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I.

HOSEA viii. 12 AND ITS TESTIMONY TO THE
PENTATEUCH.

HOSEA viii. 12 is rendered in the Authorized Version :

“I have written to him the great things of my law, *but* they were counted as a strange thing.”

The Revised Version has :

“Though I write for him my law in ten thousand *precepts*, they are counted as a strange thing.”

And in the margin :

Or, “I wrote for him the ten thousand things of my law, but they,” etc., which last the American Appendix proposes to substitute for the text.

This passage is one of special interest and importance in its bearing upon the present phase of Old Testament criticism. All critics, even those of the most revolutionary class, confess that we have in the book of Hosea the genuine production of the prophet bearing that name, who exercised his ministry in the northern kingdom of the Ten Tribes in the eighth century B.C. The length of his ministry has been contested, but all agree that it began, as stated in the title of his prophecies, in the reigns of Jeroboam II., of Israel, and Uzziah, of Judah. In the writings of Hosea and his contemporaries we have documents of undisputed value and authority for estimating the condition of things in Israel at the period to which they belong. Those who would sweep away the prior books of the Bible, and who concede to them no historical character, admit that here we are upon solid ground. It thus comes to be a question of no small con-

sequence, What do these prophets represent to have been the state of things existing in their day? and what do they presuppose as having taken place before their time? So far as can be deduced from their writings, did the previous history of Israel, and particularly the course of their religious development, conflict with the statements of the Pentateuch and of the historical books? or do they harmonize with these statements, and thus lend them additional confirmation?

The passage in Hosea which is placed at the head of this article is of very great consequence in this aspect. It explicitly recognizes the existence of an extensive written law, claiming divine origin and authority by a right which the prophet not only himself held to be valid, but to which he could appeal as undeniable, though its precepts were sinfully disregarded; which is precisely the way that he might be expected to speak of the law of Moses, if it was really his. The critics make desperate but futile efforts to escape from or to break the force of this clear and decisive testimony.

In discussing this passage we shall find occasion to deal with a number of interesting questions which are involved in it, or may be illustrated by it. We proceed accordingly to consider:

1. Its text.
2. Its grammatical rendering.
3. Its bearing upon the Mosaic origin and divine authority of the Pentateuch.

In this verse there is one instance of a K'ri, or marginal reading, differing from the K'thibh, or written text. For רבו, "ten thousand," in the text the margin substitutes רבי, "multitudes." The origin of these diverse readings and their mutual relation has been variously conceived. It has been conjectured that they may have arisen from a critical collation of MSS. whose variant readings have thus been preserved. But it is obvious that this cannot be the true explanation. In any such attempt at critical correction by a comparison of MSS. the collators would undoubtedly have inserted what they thought to be the preferable reading in the text, and placed the inferior one in the margin. But the K'thibh is what is written; the K'ri what is read. The former stands in the text; the latter is in reading uniformly substituted for it.

The learned Dr. Pocock,* Professor of Hebrew and Arabic in Oxford, writing in 1685, urges that the K'ri has arisen from the lack of congruence between the vowels and letters of the text, whence it was inferred that the letter vav was written instead of yodh. He regards this as proving

* Commentary on Hosea, in loc.

“ that there were in their ancient Hebrew copies the vowels put, which they durst not to alter ; else would he that put them have fitted them to the letter written in the text, and not by reason of them have conjectured that the letter was written wrong, or that it was not so plain but that it might easily be mistaken, and therefore not daring to change anything to the least tittle or piece of a line, have given warning in the margin what letter it was to be taken for : for between the letter vav and the letter yodh there is no farther difference than that the tail line of one is shorter than of the other.”

As, however, the assumption that the vowels were from the beginning an integral part of the text is now known to be untenable, the K'ris cannot have sprung from the vowels, as Dr. Pocock supposed.

The only hypothesis that will satisfactorily account for all the facts is that the Hebrew text originally consisted of the letters only. This was regarded as sacredly and inviolably fixed before the addition of the vowel points to serve as guides in reading. Hence, wherever a steadfast tradition had decided, for whatever reason, that a particular word was to be read differently from the way in which it was written, there was no other resource but to leave the text as it was, put the letters of the word to be read in the margin, and attach the vowel points of this marginal reading to the letters of the text. The reader is thus notified, by the discrepancy between the letters and the accompanying vowels, that the word to be read is different from that which lies in the text before him.

The letters being thus the oldest constituent of the text, it is further clear that the K'thibh must be regarded as the true original reading, except in those few instances in which there is reason to suspect an error of transcription ; and that the K'ri is simply a traditional gloss, the source of which can mostly be pointed out, since the object commonly is to remove some real or fancied difficulty in the original text. In the present instance, as in many others, the K'ri was doubtless intended to effect a more formal grammatical agreement between related words. The numeral *רְבֵּי*, *ten thousand*, is attached to the singular noun *תּוֹרָתִי*, *my law*, and this in turn supplies the subject to the plural verb of the next clause *נִחְשְׁבֵי*, *were counted*. The boldness of this construction is instantly relieved in both clauses by the substitution of the plural construct *רְבֵי* for the numeral *רְבֵי*, which puts the sing. “ law ” no longer in apposition with the preceding, but in the genitive and governed by it ; and which, moreover, provides a plural subject for the following verb. It is done, however, at the expense of giving a plural form to an abstract noun *רֵב*, which nowhere else occurs except in the singular. And though Kennicott notes that thirteen of the MSS. examined by him had *רְבֵי* in the text,* and though the St. Petersburg Codex has

* See also Horsley, in loc.

the same, the originality of רבו, as found in the great body of Hebrew MSS., is vouched for by the $\pi\lambda\eta\theta\omicron\varsigma$ καὶ of the LXX ; only the words are divided differently and the vav has been mistaken for the copulative conjunction.

As the K'thibh is not provided with vowels, the interpreter must supply such as the form demands. Archbishop Newcome quotes Dr. Forsayeth as pointing רבו = ריבו, and attaching הויה to the next clause. "I have written against him his suit"—*i.e.*, he is condemned in the controversy between himself and God. This not only gives a very doubtful meaning to the phrase, but introduces a figure foreign to the connection and destroys the manifest allusion of רבו to the הרבה, *multiplied*, of the preceding verse. De Dieu points רבו, the noun רב with 3 masc. sing. suffix referring to the people, and translates "my law, which is his greatness or excellency," that by which the people is made great, exalted, or distinguished among the nations. Maurer suggests that רבו may be the noun רב with vav paragogic archaically attached to the construct, as in רבניו, Ps. cxiv. 8, or תניו ארץ Gen. 1 : 24, "the multitude—*i.e.*, numerous precepts of my law." Kimchi appears to point it רבי 3 pl. pret. of the verb רבה, paraphrasing it "the commandments of which there *are many* in *my law*." All these constructions, however, are forced and unnatural. The simplest understanding of the word, and that which has commended itself to the great body of interpreters, is רבו, myriad or ten thousand. As it is obvious that this is not here intended as a definite number, to be strictly computed, its general meaning is sufficiently expressed by the K'ri "the multitudes of my law"—*i.e.*, its multitudinous precepts.

