hebrew word, which is indifferently rendered in these passages “everlasting,” “perpetual,” and “forever” may, with entire propriety, be employed, and in conformity with constant usage of any protracted period, and particularly one of indefinite duration. Thus, in reference to the past more or less remote, it is often translated “days of old.” The Prophet Amos used it—ix: 11—in application to the reign of David, which was but little more than two centuries before his own day. Micah vii: 14, and Isaiah lxiii: 9, use it of the period of the Exodus. Solomon applies it—Prov. xxii: 28—to the ancient landmarks which the fathers had set up, which must be at least as recent as the time of Joshua; and David—Ps. xxiv: 7, 9—calls the gates of Jerusalem the everlasting doors. So a man held to service during life is said to be “a servant forever.” Hannah vowed that her child should abide at God's sanctuary “forever.” The psalmist describes the ungodly—Ps. lxxiii: 12—in terms which the authorized English version translates, “they who prosper in the world,” but which strictly denote “secure forever.” If, therefore, Moses had simply meant to say that these ordinances were to continue for a long and indefinite period, the terms he uses would have been the proper ones to express it.

But he doubtless meant more than that. These are no transient ordinances, arbitrarily appointed or designed to serve

a temporary purpose. Canaan was the gift of Him whose gifts and whose calling are without repentance. It would never be recalled. And so in regard to the ceremonial ordinances. They belonged to the worship of God, and express that homage which the Most High ever requires, and man is ever bound to pay. The shell might drop away, but the kernel, the essence, must forever remain. The truth of the symbol lies not in the outer form, which is the mere husk, but in its inner meaning. There still remaineth a Canaan of rest to the people of God. Christ bids his followers trim their lamps and let their light shine. The apostle exhorts Christians to keep the feast, not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. These perpetual ordinances are still in force in their true import, and this, the very import in which they were originally given by Moses and accepted by the people. Moses consciously used the language of symbols, which was recognized as such by those to whom it was delivered. The declaration which the Lord makes by the mouth of Moses, respecting their perpetuity, is exactly echoed by the Lord Jesus, that "one jot or one tittle shall in no case pass from the law till all is fulfilled;" fulfilled not only by the vicarious obedience of Christ, and by the types meeting their accomplishment in him, but by all its precepts receiving their complete and final form. The same precepts remain, only they are filled up to their full complement of meaning; they abide in their highest, most spiritual sense, notwithstanding the sloughing off of the outward form.

In thus understanding the language and the institutions of Moses, we are not spiritualizing them away, but simply attributing to them their true import, that which was intended by the Spirit of God, and that which was mainly regarded by Moses himself, and by all those among the people who had any spiritual discernment. The full proof of this could only be adduced by transcribing the whole of the devotional language of the Old Testament, and all that is taught of the spirituality of God and the spirituality of the worship and service that he requires. Doubtless there were numbers then, as now, who did not look beyond the outward forms, and who contented themselves with the external observance of the Mosaic ritual, as men do now with the formalities of Christian

service. But this was no more acceptable to God then, than it is at present, and no more in conformity with the spirit and true intent of the Old Testament, than of the New.

It is no mere formal outward service that is demanded when Moses states the requirement of the law to be—Deut. x: 12—“to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” It is no mere cleaving to the letter of an external rite when he bids the people—Deut. x: 16—“circumcise the foreskin of your heart.” And Moses is so far from regarding or representing himself as the ultimate organ of divine communication, that he expressly points the people to the prophet—Deut. xviii: 18—whom the Lord would raise up, and to whom they will be required to hearken; but he would be a prophet like unto Moses, his counterpart and coadjutor, not his opponent or antagonist; not abolishing and undoing what he had done, but acting in the very same character and spirit, and carrying forward to its completion the work which he had begun.

David’s delight in the house of the Lord testifies not his adherence to ritual formalities, but his inward relish for spiritual communion; and how thoroughly the symbolic service was blended in his mind with the devotion of the heart appears from frequent expressions: “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice;” “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;” “Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,” etc.

And when the prophets foretell the universal prevalence of true religion in the blissful future, they do it in the terms of the ancient and familiar symbols, but with such accompaniments as forbid the slavish adherence to a literal sense which would be encumbered with obvious physical impossibilities. Thus Isaiah speaks of the nations coming up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; but it is when the mountain of the Lord’s house shall cease to be an insignificant eminence, and shall be established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills. And the Lord declared by the same prophet—Isa. 66, 23,—“all flesh shall come to worship before me,” not merely at the annual feasts, as Israel was required to do, but “from one new moon to another, and from one

Sabbath to another." Now, however contracted a notion of the extent of the earth's surface any may impute to the prophet, the idea of literal pilgrimages from its extremities, month by month and week by week, cannot be relieved of palpable absurdity. Ezekiel describes the temple of the future as set on a very high mountain, and as measuring three thousand cubits on each of its sides, xlii: 17—which is vastly larger than Mt. Moriah could afford a site for; and he sees a stream issuing from the temple, which makes its way to the head of the Dead Sea, notwithstanding the inequalities which would forbid it, if literally understood; and this stream heals the waters of the Dead Sea, and fills them with life.

The prophets also declare the perpetual observance of the legal institutions at the very same time that they incorporate in the picture particulars which are inconsistent with the letter of the requirement, or which imply the abolishing or superseding of the outward form. Thus Isaiah predicts an altar and consecrated pillar in the land of Egypt, and that they should do sacrifice and oblation; whereas, according to the Mosaic law, there could be no altar and no sacrifice but at the one sanctuary in the land of Israel. Malachi predicts that in every place incense shall be offered to the name of the Lord, and a pure offering. And Jeremiah, after foretelling—iii: 16—the loss of the ark of the covenant, and that it shall not be missed, declares—xxxiii: 18—the perpetuity of the Levitical priesthood to be as inviolable as the succession of day and night. What is the Levitical priesthood without the ark? But the real matter at issue was not the prerogatives of the sacerdotal tribe or family, but the blessings which were to be inalienably secured to the people of God in all perpetuity, of the authorized and effectual mediation of a divinely appointed priesthood.