The Jewish commentator Kimchi, followed by Tarnovius and others, not satisfied with the stress thus apparently laid upon the extent of the law as shown in its numerous precepts, gives a different turn to the thought by understanding it to mean not "the multitudes of my law," but "the great things of my law," a rendering adopted in the Authorized English Version. So too Drusius, who explains it of the law as containing great and excellent things, and compares as an illustrative parallel τὰ μεγάλα τοῦ Θεοῦ, "the great things of God," in Acts ii. 11. Marckius argues in favor of this view that the word "law" is in the singular, not plural, as though numerous laws were spoken of ; and further that the multitude of its commands would not so commend the law as its inherent greatness and majesty. Capito and Æcolampadius (as reported by Pocock) suppose that a distinction is here intended in the contents of the law. The people prided themselves upon their compliance with the law in its minor matters, its outward rites and sacri-

ficial services, while God had also revealed to them its weightier matters, justice, mercy, and faith, which they utterly neglected. But this is importing into the word a meaning which it does not possess, and into the passage a thought not intended by the prophet. No contrast is here suggested between the less and the more important commandments of the law, between its ritual and its moral precepts. Nor is it the design of these words to set forth the dignity of the law and the exaltation which it conferred upon those who possessed it, as *e.g.* in Deut. iv. 6-8. רב does not express the idea of dignity, exaltation, and greatness, but simply that of multitude or abundance. The thought is that of quantity or number, much or many, not quality, excellent or great. Accordingly all the ancient versions without exception give to the word the sense of multitude or multiplicity; and the most recent commentators do the same. Kimchi and those who followed him were misled by the use of רב in Aramæic and the later Hebrew to signify *great*, whence it was used as a title of office, and is so perpetuated in the word Rabbi.

Houbigant and Horsley discard the vowels of this word, reading רב instead of רבי, and attaching it to the following clause: "The masters of my law are accounted, as it were, an alien race"—*i.e.*, those who pretend to be expounders of the law shall be disowned as aliens. Archbishop Newcome alters the letters as well as the vowels. "I suspect," he says, "that the true reading is רבתי, *the words of my law.*" Dimock, Boothroyd, Grätz, Kuenen, and Cheyne follow him in this conjecture. Cheyne says: "The expression in the Hebrew, however we understand it, is remarkable and somewhat harsh. All difficulty would be removed if we might suppose the omission of a letter and a transposition; the phrase would then run, 'the words of my law.'" This arbitrary change of text is altogether uncalled for, and is directly in the face of all the ancient authorities, both MSS. and versions. The sense is perfectly good as it stands, and the construction, though somewhat unusual, admits of ready explanation.

As the word תורת, *my law*, may be converted into תורות, *my laws*, by a simple change of the Massoretic points, Hitzig and Wellhausen so read it. The former renders "my instructions to the number of ten thousand;" and Wellhausen, "ever so many of my directions." The precise meaning of the word "Torah" and its usage in the prophets may best be considered at a later stage in our discussion. It is sufficient to remark now that, while it may be used in the plural of particular commandments, it is much more commonly employed in a general or collective sense of a body of legislation in which par-

ticular enactments or precepts find their place. There is no difficulty, therefore, in assuming any one of three possible constructions. תִּירָתִי may be in the gen. after רַבּוֹ, "the ten thousand things of my law;" or, in apposition with it, the ten thousand things—viz., my law; or, as Ewald proposes, in a loose subordination after it, as is usual with nouns denoting the material, ten thousand (precepts of) my law, as three measures (of) flour, four rows (of) stone, or thirty (shekels of) silver. The early Greek versions put the noun in the plural; this, however, is only a translation according to the sense and agreeably to the idiom of the Greek language, not an indication that the Hebrew word was a plural; just as Ewald translates *meine Lehren*, "my teachings," while explicitly declaring that it is in the singular in the original. There is no good reason, therefore, for suspecting the accuracy of the Hebrew points or for departing from them in the present instance.

We now proceed to consider the correct translation of this verse. Everything depends upon the proper rendering of the verbal form אֶכְתֹּב. While this form is capable of being variously understood in different connections, its most ordinary force, as is well known, is that of a simple future, "I will write." It is so rendered by the Septuagint and by Jerome.

The Septuagint alters the meaning of the verse entirely by a slight modification of the text, by which apparently the translators would escape the inconsistency involved in rendering אֶכְתֹּב as a future, while yet it must antedate the following preterite. The application of the sentence is accordingly so changed that this difficulty is removed. In order to understand the meaning and bearings of the verse before us, it will be necessary to include in our view that which precedes and that which follows, since they are intimately connected with it. The LXX thus render Hos. viii. 11-13:

"Because Ephraim multiplied altars, beloved altars became sins to him. I will write down a multitude for him; and his enactments were reckoned as foreign, even the beloved altars. Wherefore if they offer sacrifice and eat flesh, the Lord will not receive these things. Now he will remember their iniquities and punish their sins. They returned to Egypt, and they shall eat unclean things in Assyria."

These last words, "they shall eat unclean things in Assyria," were, as is noted by Jerome, marked with an obelus in Origen's Hexapla as an insertion by the translators. They are borrowed from ix. 3, and illustrate the facility with which expressions and clauses are introduced from parallel passages.

The phrase "beloved altars" represents זִבְחֵי הַיְהוָה, "sacrifices of mine offerings," which is transferred from the beginning of ver. 13 to the close of ver. 12; זִבְחֵי, *sacrifices*, being read as if it were קִזְבֵּי,

altars, and *הַזְבֵּחַ* being derived, not from *נתת*, *to give*, in the sense of *gifts* or offerings, but from *אהב*, *to love*.

This same epithet "beloved" is likewise attached to "altars" in ver. 11, in place of the emphatic repetition in the Hebrew of *סוף ל* *to sin*, which the translators seem to have dropped as an unnecessary pleonasm; though the Complutensian edition and the Biblia Regia have *ἐπλημμελημένα*, *faulty altars*, instead of *ἠγαπημένα*, *beloved altars*; and for the old Latin rendering of this passage, *altaria dilecta*, "beloved altars," an ancient gloss substitutes *delicta*, "sins" or "crimes," evidently with the view of assimilating it to the Hebrew, which the *εις ἀμαρτίαν* of Symmachus, vouched for by the Syro-hexaplaric, shows to have read then as now.

The sense of this passage in the LXX is this: Ephraim, having multiplied altars and thus involved himself in sin, God declares, I will write down against him, hold him accountable for, charge to his account this multitude of altars; these altars, which he loves and has legalized, have been reckoned foreign by the Lord, not native or proper to Israel, but alien and outlandish, fit only for the heathen around them. Wherefore the Lord will not accept worship so offered. The verse thus interpreted relates not to God's written law, which the people had disregarded, but to God in the capacity of a judge passing sentence upon them for their sinful multiplication of altars, and regarding the altars which they have legalized as not to be tolerated in Israel. This does not indicate that the Hebrew text before the translators was different from that which we possess. Its identity is abundantly evidenced. Aquila has *πληθονομένους νόμους*, showing that it was a multitude of laws, not altars, which is here spoken of. Symmachus has *πλήθη νόμων μου*, *multitudes of my laws*, showing that God's laws and not Israel's sinful enactments are referred to. The same thing is established by Jerome's rendering, which is preserved without change in the Vulgate, "multiplices leges meas," *my manifold laws*. The Syriac, too, and the Targum, correspond precisely with the Hebrew text as it now stands. So that the variation of the LXX translators is plainly traceable to their own arbitrary rendering.

The Greek fathers in their annotations upon this passage follow, of course, the rendering of the LXX, and show how they understood it.

Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia (A.D. 392), comments as follows:

"This multitude of the altars and of those new laws which they invented concerning the worship of idols I will lay up as a written accusation and a just one against them, lodging information against them on the ground of such transgressions. The altars for which they show great love and zeal shall come under the power of their enemies," which is his explanation of their being "reckoned as foreign."

Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus, expounds this verse to the same purport and in very similar terms.

Cyril of Alexandria finds three sins here charged against the Ephraimite kings :

“(1) That they multiplied altars to sin ; (2) that they held them as beloved when they should have mourned and lamented for offending God ; (3) that the beloved altars (viz., the altars of burnt-offering and of incense in the tabernacle and in the temple at Jerusalem), which they should treat with all reverence, were regarded as foreign. The prophet interjects the clause, I will write against them as sins the multitude of their altars built by them for sins and their legalized sacrifices, or the times and ways in which they performed their profane rites.”

Cyril, it will be observed, takes the expression “beloved altars” in a twofold sense in application, first, to the idolatrous altars to which the Ephraimites were so attached, and, secondly, to the true and lawful altars, to which they ought to have been devoted, but which they regarded as belonging to a foreign state—viz., to Judah.

Theophylact, Bishop of Bulgaria, in the eleventh century, expounds in much the same fashion in terms which need not be here repeated. He makes an application of the passage, however, and adds some practical suggestions that are not without interest.

“To the people who slew Christ,” he says, “even their lawful altars became sin ; and whatsoever they had received from God as lawful was written as an accusation against them when they transgressed.” Upon the clause “the altars are reckoned as foreign,” he remarks : “They have much solicitude for their idolatrous altars ; but my altars are reckoned foreign to them and are neglected—viz., the two altars in the court and in the tabernacle. We all have two altars, one without, on which we offer bodily actions to God ; one within, in the mind, on which we send up to God the incense of prayer and of exalted spiritual and divine contemplation. These are the really beloved and precious altars. But if thrusting these aside, any one multiplies altars to himself, borne along to manifold forms of wickedness in deeds and thoughts, driven about by various and strange doctrines, such altars become sin to him.”

The Arabic version of Walton’s Polyglott follows the LXX, but understands it somewhat differently. The “writing” is freely paraphrased as a sentence of expulsion ; and the “multitude” is interpreted to be not the altars, but Israel themselves. The subsequent clauses have also undergone some modification. Its rendering is, “I will disquiet,” or chase to and fro, “his multitude ; my laws were regarded as foreign. The beloved altars the Lord will not accept, since they slay the victims and eat the flesh.”

Jerome’s Latin Version brings us back to the form of the Hebrew text. He says in his Commentary on Isa. ix. 2, that it is his usage in difficult places to give the renderings of both the Hebrew and the LXX in order that the diligent reader may perceive how far the latter departs from the other Greek versions and from the Hebrew verity. His own rendering of the passage before us is, “I will write

for them my manifold laws, which have been regarded as foreign." The laws, he says, are those which God "had previously given by Moses." God is represented as declaring that he would write these laws afresh to the people; but then he recalls the manner in which they have already been treated. "Of what use," he says, "is it to write more, when they have despised those which they have already received? For, when he had commanded that there should be one altar in Jerusalem, is it not despising God that they have made altars in all the mountains and hills to provoke the Lord? They have made altars not to please me, but that they might sacrifice many victims and eat their flesh." And he goes on to make application of the passage: "There is one altar in the church, one faith and baptism, which heretics deserting have framed many altars to themselves, not to please God, but to multiply their sins. Therefore they deserve not to receive the laws of God, since they have before-time despised what they have received."

Jerome does not, as has sometimes been stated, interpret the verse before us conditionally, "If I were to write my law," nor even interrogatively, "Shall I write?" etc. His idea is that God first declares his purpose to re-write his laws to the people; this purpose is then reversed, inasmuch as they have already been contemptuously disregarded. Jerome thus attempts to combine the future writing of the laws with the past disregard of them; but this obliges him to take "write" in the sense of "re-write," and to foist into the passage a change of purpose on the part of God, which is neither expressed nor implied.

Rufin, while he adopts the rendering of his learned contemporary, understands the writing of the laws not in the sense of enacting them, but in that of executing their penalty. "The figure," he says, "is taken from a judge who pronounces a written sentence. My laws, which long since promulgated are chiefly contained in the volume of Deuteronomy, I will write manifoldly against them—*i. e.*, I will execute them, and accumulate inflictions upon them." This is putting a sense upon the phrase "to write laws" which it manifestly will not bear.