And our Lord himself said to his disciples at the sacred supper—Matt. xxvi: 29—"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom;" and he promised them—Luke xxii: 30—that they should eat and drink at his table in his kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Unless it be held to be inconsistent with the perfect inspiration of Jesus that he should speak of heavenly and enduring realities under these material and temporary forms, it is no prejudice to the

inspiration of Moses, that he affirmed the perpetuity of divine ordinances, which were emblematic of that which abides forever.

But did not Moses thus create the impression, which he never corrects, and which could not have been corrected without impairing the confidence of the people in the law and their attachment to it, that the old restrictive and ceremonial dispensation was itself to be perpetual? And would not this naturally lead—did it not, in fact, lead—to contempt of and hostile feelings toward other nations? The Jews did indeed come to entertain a contempt and hatred for other nations, accounting and treating them as dogs, so that a heathen historian, with a measure of truth as well as bitterness, calls them “enemies of the human race.” But that this was the legitimate tendency of the Mosaic institutions, or was in any degree encouraged, whether by Moses himself, or any of the inspired writers of the Old Testament, we most emphatically deny.

God did enter, it is true, into special covenant with Israel, thus distinguishing them above all other nations; and to prevent their contamination by surrounding idolaters, he laid restrictions upon their intercourse with them. But they are distinctly and repeatedly told, that God’s choice of them was due to his sovereign grace, and to no superiority of their own over others. The descent of all mankind is traced from a common ancestry; the other nations of the world are from the same stock with themselves. In the original call of Abraham it was distinctly stated—Gen. xii: 3—that in his seed all the families of the earth (the form of expression bringing into view their common relationship) should be blessed. The same declaration is, on two subsequent occasions, repeated to Abraham—xviii: 18; xxii: 18—besides being freshly made to Isaac—xxvi: 4—and then again to Jacob—xxviii: 14. Jacob, on his dying bed, spoke to Judah of the coming Shiloh—xlix: 10—“Unto whom the gathering of the people (Heb. peoples) shall be.” This destined blessing of the world is also affirmed by the Lord to Moses—Num. xiv: 21—“As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.” It was symbolically suggested, too, by the location of the tabernacle, which, while pitched in the centre of the camp of Israel, was invariably set by the points of the compass, thus standing in re-

lation to the whole earth. So Joshua, mindful of this universal destiny of Israel, calls the ark—Josh iii: 11-13—“the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth;” and declares—iv: 23, 24—that the miracle of the Red Sea and that of the Jordan were both wrought in order “that all the peoples of the earth might know the hand of the Lord that it is mighty.” It was thus set before the covenant people from the outset, and they were again and again reminded of the fact, that the restriction of the true religion to a single people was but temporary, and was in order to its secure preservation and ultimate diffusion over the whole earth. The same strain was taken up abundantly by the Psalmists, and echoed in varied forms by the prophets of every age, from Jonah and Isaiah to Malachi; so that when the apostle—Col. i: 26; Eph. iii: 5—speaks of it as a “mystery, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles shall be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel,” he cannot possibly mean that this was wholly unknown before. He himself argues the opposite at length in Rom. ch. ix and x. But it was now evidenced with new clearness, both by fuller revelations and by an actual experience, previously unknown of the reality itself.

But besides these statements respecting the future extension of the blessings of salvation to the Gentiles, practical measures were taken from the beginning, to grant them a free and unlimited participation in the blessings covenanted to Israel. In the original institution of circumcision in the family of Abraham, provision was made that the seal of the covenant should be given to any that were born in his house, or bought with money of any stranger who is not of his seed—Gen. xvii: 12-27. And at the institution of the passover it was ordained—Ex. xii: 48, 49—“When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land. . . . One law shall be to him that is home-born and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.” The same law was formally repeated at the next anniversary of the passover—Num. ix: 14. So

in the law of sacrifices, foreigners are put on a precise par with the children of Israel—Num. xv : 14-16—“ If a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord ; as ye do, so he shall do. One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance forever in your generations ; as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.” And so in regard to theocratic offences and penalties—Num. xv : 29, 30—“ Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord ; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.” So in regard to their civil and criminal matters—Lev. xxiv : 22—“ Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country.”

And these were not inoperative enactments. The incorporation of foreigners with the seed of the patriarchs did take place in large numbers. It appears from the record, that Abraham's servants were actually circumcised ; their full number we do not know, but mention is made on one occasion of three hundred and eighteen trained servants born in his house—Gen. xiv : 14. The retinues and dependents of the several patriarchs were blended with their lineal descendants, which accounts in part for the immense multiplication of the children of Israel in Egypt, where they were swelled to six hundred thousand men—Ex. xii, 37. And at the Exodus it is expressly said, that a mixed multitude went out of Egypt with them—ver. 38—and accompanied them through the desert—Num. xi : 4. The mention—Gen. xxxiv : 22-24—of the circumcising of all the males in the city of Shechem, in the time of Jacob, shows what was possible in other instances with worthy motives and better results. Moses invited the family of his father-in-law, a Midianite, to accompany Israel with the promise—Num. x : 32—“ What goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.” Solomon, in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, simply expressed the spirit of the

legislation of Moses and the policy which had been pursued toward other nations from the beginning. 1 Kings viii: 41-43—“Moreover, concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people, Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake, (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm); when he shall come and pray toward this house, hear thou in heaven, thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all the peoples of the earth may know thy name to fear thee, as do thy people, Israel.” No aggressive movements were made for the conversion of Gentiles, no preachers sent to them, no missions planted among them. The time for this had not yet arrived. In the weakness of her pupilage, the utmost that the church could do was to stand on the defensive, and maintain her own faith and worship in its integrity. But the door ever stood open, and all who were attracted by the holy teachings or the mighty deeds of the God of Israel, were welcomed, from whatever nation. With four signal exceptions, to be considered presently, no hindrance was interposed to the free admission of Gentiles resident in Palestine, or in any country under heaven, to the full privileges of the children of Israel.