Cornelius à Lapide, the distinguished Roman Catholic professor at Louvain in the first half of the seventeenth century, follows Rufin, while the Spanish commentator Sanchez substantially adopts the view of Jerome. The latter supposes that God is speaking ironically and, as it were, in disapproval of further effort for the moral improvement of Israel, since they would be no better for it. "I will forsooth write for Israel new laws, which he will contemn like the old ones," meaning really that it would be preposterous to

do so. Cornelius à Lapidè paraphrased it thus, "Whereas I formerly wrote my manifold laws and their penalties on stone by Moses, I will now write them on the back of the Israelites with a rod and a pen of iron—that is to say, I will inflict upon them the manifold plagues described by Moses by the sword of their enemies, because they have neglected and despised my laws as foreign. As a good man is a living law, so is the punishment of the wicked which cries aloud to others to avoid their sins." And he urges in confirmation of this view the first word of ver. 11, *כי*, *because*, as suggesting a causal relation between this verse and the next. "Because Ephraim has multiplied altars to sin, I will inflict upon him the penalties of the law." The obvious reply is that, even if this particle suggests a relation to what follows, the sequence may be found in the second clause of ver. 11 itself, or, better still, in the denunciation of ver. 13. But the true connection, as the best commentators agree, is rather with what precedes, either with ver. 10, or with the thought which finds expression in various forms in the antecedent portion of the chapter—Ephraim shall be punished by subjection to foreign nations because of his sinful multiplication of altars. And this is besides the effectual answer to Stuck's argument of the fragmentary character of the discourses of Hosca, based upon this same particle. He claims that ver. 11 begins a new fragment, which stands in no relation to the foregoing, and that the opening word "because" points exclusively to what follows. The fact is that it links that verse in the most intimate manner with the whole preceding context.

Bishop Horsley also translates *אֲכַתֵּב* as a future, and takes the clause in a punitive sense; but he reaches this result by transferring *לְחַטָּא* with altered vowels from the end of ver. 11 to the beginning of ver. 12, and making it the object of the verb so as to express what God will inscribe upon Israel—viz., that he is the property of sin. This, as he supposes, is in allusion to the custom of marking a slave with the owner's name. As in Isa. xlv. 5, a man is said to acknowledge Jehovah's ownership by writing upon his hand *לִיהוָה*, *Jehovah's*, so here God declares, "Inasmuch as Ephraim hath multiplied altars, altars are (counted) sin to him. I will write upon him *לְחַטָּא*, Sin's," or belonging to Sin.

The changes of text and forced interpretations, which have now been reviewed, have been very properly discarded by more recent scholars. Those who now assign a future sense to *אֲכַתֵּב*, claim that it is hypothetical and suggests a condition which is not actual, but only supposed. Thus Hitzig, who herein follows Abarbanel and Mercerus, says that inasmuch as Israel never had 10,000 laws, nor

anything like it, אֶת־כִּתְבֵי cannot be regarded as a historical present, but must be hypothetical. "Were I to write for him my instructions to the number of 10,000, they would be despised as those of a stranger" who has no right to command, Gen. xix. 9.

Dr. Robertson Smith* says: "The prophets of the eighth century never speak of a written law of Moses. The only passage which has been taken to do so is Hosea viii. 12; and here the grammatical translation is, "Though I wrote to him my Torah in ten thousand precepts, they would be esteemed as a strange thing." Dr. T. K. Cheyne† regards this rendering as "grammatically possible," though he does not himself adopt it. Wellhausen‡ gives substantially the same translation, except that to obscure the testimony here given to the existence of a written law still more, he arbitrarily alters the sense of the verb: "Were I to prescribe to him ever so many of my directions, they would be esteemed as those of a stranger." But as Eichhorn§ long since observed: "So long as laws are only perpetuated orally and by tradition, no one will use *scribere* for *præscribere*." Even if כתב meant "prescribe" in this passage, it could only have been used in this sense because it was a familiar fact that the divine law was in written form. And this is as clearly true if the clause be hypothetical as if it be declarative. Why, in putting the case of imposing his commands upon the people, should he speak of writing his law to them, unless this was the recognized form proper to the divine law and associated with it in their minds by existing usage? Further, if this clause were purely hypothetical, it would be incongruous to speak of enjoining ten thousand precepts, as though so vast a number would be more likely to secure obedience than the inculcation of a few. But the hypothetical construction is shown to be absolutely impossible by the preterite tense of the following verb. נִחְשְׁבֵי cannot possibly mean "they would be esteemed," but only "they have been esteemed as a strange thing." The contemptuous disregard of the law here denounced is actual and past. The writing of the law, which was followed by this treatment, cannot therefore be either hypothetical or future. As Pocock remarked two centuries ago, "נִחְשְׁבֵי, *have been accounted*, doth seem to require that it should be spoken rather of something that he had already written than of what he would after write." Kuenen (Hexateuch, p. 175) concedes that "the existence

* Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 297. See also The Prophets of Israel, p. 114.

† Hosea with Notes, p. 90.

‡ Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels, p. 60.

§ Einleitung in's Alte Testament, 4th ed., vol. ii., p. 604.

of written Tora is expressly asserted in one passage (Hosea viii. 12) and rendered highly probable by the context in others."

Ewald,* in his Grammar, cites Hos. viii. 12 as an example of a conditional clause without a conditional particle. But he does not so translate it in his Propheten; and in his History of Israel † he draws inferences from it which assume it to be an affirmation, and are quite inconsistent with the notion of its being purely hypothetical. Professor Driver, in his Use of the Tenses in Hebrew, discusses at some length "hypothetical propositions without the aid of any hypothetical particle to introduce them," but can find no instance analogous to this. He says: "Whether it is permissible to explain Hos. viii. 12" as belonging to a certain class of these cases "is doubtful, as nowhere does the perfect appear in the apodosis." Psalm xi. 8 might be urged if the common rendering were correct: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" but the proper translation is: "The foundations will be destroyed; what hath the righteous done?" or effected?

We are thus shut up to the necessity of finding in אָתָּה not a reference to the future, nor a hypothetical statement, but a declaration respecting the past. The people are charged with having already shown their disregard of God's written law; the writing of that law must, of course, have preceded their violation of it. Now, this verbal form אָתָּה, as is well known and universally acknowledged, may be used, and often is used, in vivid descriptions of the past, when that which has already taken place is spoken of in lively discourse, as though it were now occurring before the eyes. It is such a use of the Hebrew future or imperfect as we are familiar with in the English historical present, which is employed for a similar purpose. We sing, "He dies, the Friend of sinners dies," when the meaning is that Christ died upon the cross of Calvary. Thus in Ps. ciii. 7 the Psalmist, speaking of God's grace to former generations, says: "He made known (or makes known) his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel," where the Hebrew has יִרְיֶה. So God here says, "I write my law," meaning I wrote it through the instrumentality of Moses, the action being made more impressive by being exhibited to the eyes as then taking place. It is so rendered by Symmachus, ἔγραψα, *I wrote*; so by the Targum and Syriac Peshitto.

It has been objected to this rendering that such a use of the tense belongs only to the higher or poetic style; and that in prose it is only to be found with certain particles as אָז, or אָתָּה. Thus Dr.

* Heb. Gram., § 357 b.

† Eng. Trans., vol. i., p. 84.

Cheyne * says : " The tense is the imperfect, which is sometimes used in highly poetical passages where past occurrences are referred to. Such a use of the imperfect would, however, here be isolated, nor is the passage in a poetical style. We must therefore reject the rendering of the Authorized Version, and with it the theory that the prophet refers simply and solely to a body of Mosaic legislation."

But the obvious reply to this is : 1. The historical use of this tense, though rare in ordinary prose without accompanying particles, is not unexampled, as the instances cited by Driver and other grammarians sufficiently show. 2. The style of Hosea, except in ch. 1 and 3, is not to be measured by the rules of simple prose, but is, on the contrary, remarkable for its bold and unusual constructions. And in particular there are other clear instances of the historical use of the future or imperfect, as 7. vi. 1, " he smote," and especially xii. 5, in which, as Dr. Cheyne observes, " poetry is dispelled by prose ;" and yet with allusion to an event in the life of Jacob, the prophet says, וַיִּפְּצֵהוּ, " He found him in Bethel, and there," וַיְדַבֵּר, " he spake with us."† I believe that Ewald stands quite alone in insisting here upon a future sense, and making the clause predictive of revelations yet to be made in Bethel, which there is nothing in the connection to suggest, and which is at variance with every other reference made by Hosea to that desecrated spot. 3. This historical use of the future by Hosea finds its analogy and further confirmation in his prophetic use of the preterite in repeated instances—iv. 19, viii. 8, ix. 6, 7, 16, x. 5, 15. The imagination which could transport itself thus into the distant future could as readily take its standpoint in the past.

There is another use of the Hebrew future or imperfect with reference to past action which may also be applicable here. It is frequently employed of what is habitual or customary. So understood, the verse would read, " I have repeatedly written to him," or I have been constantly writing to him " the ten thousand things of my law, but they have been counted as a strange thing," as something

* Hosea, p. 36, *note*.

† Kuenen (*Hexateuch*, p. 228) says of this passage : " The words, ' at Bethel he (Yahwè) found him (Jacob), and there spoke he with him ' (read וַיִּפְּצֵהוּ), point to an account of a theophany at Bethel after Jacob's return from Aram. Strictly speaking, the only such narrative we possess is in *Gen.* xxxv. 9, sqq." The attempt to render the verbs as frequentatives, " used to find," " used to speak," breaks down from the fact that there are but two recorded instances of God's appearing to Jacob at Bethel. And there seems to be reason in Kuenen's claim that one of these is excluded by the conditions of the case ; for the clause referring to Bethel comes after an allusion to Jacob's wrestling with the angel.

foreign or alien, in which the people had no concern ; which is preferable to the rendering of the second clause, "they have been counted as the work of a stranger," as though they had proceeded from some foreign deity, or one who had no claims upon them and no right to control them.

This habitual or frequentative sense of the verb "I have written my law to them again and again" yields substantially the same meaning as the historical present ; only, as Hengstenberg* observes, it directs attention to "the continual validity of the law that was written centuries before. What God has once written, that he writes, as it were, evermore. . . . On account of the continuance of the essence the prophet represents the formal act by which it was first made known as likewise continuing. He speaks of God as constantly writing the law, because, once written, it has the same validity as though it were every moment written anew." In like manner God is spoken of (Isa. xlii. 5) as creating the heavens and stretching them out and spreading forth the earth—the participle denoting continuous action—since God's upholding and preserving what he had once made is regarded as a continued creation.

Kimchi so understands the passage before us. He remarks that "אכתוב is here equivalent to כתבתי ; and אכתוב is used as meaning, I am writing my law to them day by day, when the prophets whom I am sending to them warn them according to the words of the law and recall them to their memory ; but it does them no good." Pocock takes the same view. He says :

"The future is not unusually put to signify a continued act and a custom of doing a thing, and is therefore rendered by others in the present tense. He wrote to them by Moses, not for that time only, but that they might be perpetually before their eyes as if he were still writing. He continued also to write them by the prophets, who daily put them in mind of them and interpreted them to them, and themselves wrote also to them their own admonitions agreeable to them ; although their preaching them to them may also be called *writing* them in a larger acceptance of the word."

This view of the agency of the prophets as contemplated in this passage under the aspect of a re-enacting of the law and, as it were, writing it afresh, proved a stepping-stone to a very different conception which has been advanced in recent times, that the law here meant is not exclusively or not at all the law of Moses, but rather the revelation made through the prophets. Thus the Speaker's Commentary understands it to denote "God's multiplied communications of his will to the people in writing ; having in view, perhaps, not only 'the book of the law,' but also instructions given through prophets and by them even before Hosea's time committed to

* Die Authentie des Pentateuches, i., p. 64.

writing." Nowack says: "The imperfect is chosen here because the prophet has a perfectly correct consciousness that the legislation did not take place at once in the time of Moses, but rather was gradually completed." And Cheyne adds to the same import: "The prophet is fully conscious that the divinely-given laws under which Israel lives (or ought to live) were not formulated once for all in the Mosaic age, but grew up in different ages. Thus understood, the passage is an important authority for the existence of a legal literature before the Pentateuch became canonical."

It is freely admitted that the word Torah is neither by derivation nor Biblical usage limited to the law of Moses. Derived from *הוֹרָה*, *to teach*, its radical meaning would appear to be *instruction*. Accordingly the Dutch divine and scholar, Cocceius, in the interest of Protestant theology, gave to it in this passage the meaning of "doctrine," which is to be drawn from a written rule of faith and not from oral tradition; and the sin of counting it a strange thing is the rejecting of the true sense of Scripture and perverting it to false tenets.