And further, so far was the law of Moses from inculcating or encouraging hatred of foreigners, or hostility toward them, that it, in express terms, enjoins the reverse. It not only commands in general terms unselfish love to all—Lev. xix: 18—“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” but to guard against the possibility of limiting this to fellow Israelites, it adds—vs. 33, 34—“And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.” Ex. xxiii: 9—“Thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” So Ex. xxii: 21. It is declared to be the attribute of God—Deut. x: 17-19—that “He regardeth not persons; . . . he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye, therefore, the stranger.” Special kindness was required to be shown to foreigners, particularly such as were impoverished and needy.

The unreaped corners of their fields and the gleanings of their harvests and vineyards were to be left for the poor and stranger—Lev. xix: 9, 10; xxiii: 22. In their religious festivals the stranger, as well as the fatherless and the widow, were to share their bounty and their joy—Deut. xvi: 11–14. Israel had been grievously oppressed by the Egyptians, and their friendly request for a passage through the territory of Edom had been refused with hostile demonstrations, to their very serious inconvenience, yet they are forbidden to harbor resentment for these injuries—Deut. xxiii: 7—“Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother; thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wert a stranger in his land.”

But it has been a standing objection to the morality of the Old Testament, that the Israelites were commanded to treat the Canaanites with the utmost barbarity and cruelty, utterly destroying all that breathed, men, women, and children; they were likewise commanded to exterminate the Amalekites; and were forbidden to receive Amorites and Moabites into the congregation, even to the tenth generation—Deut. xxiii: 3. Such commands and prohibitions, professing to emanate from the mouth of God, are, it has been urged, simply evidence that Moses could not have been an infallible interpreter of the divine will.

It is sufficiently plain, from what has been already said, that the treatment of these four nations is not the outgrowth of a hostility cherished toward foreigners in general. For these are the solitary exceptions in a system of laws singularly just and humane, and even generous, toward them. It is freely conceded that the treatment of the Canaanites finds no justification in the laws or usages of war. If the Israelites seized upon Canaan by no right but that of conquest, and plundered and massacred the inhabitants without mercy for no crime but that of defending themselves and their homes, then they were a horde of brutal savages, and their conduct was horrible in the extreme; and Moses, in stimulating and sanctioning such atrocities, in the holy name of religion, has outdone the fiercest and darkest fanaticism that the world has ever known. Then the inevitable conclusion would be, not that Moses' inspiration was defective at this point, but that he was inspired from beneath; then the old Manichæans were right in affirming that

the God of the Old Testament was not the same as the God of the New, but was the original Spirit of Evil. For there can be no doubt that all this was done under the immediate direction of Jehovah, whose chosen instrument Moses was. We here assume the truth of open, notorious facts, recorded in the books of Moses, the acceptance of which is dependent not on his inspiration, but on his veracity as a historian. If this be questioned, it must be settled by an independent line of argument, for which we have no space at present. We only say, that if the narrative is untrue, then there is nothing to explain; the Canaanites may never have been maltreated at all; and the imputation cast upon the inspiration of Moses on this and similar grounds is without foundation.

The Lord promised to Abraham the possession of the land of Canaan, though it is expressly stated that the land was occupied by the Canaanites and Perizzites when he first entered it. This promise was given to him before he left his father's house, and afterward repeated in vision and in his waking moments, by internal suggestion, by a voice from heaven after the sacrifice of Isaac, and by God appearing to him in human form, and talking with him as previous to the birth of Isaac and the destruction of Sodom, these facts being at the same time foretold to him, and their fulfillment affording indisputable evidence that it was no illusion, but a real divine communication. Abraham's confidence in this promise, as well as in others which were connected with it, and received in precisely the same way and on the same authority, is adduced, not only in the Old Testament, but in the New, as the great proof of his faith in God, and it earned for him the title of the father of the faithful and the friend of God. The same promise was repeated by God himself to the other patriarchs, and formed the burden of Isaac's blessing to Jacob, and of Jacob's dying blessing to his sons. When God appeared to Moses in the flaming bush, announcing himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (a fact appealed to and argued from by our Saviour), it was to announce to him that the time had arrived for fulfilling these promises, and putting the children of Israel in possession of the land occupied by the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And all the wonders wrought in Egypt, the plagues

sent, the passage of the Red Sea, the miracles and guidance in the wilderness, were but successive steps by which God was conducting them, by his own mighty hand, to the land flowing with milk and honey, which he had sworn to their fathers. The fifth commandment, uttered by God's own voice from Sinai, speaks of "the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." The sentence that doomed the entire generation which left Egypt to die in the wilderness, and which kept Israel wandering in the desert for forty years, was in consequence of their disobedience when commanded to go in and take immediate possession of the land, notwithstanding the discouraging report of the spies. They are again and again charged to destroy the Canaanites, and severe penalties were threatened if they failed to do so. These nations were mightier than themselves, but immediate divine assistance was promised and granted for their subjugation. The Jordan was dried before them; the walls of Jericho thrown down; the sun and moon stood still at Joshua's bidding; hail-stones fell from heaven upon their foes, and discomfited them. When God deserted them, as upon Achan's trespass, Joshua and the people were in the utmost consternation, and were powerless before their enemies. There is nothing in the divine legation of Moses that is more clearly evidenced, than that it was by God's immediate direction the Israelites marched into Canaan, took forcible possession of the land, and destroyed its inhabitants. There is no room for the assumption that Moses, through defect of inspiration, committed the dreadful mistake of imagining that to have been commanded of God, which he never enjoined, but which was, on the contrary, the most frightful and atrocious offence conceivable against his holy will. Palpable facts made it plain, both to Moses and to Israel, that there could be no misapprehension here. There is no middle ground between denying the truth of these facts and confessing that the whole responsibility, in respect to the treatment of the Canaanites, rests with the Lord himself.