Torah, however, in actual usage is not mere instruction, but authoritative direction or law. And unless certain passages in the Book of Proverbs are exceptions, it is always used of the law of God. The priests are often spoken of as the custodians of the law. Thus Jer. xviii. 18: "The law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet." So also Ezek. vii. 26. Mal. ii. 7: "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth." The most serious charge that could be brought against the priests was (Hos. iv. 6) that they had forgotten or (Ezek. xxii. 26) violated the law of God. Other passages in the prophets, however, show that the term Torah may be applied not only to the priestly law, but to the utterances of the prophets as well. Thus Isa. i. 10 bids the people "Hear ye the word of the LORD, . . . give ear unto the law of our God." And ii. 3: "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." And v. 24: "They have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." In these and similar passages "the law" is parallel to "the word of the LORD," and is either identical with or at least includes the revealed will of God communicated through the prophets.

But though the word Torah may be applied to the Torah of the prophets as well as the Torah of the priests, or may comprehend them both, it is obviously the priestly and not the prophetic Torah which is intended by Hosea in the passage before us. It is con-

vincingly argued by Smend,* both from the phrase רבו תורתיו or רבי תורה and from אכתוב, that laws in the proper sense, and not the injunctions of prophets, are here meant. If with Hitzig and Wellhausen we read "ten thousand Torahs," this cannot be referred to the discourses of the prophets. For the Torah of the prophets is always spoken of as constituting one whole, including all that Jehovah commands at any given time, in any given condition of affairs, like the expression "the word of the LORD." So that one Torah of the prophets is not to be distinguished from another, but all that the prophets teach at any time whatever is God's Torah. Accordingly, however numerous the books of the prophets may have been in Hosea's time, they could not have been called "ten thousand Torahs." Nor, if the other rendering be adopted, "ten thousand (precepts) of my law," could this be applied to the prophets, for they utter discourses, not individual precepts, though their adversaries ridiculed them as delivering "precept upon precept, line upon line" (Isa. xxviii. 10, 13).

But chiefly אכתוב shows that Hosea is here speaking of laws. Prophets may have been accustomed to commit their discourses to writing before the time of Hosea or Joel, though of this there is no evidence. But at any rate the prophets of Hosea's age taught by speech, not by their pen. Though they committed to writing what they had previously uttered for the sake of giving their words a wider circulation or handing them down to posterity, they delivered the commands of Jehovah chiefly *vivâ voce*. God says, Hos. xii. 10, "I have spoken by the prophets;" vi. 5, "I have hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth;" and, xi. 2, 7, the prophets are said to have vainly "called" the people to the Most High. If Hosea had meant the prophets, he would have said that God uttered or declared his will by them, but not that he wrote it. Duhm's † suggestion that God might have his instructions written down except that this, too, would be unavailing, is not only inconsistent with the terms of the verse, which preclude the hypothetical construction, but besides involves the absurdity that written messages might be expected to be more effective than those delivered orally.

And while the written law here spoken of is evidently not the revelation of God through the prophets, but something quite distinct, a body of laws in the strict and proper sense, the form of the verb אכתוב does not oblige us to assume that these were gradually produced or were committed to writing at successive periods. For, as Smend correctly observes, whether this clause be taken conditionally

* Moses apud Prophetas, pp. 10 ff.

† Die Theologie der Propheten, p. 131.

or declaratively, the imperfect may in vivid discourse represent a single act performed at one definite time in the past. According to Keil the tense form suggests that the law written in the time of Moses was still valid in the days of Hosea. There is force in Smend's objection to this that, while the perfect may denote a thing done in the past which still continues in the present, the Hebrew imperfect never has this sense. The same result was reached by Hengstenberg, however, in an unobjectionable way, as has already been shown through the frequentative sense of the imperfect. God is represented as writing his law to Israel in perpetual repetition because its authority and binding force were the same as though it were freshly enacted and written anew day by day. But there is no more reason on this account to assume that it was written in successive portions and in different ages than there is to understand Isaiah as declaring that the work of creation was still going forward when he speaks of God as creating the heavens and spreading forth the earth. The only objection to the rendering of this verse in the text of the Revised English Version: "Though I write for him my law in ten thousand *precepts*, they are counted as a strange thing," is that it seems to limit the statement to present time and to exclude the reference to the past, which lies so unmistakably in the second verb. The dependent construction, which is adopted in the Revision and by Ewald in his Grammar, must not be confounded with the hypothetical construction of Hitzig, Wellhausen, and Robertson Smith, the effect of which is altogether different. "Though I write" implies the fact of writing. "Though I wrote" or "were I to write" is a supposed case, which has not really occurred and may never occur; it is not a fact, but simply a possibility.

Ewald, commenting on this passage in his History of Israel, I., p. 84 (Eng. Trans.), says:

"We have the clear testimony of Hosea viii. 12 for the assertion that from this time onward a branch of literature was formed in the nation which flourished for several centuries, and aimed at collecting and elucidating the old hallowed laws, often in direct opposition to modern deteriorations. This assertion of Hosea shows at the same time that such writings originally enjoyed no public acknowledgment at all, but were current in the nation for centuries as free creations of literature, until this or that part of them chanced to gain a higher authority and become sacred." And he adds in a note: "This passage presupposes that a number of books of the same kind as the Book of Origins (called by other critics the Priest Code), some of which were highly esteemed, were in circulation in the northern kingdom in the time of Hosea, though entirely disregarded by the authorities. Such *myriads* of written laws cannot refer to a very ancient literature, which time itself was constantly reducing; they were evidently not very ancient writings."

But this distinguished scholar is here evidently substituting his own views for those of the prophet. There is nothing in the lan-

guage of Hosea to imply that several books were intended, or that these were of various grades of authority, or that they were not ancient. The prophet does not tell us whether the ten thousand precepts were embraced in one book or in several ;* but as it is claimed that Jehovah wrote them, all must alike have been of unquestioned divine origin and authority. This was not merely the individual belief of the prophet himself, but must have been the accepted faith of the people at large, whom he was addressing, and whom he charged with gross criminality for transgressing them. This was the hinge on which his entire ministry rested ; and unless he could presuppose the universal admission of the divine obligation of the law of Jehovah to which he appeals, his words had no meaning, and he was simply making himself ridiculous.

Dr. Robertson Smith tells us † :

“ The Torah is not a new thing in the eighth century B.C. The false religion of the mass of the nation is always described as a corruption of truths which Israel ought to know. ‘ Thou hast forgotten the Torah of thy God,’ says Hosea to the priests (Hos. iv. 6). It cannot fairly be doubted that the Torah which the priests have forgotten is Mosaic Torah. For the prophets do not acknowledge the priests as organs of revelation. Their knowledge was essentially traditional. Such traditions are based on old-established law, and they themselves undoubtedly referred their wisdom to Moses.”

It is only necessary to add to this that Hosea speaks of God’s writing the law in the sense of his enacting it and imposing it upon the people. This is equivalent to saying that he gave it to Israel in written form. The law subsisted not merely as immemorial usage, or oral tradition, but as a body of written statutes of ancient date, and doubtless universally ascribed (whether truly or falsely we do not now inquire) to Moses, who, as the critics tell us, was presumed to be the fountain-head of all legislation, as in fact their theory of “ legal fiction” contrived to account for the reference of Deuteronomy and the Priest code to Moses, compels them to assume. Kuenen ‡ says : “ Nothing hinders us from assuming that the prophets had in view collections of laws, and admonitions, to which a higher antiquity or even a Mosaic origin was attributed.”

This written law could not be merely the ten commandments, which some are willing to allow to have been Mosaic, at least in an abbreviated form. Eichhorn’s § argument on this point is perfectly conclusive : “ No one could ever have spoken of the ten commandments as *myriades legum*.” It must have been, as Pocock well

* “ There may, of course, either have been various small law-books, or one large one ; we cannot determine this point from the Book of Hosea.” (Cheyne, Hosea, p. 37.)

† The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 297.

‡ Religion of Israel, i., p. 56.

§ Einleitung, ii., p. 604.

observes, "a manifold law, containing a multitude of precepts, fitted to all occasions of men and directing them in all parts of their duty and to a right performance of them for a right ordering of all their actions, that they might be well pleasing to him."

But it is further alleged that the Pentateuch is likewise excluded for a similar reason, since it does not contain anywhere near 10,000 precepts. The entire Pentateuch, including history as well as legislation, has but 5845 verses; and even in the legislative portions each separate verse does not contain a distinct statute. But no one expects numerical exactness in such a statement as this, any more than in Deut. xxxii. 30, "two shall put ten thousand to flight," or 1 Sam. xviii. 7, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands." The derivation of רב־ points simply to a great number, and it is here obviously used indefinitely as its equivalent רב־נה commonly is. The רב־ of the K'ri further shows that it was so understood. It simply denotes a law containing a great number of precepts. Dr. Cheyne * concedes that in bulk it must have resembled the Pentateuch. He says: "We can estimate the multiplicity spoken of from the Pentateuch, whether this work was known to Hosea in anything at all like its present form or not."

Why, then, may it not have been the Pentateuch? Nowack † says: "Neither the Priest code nor Deuteronomy can here come into the account, for even in respect to the former it is universally admitted that it cannot have had canonical authority in the time of Amos and Hosea." And Cheyne tells us (p. 36) that it is impossible to write the history of revelation with Deuteronomy accepted as a work of the Mosaic or at any rate pre-Hezekian age. But here we take issue with this manifest begging of the question. This is the very point in controversy; and we are not prepared to yield it without a contest. The present phase of revolutionary criticism has arisen in the last twenty years, and may perhaps be swept out of existence by the next critical wave. It is scarcely entitled yet to claim secure possession of the field.

But the chief argument of the critics is that the law which Hosea here has in mind is of a moral and not a ceremonial nature. Thus Wellhausen: ‡

"This passage has had the undeserved mishap of being obliged to serve as proof that Hosea knew extended writings of like contents with our Pentateuch. This is the only thing that follows from the antithesis *instead of following my Torah they sacrifice*—for that is the meaning—that the possibility never entered the prophet's mind that any one could make the cultus likewise the object of Jehovah's teachings."

* Hosea, p. 91.

† Der Prophet Hosea erklärt, p. 151.

‡ Prolegomena, p. 60.

So, too, Nowack :

“ The prophet, in opposition to a people which places an exaggerated value on sacrifices, points to the Torah, which consequently cannot have for its object the legal regulation of the cultus, but must have been of a prevaillingly ethico-religious character.”

It has been repeatedly maintained before that the prophets depreciated the ceremonial law. Perhaps the most remarkable attempt to elicit such a meaning from the verse before us is that of Junius and Tremellius, who render it : “ What I prescribe to him in the most ample documents of my law are reckoned as a strange thing ; ” and this is interpreted to mean, I make no account of all their rites and ceremonies that are required by the law. Wellhausen maintains rightly enough that there was no breach between the prophets and the law ; only he has made the surprising discovery that the law had no relation to the ritual.

“ Hosea bitterly complains, iv. 6 ff., ” he urges, “ that the priests are devoted to sacrifices instead of the Torah. The Torah which Jehovah entrusted to their order makes it their calling to spread the knowledge of God in Israel as requiring faithfulness and love, justice and equity, and not gifts ; but from a paltry regard to their own interest they promote the inclination of the people to the cultus, in the overestimate of which consists their superstition, their sin, and their destruction. . . . Whence it may be seen how foolish it is to believe that the prophets controverted the law. They contend for the priestly Torah, only this has to do, not with the cultus, but with right and morals.”

In point of fact, no such contrast, as Wellhausen assumes, is drawn between the ritual and morality. Hosea would not have the people abandon sacrifice for the sake of discharging their moral duties. On the contrary, he represents sacrifice by which pardon was obtained and the ephod by which the will of God was consulted as essential to the maintenance of Israel’s intercourse with Jehovah ; so that when he would depict the people in the seclusion of the exile—awaiting a happier future, but their relation to God and to idols both severed for the present—he speaks of them (iii. 4) as, on the one hand, without a sacrifice and without an ephod, and, on the other, without a pillar and without teraphim. As the latter were indispensable instruments and accompaniments of idolatry (x. 1, 2), so were the former of the true worship of Jehovah. When he says (v. 6) : “ They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD, but they shall not find him,” the antithesis implies that there was reason to expect that, going with such offerings, they would find him. The real cause of their failure is immediately added : “ He hath withdrawn himself from them.” When the Most High declares (vi. 6) that he desired “ the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings,” it is implied that burnt-offerings were desired. The threatened captivity would be aggravated by their inability to

observe the laws of ceremonial purity: "They shall eat unclean things in Assyria" (ix. 3). The acceptability of drink-offerings properly presented is taken for granted (ix. 4); and sacrifice must have been regarded as pleasing to God, when it is made the symbol of praise; "so will we render calves, our lips" (xiv. 2). That this was the attitude of the prophets is unequivocally conceded by Kuenen (*Hexateuch*, p. 176):

"We must not assert that the prophets reject the cultus unconditionally. On the contrary, they too share the belief that sacrifice is an essential element of true worship. The context always shows that what they really protest against is the idea that it is enough to take part in the cultus, that there is no inconsistency in devotional zeal coupled with neglect of Yahwe's moral demands, and that so long as his altars smoke and his sanctuaries are frequented his favor is sure."