How then can this be reconciled with the divine attributes and with the will of God, as elsewhere revealed? God is the absolute proprietor of the whole earth, and he had the perfect right to dispose of the land of Canaan as he pleased. If

the Canaanites, who were merely tenants at his will, showed themselves unworthy occupants, no one can question his righteousness in ejecting them from it, and bestowing it upon whomsoever else he chose. If he had desolated the region by pestilence or earthquake, he would merely have done what the awful catastrophes, which he has sent at other times and places, abundantly assert his right to do. The chief peculiarity in this case, and the only thing that needs to be accounted for, is that God enjoined it upon the Israelites to do that which he has elsewhere effected by the unintelligent physical forces of nature.

In explanation of this it may be remarked, that the Canaanites were judicially sentenced to destruction for their detestable crimes and abominations. This is the reason which is constantly assigned for their extermination. Thus, in Lev. xviii : 24, 25, after the mention of a number of unnatural crimes, it is added, "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you. And the land is defiled ; therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land herself vomiteth out her inhabitants." So Deut. xviii : 12, after another list of criminal practices, it is added "Because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee." Again, Deut. xviii : 16, 18, "Of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth ; but thou shalt utterly destroy them, that they teach you not to do after all their abominations which they have done unto their gods."

This righteous sentence Israel was charged with executing. They no more acted on their own responsibility than the executioners of human law in inflicting the penalty of death, where sentence has been pronounced by the competent tribunal. And they had no more right to overstep the limits divinely prescribed, than modern executioners have to act irrespective of the decree of the court, and bring to the gibbet whomsoever they judge to be worthy of death, not to say whomsoever they may be pleased to sacrifice to their cupidity or malevolence. No discretion was allowed them in the case. No man or body of men could be either safely or righteously trusted with so awful an exercise of irresponsible

authority. The Israelites could not sentence any nation or community to extermination which God had not by name expressly sentenced. And others cannot plead the example of the Israelites, unless they are acting with the same indisputable evidence of being under immediate divine orders.

The duty of executing this sentence was imposed upon the children of Israel, not to gratify or encourage a blood-thirsty spirit, but for the sake of the severely solemn lesson which it was designed to teach them. They were warned by Moses, that if they copied the criminality of these nations, a similar retribution should overtake themselves. In executing God's justice upon others, they pronounce their own sentence, if they incur like guilt. This terrible lesson, in which they were required to be actors, followed in the train of others, in which they had been spectators or sufferers during the wanderings in the desert. Every act of rebellion and of murmuring had been followed by instant divine inflictions, plague, and fire, and fiery serpents, and the earth opening her mouth and swallowing down the transgressors, and all that appertained to them. The awfulness of the doom, which God's righteous judgment would inevitably inflict upon the violators of his holy law, was thus doubly inculcated, by penalties inflicted upon Israel and penalties inflicted by them.

And they were required to deal, and did deal out equal severity to apostates of their own number, as to the Canaanites themselves. Thus, after the crime of the golden calf, the sons of Levi were commanded—Ex. xxxii: 27—“Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.” And for the pious obedience shown in this summary chastisement, this tribe was rewarded with the priesthood—Deut. xxxiii: 9, 10. And if any, even their dearest relatives or friends, should secretly seek to entice them to serve other gods—“thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul”—he was to be unsparingly put to death—Deut. xiii: 6; and if one of their own cities should apostatize to idolatry, it was to be utterly destroyed, “with all that were therein, and burned with all the spoil of it, and it should be left an heap forever,

and never be rebuilt"—vs. 15-17. This zeal to put away evil from the midst of themselves was, in actual fact, shown against transgressors of their own number, in the case of Achan, in the formal investigation into the matter of the altar built on the east of Jordan—Joshua xxii: 11; in the assembling of the tribes to war against Benjamin for the crime committed in Gibeah—Judges xx. This was no wild and fierce fanaticism, but a determined spirit of obedience to the divine will. And it affords no justification to those who, in later ages, have sought to propagate what they deemed the true religion by fire and sword, or to extirpate heresy by pains and penalties. Rebellion and disobedience in the face of those immediate manifestations of God's presence and power, with which the age of Moses and Joshua was filled, betokened an incorrigible contumacy, which merited condign punishment. It may be likened to the blasphemy of those who attributed the miracles of Jesus to the agency of evil spirits, and are consequently said to have committed that crime for which there is no forgiveness, and for which the apostle John forbids even to pray. But such a crime and such inflictions belong only to an age wherein there are immediate divine manifestations to be resisted, and special revelations from God himself to authorize and to prescribe the penalty.

It should further be remarked, that the generation of Israel which was led by Joshua into Canaan is by no means the counterpart of that which Moses led out of Egypt, and whose deep infection with the idolatry and corruption of that land was shown by its repeated murmurings and acts of rebellion and apostasy. There would have been a glaring inconsistency in making the latter the ministers of God's righteousness. But that old generation was itself completely cut off by divine judgments in the wilderness. And another generation was trained up, under the tuition of God's immediate revelations, and the discipline of immediate divine inflictions, to a prompt and ready obedience. There were no murmurings against Joshua, as there had been against Moses, and no overt acts of disobedience; on the contrary, the testimony is, that—Josh. xxiv: 31—"Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which

had known all the works of the Lord that he had done for Israel."

And the generation of Canaanites, which the Israelites were bidden to extirpate, was not the counterpart of that which Abraham found upon his entrance into the land, nearly seven centuries before. An interval had elapsed equal to that which separates us from the crusades. The degeneracy which might take place in such a period of time cannot be computed. God said to Abraham, that the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. Nevertheless, in one corner of the land, even then Sodom had sunk to such a pitch of wickedness that vengeance could be no longer delayed, and it was destroyed by fire from heaven. What a chasm between Melchizedek, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God, and Adonibezek, who confessed to the incredible barbarity of having cut off the thumbs and great toes of threescore and ten kings, and obliged them to gather their meat under his table, and who was justly sentenced to be treated as he had treated them—Judges 1 : 7 ; or that degraded race whose worship consisted in sacrificing their own children, and indulging in the impure and beastly rites of the goddess Ashtaroth. Probably, if we knew more of their abandoned wickedness, we should better understand why divine justice decreed that such wretches should be swept from the earth. The fact that none but the Gibeonites sought to make peace with Israel, or to make their submission to Israel's God, notwithstanding the miracles of Egypt and the wilderness, shows that they had reached that pitch of desperate frenzy, that they would consciously fight against a God who wrought such wonders.

The case of the Amalekites need not detain us long. It is evidently governed by the same principles as that of the Canaanites. The Amalekites were the first to attack Israel in the desert, and this just after the mighty wonders God had wrought on their behalf in Egypt, and the miraculous passage opened for them through the Red Sea. Their assault, under such circumstances, upon a people so manifestly under God's immediate protection, was virtually, and in all probability it was consciously, directed against Jehovah himself. The Amalekites were, therefore, by God's decree, made the standing type of the malignant and incorrigible enemies of

God, and the Israelites were directed to effect their extirpation.

So the Ammonites and Moabites, who, instead of taking a friendly attitude toward a nation so favored and led of God, hired Balaam against them, to curse them, and, both by incantations and by enticements to the shameful orgies of their abominable idolatry, sought to compass Israel's ruin. Israel is accordingly forbidden to enter into peaceful relations with them, or to admit them to the tenth generation into the congregation of the Lord.

The same principle applies to the imprecations in the Psalms. It is entirely to mistake the spirit of these inspired writers to interpret their language as that of personal vindictiveness, or impotent malice, which, unable to wreak its spite with its own hand, would engage the Most High to be the minister of its hate. Thus understood, they could never have been admitted to a place in the Scripture, which is declared to be all inspired of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness; to which our Lord constantly referred the Jews as the word of God, and which he declared cannot be broken. Our Lord himself quotes a Psalm of this character, Ps. xli, as Scripture—John xiii: 18; and Ps. lxxix is quoted by the evangelists in application to the treatment of our Lord at his crucifixion, and in the book of Acts in application to Judas.

In relation to psalms of this character generally, it should be remarked, that imprecations are far fewer than our version would lead one to suppose. Many verbs translated as imperative are simply declarative; and should be rendered not "let them be," but "they shall be," so and so. The Psalmist announces what is foreshown to him; the retribution which God has purposed to inflict. And when the imperative form is used, it is not expressive of an unauthorized wish of his own, which seeks the hurt of those who have injured him. It is the authoritative announcement of God's just displeasure at those who are not merely personal enemies of the Psalmist, but enemies of God; and it expresses his approval of the rectitude of God's righteous sentence of condemnation. Ps. cxxxix: 21, 22—"Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate

them with perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies." It is not the persons of the men, nor their treatment of himself as an individual, but their character and attitude toward God, which determines the Psalmist's feelings toward them.

The 41st, 69th, and 109th Psalms, which are among the most marked instances of imprecation, are, in their titles, attributed to David, and must in fairness be interpreted by David's known sentiments, expressed elsewhere, both in his language and his conduct. He indignantly repels, in repeated passages, the idea of his indulging malevolence toward his personal enemies, or taking it upon himself to requite their ill-treatment. He merely committed his case to the Lord, "who judgeth righteously," and "to whom vengeance belongeth." Thus, Ps. vii: 4—"If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, and *plundered him that without cause is my enemy*, let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honor in the dust." And Ps. xxxv: 12-14—"They rewarded me evil for good, to the spoiling of my soul; but as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting; I behaved myself as though he had been my friend and brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother." And that this was no empty profession, but the actual rule of his life, appears from the absence of all vindictiveness in his treatment of Saul, whose fierce malignity, when in the very act of pursuing him, David twice subdued by his noble generosity; at whose death he sung a touching lament, making graceful mention of Saul's brave and noble qualities, without an allusion to his deadly hostility toward himself; and after David had been fully settled on the throne, he asked, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness?"—2 Sam. ix: 1-3. The law of his life is expressed by his son, Solomon—Prov. xxiv: 17—"Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth." Prov. xxv: 21—"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink."

It should further be borne in mind, that these Psalms were not mere individual utterances, but were prepared to be sung in the temple service and are hence inscribed, "To the chief

musician." The Psalmist expresses, consequently, not his own personal experience and feelings merely, but those which are common to him, with the rest of the true people of God. He speaks in his representative capacity as one of the pious, describes the sufferings to which, as a class, they are subjected from the malignity of wicked men, and the glad deliverance which shall surely be vouchsafed to them by the overthrow and righteous punishment of their foes. It is in virtue of this generic character of these psalms, that they find their highest accomplishment in Christ, the ideal of holy sufferers, and that it is no accommodation of their language to another than their proper subject, but the explication of its true and genuine import, when the evangelists apply it to the treachery of Judas and the barbarity of the murderers of Jesus.

David, as the monarch of Israel, is, further, the head and representative of the entire body of God's people. His cause is theirs, and their foes his, and his language should be interpreted accordingly.

What is said of Babylon, in Ps. cxxxvii, is not the bitter curse of the exasperated patriot. The words are those of a holy seer, foreseeing the terrible retribution which should be meted out to that merciless foe of God's people. She should suffer in her own haughty capital the same ferocious treatment which her brutal soldiery had inflicted on Jerusalem, dashing the very infants against the stones. He celebrates not the barbarous atrocity, but God's righteous vindication of his own cause, and that of his people, with which this atrocity should be connected. Existing relations should be so reversed that he would be accounted happy, and would be saluted with acclamations, who broke the power of this tyrannical oppressor, and in the resulting massacre dashed *her* little ones against the stones.

But while the Psalmists thus display the fearful doom of Babylon, they likewise link its name with a glorious manifestation of grace. Thus, Ps. lxxxvii: 4—"I will make mention of Rahab (*i. e.*, Egypt) and Babylon to them that know me." And the Psalmist goes on to say, that when the spiritual census of the nations shall be taken, this one and that one among hostile powers and distant lands shall be reckoned to have been born in Zion; they shall be her sons, her native-

born citizens. Do such blessings and cursings proceed out of the same mouth?