If Duhm's conjectural emendation of ver. 13 were justified, there would be some semblance of reason for affirming that Wellhausen's antithesis of Torah to sacrifice was to be found in the text. For זכתי אהבהנו Duhm * proposes to read זכתי אהבהנו—"The precepts of my law are counted a strange thing, but they love sacrifice." But there is no warrant for this change of text; and Duhm himself admits that Hosea does not discard sacrifice altogether. He even fancies that there is this difference between Hosea and Amos, that while the latter insists only upon morality and civil righteousness, Hosea holds to religious requirements as well.

If, then, neither the general teaching of Hosea nor the passage which we are examining affords any warrant for placing the law in contrast with sacrifice and the ritual generally, there is abundant reason, on the other hand, for affirming that the law must have included ritual matters and embraced regulations concerning them. In order to establish this it is not necessary, with Bredenkamp,† to resort to conjectural alterations of text. He inclines to follow the LXX both in attaching the first two words of ver. 13 to the end of ver. 12, and in deriving זכתי אהבהנו from אהבה, "sacrifices beloved by me are counted a strange thing," or else from זכתי in the sense of giving or appointing, "sacrifices appointed by me are counted a strange thing." So that if Hosea had actually written what Bredenkamp thinks he may have written, there would be here an explicit assertion that the ten thousand things of the law which God had written and the people neglected embraced divinely approved or divinely instituted sacrifices. Nor will it be necessary to adopt Ewald's unsupported rendering of זכתי אהבהנו as meaning *raw*, in which case the thing censured in contrast with the law would be the novel and barbarous usage of eating raw flesh in the ritual, which is explicitly for-

* *Die Theologie der Propheten*, p. 132.

† *Gesetz und Propheten*, p. 159.

bidden (Ex. xii. 9). Nor need we render this much-disputed word, as is done by certain Rabbins quoted by Kimchi and approved, among others, by Levy in his *Chaldäisches Wörterbuch*, "My burnt sacrifices," as though the people were charged with feasting upon sacrifices, which should have been wholly consumed upon God's altar. We have no occasion to insist that the prophet here alludes to either of these supposed ritual transgressions and places them in contrast with God's written law.

The plain and acknowledged meaning and connection of the passage make it clear that there were ritual prescriptions in the law. The antithesis is not, as Wellhausen affirms, between the law and sacrifices, but between the law and multiplying altars to sin. It is not sacrifices as such, but Ephraim's sinful sacrifices which are here adduced as evidence of his estrangement from God's written law. And it was because of this sinful character of the sacrifices offered unto God, and not because sacrifices were in themselves either displeasing or a matter of indifference to him, that he did not accept them, but regarded them as having no sacredness whatever, no more than flesh slain and eaten as ordinary food. Such sacrifices made no atonement for their sins, which accordingly God would visit upon them by sending them back again to the bondage of Egypt, or its equivalent in the form of subjection to some other oppressor. The implication unquestionably is that an altar which was not an altar to sin, and sacrifices offered not at variance with God's written law, but in compliance with its requirements, would have been accepted by him and would have made atonement for their iniquity, so that God would no longer remember it against them, but would have averted the threatened penalty. The law consequently must have given regulations respecting the altar and sacrifice, must have distinguished the legitimate from the illegitimate, must have indicated what sacrifices would be acceptable to God and what would not; since it was by counting the precepts of the written law a strange thing that Ephraim had transgressed in this matter and laid himself open to the denunciations of the prophet.

And it seems to be a very reasonable supposition that the law, which Hosea had in mind, contained a restriction like that in Deut. xii. and Lev. xvii. of sacrifice to one sanctuary and one altar, and a permission like that in Deut. xii. 15 to kill and eat flesh in all their gates. At least his language is in obvious and striking correspondence with such a view. This would explain the otherwise surprising fact that here and elsewhere he speaks reproachfully of the multiplication of altars; and also that sacrifices on these multiplied altars were in the sight of God nothing but flesh slain for ordinary food.

To this add that a law of moral precepts, such as the critics suppose to have been meant, could not from the nature of the case have been of very great extent, and could not have been described as having ten thousand precepts.

Furthermore, a sharp distinction between the moral and the ceremonial is not only at variance with the views of Hosea, as has been shown already, but with the religion of the Old Testament and every other ancient religion. The true religion was distinguished from the false not by being exclusively moral as opposed to ceremonial, but by being pure and exalted and true in both these elements ; not by having no ritual, but by its ritual being, instead of senseless or degrading formalities, the embodiment and expression of true spiritual worship.

Account must further be taken of those various coincidences of thought and language between this book of prophecy and the Pentateuch, which look like so many direct allusions to the latter ; of the repeated mention of historical facts recorded in the Pentateuch, which the critics would have us believe were drawn, not from it, but from other conjectural and unknown sources ; of the references to institutions and enactments which correspond with those of the Pentateuch, and particularly the fact that the sacred seasons and the ritual services of which Hosea speaks as observed in Israel are those of the Pentateuch in name and outward form, but degraded from their spirit and intent by the sensuous idolatry to which they were attached, so that they call forth his intense indignation and vehement rebuke. The worship of Israel is a gross defection from the purity of earlier days and a shameless breach of covenant engagements. This is the one constantly recurring thought which lies at the basis of the entire Book of Hosea. He denounces Israel's worship at Bethel and Gilgal (ix. 5, 8, 15, xii. 11), on the mountains and hills, under the oaks, poplars, and elms (iv. 13). He likewise reproves Judah for their sins, and begs them not to associate themselves with Ephraim in his idolatrous worship and schismatical altars (iv. 15-17) ; but he has not a word of reproof for Jerusalem or its worship. On the contrary, he connects in the blissful future Israel's subjection to the house of David with their return to the true worship of God (iii. 5). And that God's written law was esteemed "strange" or "foreign" by apostate Ephraim may intimate its recognition and observance in the rival kingdom of Judah.

The law of the Pentateuch, with its ten commandments and its other numerous requirements, spiritual, moral, and ritual, is just such a law as Hosea implies. That it was flagrantly disobeyed is to the critics proof of its non-existence ; but Hosea testifies to this

fact, as well as to its divine origin and authority. If this is not the law which he actually meant, it behooves the critics to tell us what has become of that divine and written law of ten thousand precepts of which the prophet speaks ; and how it has come to pass that it has vanished so completely without a trace being left of its existence, other than the exigencies of an unsupported critical hypothesis.

WILLIAM HENRY GREEN.