And the human sympathies, which are sometimes mingled with these prophetic denunciations, show that these latter are not inconsistent with a tender pity for those whose guilt has involved them in their calamities. Thus Jeremiah, while depicting the overthrow of Moab—xlvi: 31, 32—says, “Therefore, will I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab; mine heart shall mourn for the men of Kir-heres; O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer.”

And that such denunciations are not inconsistent with the spirit of the New Testament appears from the language of the loving Apostle John, in the book of Revelation—chap. xviii—respecting the Babylon of the future—ver. 6—“Reward her even as she rewarded you;” and ver. 20—“Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.” And the Apostle Paul, who could even wish himself accursed from Christ for his kinsmen according to the flesh, nevertheless did not hesitate to say—I Cor. xvi: 22—“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maran-atha,” and of those who do evil that good may come, that their “damnation is just”—Rom. iii: 8. The same thing appears also from the woes pronounced by our Lord himself upon the scribes and Pharisees, and upon Chorazin and Bethsaida.

Objection has also been sometimes brought from three cases in which the children of criminals were made to suffer the penalty of their father’s offense. The provision of the law of Moses is express upon this point—Deut. xxiv: 16—“The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin.” This was the law for human tribunals; and that it was acted upon in Israel, as everywhere else where a proper sense of justice prevails, appears from the express statement of the fact—2 Kings xiv: 6. But the Most High is not bound by this law in his own decisions. He himself declares, that he visits the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him. There can be no suspicion of error in this statement from the defective inspiration of Moses, since it is in the second

commandment which was proclaimed by God's own voice from Sinai, and he perpetually acts upon it in his providence. There is no injustice in this as it occurs in the divine administration, for it is expressly limited to the case of those who hate him; where the children perpetuate the hostility of their parents, and thus render themselves answerable for their crimes, even though their own criminality may not have taken on precisely the same outward form. Such visitations are unerringly and righteously made by him who tries the hearts and reins, but cannot be allowed to human tribunals, whose only rule of judgment is the outward conduct.

Now, in each of the cases above referred to, the execution was by immediate divine direction; it was so with the family of Achan, with the sons of Ahab, and with the sons and grandsons of Saul. While, however, Jehu acted by God's command in putting to death the entire house of ungodly Ahab, this lends no justification to the atrocities connected with it; it does not excuse the ghastly spectacle of their heads piled in heaps at the entrance of the gate of the city.

In the case of Saul's family, if the transaction were one of mere superstition, it is detestable. If, upon the occurrence of a famine, which was due simply to natural causes, David and those whom he consulted imagined that it was sent in consequence of Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites, and to expiate this crime, which had no real connection with the matter, David executed seven of Saul's unoffending descendants, then it was a cruel, unjustifiable deed. But if there was a real disclosure of the will of God in the case, and the historian speaks the truth when he says that the famine was designed to mark God's displeasure at a criminal breach of faith, and the whole people were made to suffer in this way for the murderous offense of their king, which they had sanctioned and participated in, who will venture to impugn the rectitude of the Most High in further showing his abhorrence of this cruel treachery by visiting it upon the heads of seven of Saul's descendants? Their hearts and lives he knew, although we do not, and, for all we know, they may have directly participated in the crime itself, which probably was committed near the close of Saul's reign, as the execution certainly took place near the beginning of that of David. Christ himself said to that generation which

filled up the measure of their fathers by shedding his blood, that upon them should come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth from the blood of righteous Abel.

So far the charges of cruelty and injustice often brought against the Old Testament. What has in like manner been said of slavery, polygamy, and divorce, must be discussed in a very few words. Moses regulated and restricted evils which were too deeply rooted in the usages of the time and in the prevailing social system, to admit of immediate and successful extirpation. He ameliorated domestic servitude by various humane regulations, besides limiting its duration to seven years in the case of Hebrew servants. The polygamy of the patriarchs is recorded, but not approved; on the contrary, the domestic dissensions and troubles resulting from it are likewise recorded, and serve to evidence God's providential disapprobation; and Moses positively prohibits marriages like that of Jacob, of two sisters at the same time—Lev. xviii: 18. So far as the evidence goes, it would appear that polygamy never prevailed extensively among the Israelites, notwithstanding the several wives of David and the enormous excesses of Solomon in the face of the explicit prohibition of the law of Moses—Deut. xvii: 17. These evils were not violently and suddenly eradicated, but their correction was left to the gradual influence of those principles of justice and of mutual love which were inculcated, and to the providential disclosure of the unhappy consequences which they entail, together with the setting forth of the true model of marriage in its original institution, to which our Lord appeals as containing its law for all time—Matt. xix: 4ff.

It is not correct to say, that unlimited facility of divorcement was allowed by the law of Moses. Its language is—Deut. xxiv: 1—"When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, *because he hath found some uncleanness in her*; then let him write her a bill of divorcement," etc. There was indeed a lax school among the Jews which affected to interpret this "uncleanness" of the most trivial causes of dissatisfaction; but its genuine meaning was more correctly represented by the opposing school, which held it to denote criminal conduct, which the husband, as in the case of Joseph, did not wish publicly to expose,

or something grossly offensive. The word properly means "nakedness," and suggests what is shameful, indecent, or revolting. In so far, however, as divorce was not absolutely limited to the sin of adultery, it came short of the requirement insisted upon by our Lord; a relaxation due, as he declares, not to Moses' imperfect inspiration, but temporarily allowed in consequence of the hardness of the people's hearts.

The wholesale putting away of strange wives in the time of Ezra has sometimes been represented as a case of aggravated wrong. Upon Ezra's arrival in Judea from Babylon, he was informed by the princes of the people that the exiles who had come up in previous migrations, and had now been for years resident in the country, had grossly violated the law of Moses by inter-marriages with the heathen there, and with the predicted result of falling into the idolatry of the people around them, thus annulling the whole effect of the discipline of the exile, and repeating the very transgressions by which it had been incurred. Ezra ix: 1, 2: "The princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands; yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass." It is not surprising that in such a state of affairs Ezra "rent his garment and his mantle and plucked off the hair of his head and of his beard, and sat down astonished," and that he poured out his heart before God in that prayer of penitent humiliation which occupies the remainder of the chapter; amazed and mortified beyond expression, that the exiles, fresh from captivity, should have already entered upon a course of transgression, which was certain to induce another and a heavier woe. Vs. 13, 14: "After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; should we again break thy commandments and join in affinity with the people of these abominations, wouldst thou not be

angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?" Nehemiah, too, gives an account of the same trespass, and speaks—xiii: 23, 24—of "Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab; and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people."

The prophet Malachi, speaking of the same matter, adds another feature to this iniquity, from which it appears that these lawless transgressors had, in many cases, abandoned their own legitimate wives of native birth, and taken up with these foreign women; and he depicts the grief thus wantonly inflicted in the most moving terms. Mal:ii: 13, 14, 16: "And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, nor receiveth it with good will at your hand. Yet ye say, wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet is she thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith, that he hateth putting away."

Moreover, the weeping of men, women, and children spoken of in the book of Ezra—x: 1—in connection with this matter of strange wives, must not be misunderstood as though it was the outcries of the strange wives themselves, in consequence of their being repudiated by their husbands. It was a weeping accompanied by confession of sin, and a weeping, too, in which Ezra himself took part; the tears were tears of penitence, that this great trespass had been committed against God. And these strange wives were not hastily thrust out, homeless and shivering, into the cold and rainy street, but a convention of the people called in the interest of reform stood stoutly to their work in the wet and chilly day, and manfully resolved "As thou has said, so must we do."—Ezra x: 12. The actual severance was more deliberately performed, occupying three months, from the first day of the tenth to the first day of the first month, being thus finished on New Year's day.—ver. 16, 17.

It is further added, at the close of the enumeration of all the particular cases—Ezra x: 44—"All these had taken strange wives" (there were 113 out of a population of about 50,000—Neh. vii: 66, 67); "and *some* of them had wives by whom

they had children." From this it may be inferred, that when this misdemeanor was arrested, the offense was in most cases comparatively recent.

The facts then appear to be these: About one hundred foreign women, married in defiance of the law of Moses, and in some cases by the repudiation of broken-hearted native wives, and who had introduced heathen abominations among the people still smarting from the captivity which the like abominations had brought upon their fathers, were separated from those to whom they had been unlawfully married; and this not in a heartless, frivolous manner, driving them out in the rain and the cold, but by a people deeply penitent before God for their fault, and by a solemn judicial process, covering three successive months. It was a painful transaction no doubt to all concerned. But it may be submitted to any candid person, whether the perpetuation of the true worship of God among this feeble band of returned exiles, who were the religious hope of the world, did not warrant the severity of the measure; and whether the entire transaction in itself, or in the manner in which it was conducted, casts the slightest discredit on the inspiration of Ezra as a man of God.

In his sermon on the mount, our Lord takes occasion to set forth, in express terms, the relation in which his teachings stand to the pre-existing Scriptures. A brief consideration of his authoritative statements on this point will conclude the present article. Our Saviour first defines his attitude to the law of Moses, and to the Old Testament generally, in language so explicit, and in such varied forms of statement, that we would think it must preclude the possibility of mistake. Matt. v: 17-19: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." The law is then imperative in all its parts; it is not to be broken, even in its least commandments. Nothing could more flatly contradict the theory, that Moses, through imperfect inspiration, misconceived and misstated the will of God; that many of his supposed revela-

tions were not from God at all, but emanated from his own imperfectly sanctified nature, and are actually shocking to the moral sense. There is not an ordinance in the Old Testament, even the very least, which is not the ordinance of God, or which can be safely broken; and he who teaches that it can, our Saviour declares, is the least in the kingdom of heaven. We do not pretend to define all that our Lord intended by this expression; but it certainly must include this, that such a view of the Old Testament involves a very inadequate apprehension of the New, of that kingdom of heaven, whose foundations Jesus came to lay, and whose laws he was then propounding.

This inviolable, indestructible law Christ came to fulfill, to fulfill not only in other ways, but as a teacher. He came not to abolish or supersede it in the minutest particular, but to complete it in all and every part. He communicates the final lessons, and these final lessons are not something new, freshly introduced into it, engrafted upon it, incorporated with it from some other quarter, but simply the complement, the fulfillment of the Old. And this completing is to reach to every part; not a jot or a tittle is to be lopped off or pared away, but all is to be fulfilled. The full spirit and intent of every particular is to be brought out; its deep meaning and wide applications are to be plainly set forth. In the bud there is no faulty excrescence; when it is developed, its old casing may fall away, but every part of the bud itself enters into that which is unfolded from it; it only comes out in fuller vigor and larger dimensions. The new law of Christ is simply the old law fulfilled; it is not the substitution of the true for the false in even a single item, or the pure for the impure; but it is strictly and simply the genuine expansion of every jot and tittle to that complete and final form, for which it was originally destined.

Our Lord then proceeds to illustrate his treatment of the law by a few examples. He cites the language of the sixth and seventh commandments, and declares that it is not enough to abstain from murder and adultery; causeless anger and the lustful eye are also offenses against God. Here, as is obvious, he simply insists that compliance with the outward letter does not exhaust human obligation. God lays his demand on the

heart, as well as on the external conduct. There is nothing in this at variance with the law of Moses; nothing, in fact, which that law does not itself insist upon. It requires no mere formal outward service to be paid to God, but—Deut. vi: 5—“Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” So in regard to duties to our fellow men—Lev. xix: 17, 18—“Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; . . . but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Deut. xv: 9—“Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart,” etc., etc.; compare Gen. vi: 5, which traces corruption to the heart. And the very structure of the second table of the law shows the same thing. The essence of its commands is, “Thou shalt not injure thy neighbor by deed (either in his life, the 6th commandment; his dearest treasure, his wife, the 7th; or his property, the 8th); thou shalt not injure thy neighbor by word, the 9th; and thou shalt not injure thy neighbor in thought, the 10th.” The requirements thus range over deed and word and thought, showing that they concern the whole man in his inward and his outward life.

The next case is one in which the spirit of the law was not merely disregarded, but its very letter mutilated in practice by the neglect of a very important particular. “Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce-ment,” those who plead the law in this form quite overlooking the limitation in the express terms of the statute, “because her husband hath found some uncleanness in her.” Even with this restriction, however, there was here a temporary tolerance of an evil; not, be it observed, because of Moses’ imperfect inspiration, as our Lord in another place expressly explains, but for a very different cause—“the hardness of the people’s hearts.” Jesus, therefore, as the fulfiller of the law, proceeds to give a full and explicit statement of duty on this subject, limiting the somewhat vague and indefinite term “uncleanness,” used in the law, to the specific crime of adultery, and announcing as the true law of marriage what was really involved in its original institution as recorded by Moses, and was but the application to this particular case of the general law of mutual love.

In the next two instances, likewise, our Lord both corrects perversions of the law and elevates the standard of require-

ment. The law forbade false swearing, and enjoined the faithful performance of oaths taken in the name of the Lord. The perverted inference was hence drawn, that there was no violation of the law if the oath were by anything other than the name of God, or if the oath by the name of the Lord were not untrue, however irreverent it might be, or however trivial the occasion. Christ sweeps these miserable subterfuges away at a stroke by prohibiting any oaths whatever. Fealty to God is shown when men make their solemn appeals to him rather than to false divinities; and when by these solemn appeals they are held to the strict utterance of the truth. But it is a higher reverence for God, which, even without such direct appeal, utters only the simple truth, sensible of his all-pervading presence. While to a superficial view it seems like a contrariety that Moses should sanction and Jesus should forbid an oath, a deeper insight into the matter will show that the one proceeds from the very same principles as the other, only carried to a higher potency, and that the precept of the New Testament is but the complement, the fulfilment, of the Old.

So in regard to the penalty judicially prescribed for injuries—Ex. xxi: 22–24; Deut. xix: 16–21—Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, which was perverted into a justification of a vindictive spirit and of private revenge. Jesus applies the needed corrective by enjoining the patient endurance of wrong. It is not that the sufferer has no rights, or that those charged with the administration of public justice should inflict no penalties on evil-doers. But Jesus would lift his followers to a higher plane of life. The law would inspire such a regard for the righteous government of God, that men should be strictly just in all their dealings with their fellow-men. But Jesus would inspire so high a regard for the divine government, that men would patiently submit, even to gross and glaring wrongs, without seeking to right themselves, or appealing to human tribunals for redress, but confidently entrust their vindication to God alone. And this surely is not at variance with the spirit of a law, one of whose requirements is—Lev. xix: 18—“Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people.”

The several themes upon which our Lord thus comments are

regularly introduced by the formula, "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time." And these themes are mostly stated in language taken *verbatim*, or in substance, from the law of Moses, but perverted to a sense foreign from the true meaning and spirit of the law. This perversion is stated in explicit terms in the instance which yet remains: "Ye have *heard* that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor" is the language of the law; but "Thou shalt hate thine enemy" is a perverted inference, which those whom the Saviour addressed may often have *heard* drawn, but which assuredly finds no sanction in the law itself. On the contrary, it expressly enjoins acts of kindness to an enemy—Ex. xxiii: 4, 5: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him." And that our Lord never designed to sanction such an inference from these words of the law is plain, from the fact, that he himself sums up our duty to men in these same words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and that he spake the parable of the good Samaritan expressly to expound who is meant by "neighbor" in this passage of the law.

One word in conclusion. The best solution of the difficulties which are felt, and the true corrective of the errors which are entertained, in respect to the Old Testament, are to be found in the deeper and more thorough study of this portion of the sacred volume. The prevalent neglect of all that belongs to the former dispensation is avenging itself in other ways than in the resulting misconceptions and consequent skeptical objections which threaten to undermine the authority of the Old Testament, and with it that of the New. It likewise reacts more directly and quite as seriously upon the interpretation of the New Testament, and is the fruitful parent of inaccurate or superficial views. If the New Testament contains the key to the Old, the Old Testament is likewise the guide to the New. It is a divine course of pupilage, by which the people of God were trained for the reception and comprehension of the gospel; and it is one which they cannot, even now, afford to do without. It contains the foundations on which the

scheme of gospel truth is built. If the lesson taught in the Old Testament, of the uncompromising justice of God, had been adequately learned, the divine love could not be so grossly caricatured, as it often is, by those who lose sight of every other attribute, and end by degrading that which it is their professed aim exclusively to exalt. If the sacrificial system were better understood, the atoning death of Christ would not be so often misconceived. The divorce of what God has joined together cannot but be fraught with mischief. If the facts and institutions of the Old Testament, and, not least among these, the very things which are made the ground of flippant or skeptical objection, were more devoutly pondered, more seriously laid to heart, and more faithfully and widely preached, a firmer bulwark would be erected against prevalent and growing errors.

Art. III.—EQUABLE REDUCTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.*

By EDWARD P. WOOD, Princeton, N. J.

[The following article was in the printer's hands before the Report of the Committee appointed by the last Assembly on Representation was published. Without undertaking to discuss it, or expressing assent or dissent with reference to its main position, further than to reiterate our judgment, that the Assembly ought to be reduced, and that some basis ought to be found which will mitigate, or certainly not aggravate, present inequalities in the representation of different parts of the church, we submit a plan which appears to us to meet the essential conditions of the problem. At all events, the careful and extended numerical tables submitted by our correspondent will, we hope, prove an important help in estimating the bearings of every scheme of representation that may be proposed.—EDIT OS.]

THE refusal of the Presbyteries to adopt either of the overtures on representation sent down by the General Assembly may be explained by the fact, that one of them was extremely radical, and the other greatly magnified the existing inequalities of representation. The mind of the church is unmistakably

* Report of the Committee on Assembly Representation, appointed by the General Assembly of 1876.