

❖THE❖OLD❖TESTAMENT❖STUDENT.❖

VOL. VI.

JUNE, 1887.

NO. 10.

WITH this number THE STUDENT closes its sixth volume. A glance at the contents of this volume shows at least two things:—

(1) It is possible to present the leading subjects of Old Testament study in a form which is at once scholarly yet popular. In certain lines of investigation, where the linguistic element abounds, the more learned style is necessary. But in general, there is no occasion for the employment of the affected style which characterizes much of our "learned" work. A plain straightforward presentation of a subject is entirely consistent with a deep and exhaustive knowledge of that subject. If scholars could but be brought to recognize this fact, how much more wide-reaching the results of their work would be.

(2) It is possible for men who are not specialists to keep abreast of the results accomplished in a given department with the expenditure of a comparatively small amount of time and energy. The great cry, in these days, is for more time; and certainly, in view of the pressure which rests upon us, more time is needed. But the fact is, a judicious use is not always made of the time we have. Men think, and plan, and consider, but do not *act*. The Old Testament subjects about which so much is written, for example, are thought to be too deep, too exacting, for anyone but a specialist to take up. It is true that a certain portion of the work must be done by specialists; but when the results of this work have been put into shape, there is no reason why men who are not specialists should hesitate to enter upon an investigation of them. The work, if but once begun, will be found to be most helpful and stimulating. There is, however, aside from this, a general knowledge of the Old Testament department which every conscientious Bible-student should make an effort to maintain. For such especially THE STUDENT is intended. May the number desiring such help become greater; may the help afforded by THE STUDENT become more valuable.

- Whitney**, Rev. George Henry, A. M. — Review of Olin's Travels. *No. Hand-book of Bible Geography*. N. Y., 1871. *Am. Review*, LVII. 496.
- Williams**, Rufus Orland. Egypt and the Book of the Dead. *Univ. Quar.*, XXXIII. 398.
- Wood**, William Spicer. An Eastern Afterglow, or present aspects of sacred scenery. Cambridge, 1880.
- Woodruff**, Prof. Frank Edward. The el Fayoum Manuscripts, with a resumé of the discussion concerning the alleged Gospel fragment. *Andover Review*, IV. 272-277.
- Wolcott**, Samuel, D. D. Articles in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*: Notices of Jerusalem (first series, 17-87. 1843); Topography of Jerusalem (XXIII. 684; XXIV. 116; XXVII. 565); The Site of Sodom (XXV. 112); The Land of Moriah (XXV. 765).
- Worcester**, Rev. John. A Journey in Palestine in the Spring of 1882. Boston, 1884.
- Topography of the City (A Review of Fergusson's Theory.) *Smith's Bib. Dic.*, Am. Ed., pp. 1330-1337.
- General Views of Palestine and of its Representation. *New Jer. Mag.*, (new series), VII. 447-450. 1883.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.—The foregoing list of American writers on subjects connected with Biblical Exploration, being a first attempt at such a collection, is necessarily incomplete; but it may furnish suggestive material for better work in the same direction. The attempt is to record under the name of each writer all the works and the articles which have appeared in reviews, magazines and other permanent volumes of periodical literature. Want of space forbids the insertion of a much larger list which might have been gathered from the columns of religious Journals. The compiler will be grateful to any who will send him corrections or additions to this list for future use.

IS THE CURRENT CRITICAL DIVISION OF THE PENTATEUCH INIMICAL TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH?

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THE OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT for May, page 259, copies a paragraph from the *Presbyterian Review* containing the following sentences:

"The analysis of the Hexateuch into several distinct original documents is a purely literary question in which no article of faith is involved. Whoever in these times, in the discussion of the literary phenomena of the Hexateuch, appeals to the ignorance and prejudices of the multitude, as if there were any peril to the faith in these processes of the higher criticism, risks his reputation for scholarship by so doing."

Two remarks are naturally suggested by these words.

1. Truth is to be accepted at all hazards. If the first six books of the Bible are really compounded of the several documents which the critics profess to discover in them, we must admit the fact and make the best of it. No doubt the Christian faith will survive, whatever happens.

2. Nevertheless there are good reasons why those who reverence these books as an integral portion of the inspired Word of God and who believe them to be a truthful and reliable record, should not be overhasty in accepting critical conclusions which are based upon and necessarily involve the opposite assumption.

The bearing of the divisive hypothesis upon the credibility of the Pentateuch and the inspired authority of the Bible as a whole is obvious. If the great leader and legislator of Israel himself recorded the marvelous transactions in which he took so conspicuous a part, and those laws which he is expressly said to have written, or which God is said to have directly imparted to him, then we have the highest possible guarantee of the truth and accuracy of the statements and of the verity and divine authority of the legislation; and then, too, the declarations of all the subsequent scriptures both of the Old Testament and of the New upon this subject are completely justified. But recent critics claim that the professed record of the history and legislation of Moses is based upon different documents of unknown origin and of uncertain age, which have been compacted together by a redactor or series of redactors, of whom nothing whatever is known. If these documents were the products of contemporaries of and participants in the events described, and there was evidence that they had been fairly dealt with and faithfully transmitted, the case would not be so bad. But whatever diversities exist among the critics as to the age, authorship and tendencies of these supposed documents, their unanimous verdict is that the earliest of them was not written until several centuries after the Mosaic age.

Moreover, these documents give, it is claimed, not only varying but mutually inconsistent accounts of the persons and events which they describe, and this not only in subordinate and unessential particulars, but in matters of the greatest moment. And they have been put together in such a manner as to give an entirely different complexion to things from that which either of the documents taken singly aimed to give. Their incompatible statements have been harmonized in an unwarrantable manner, and their divergent accounts of the same event have been converted into distinct events, showing that the redactor misunderstood or misrepresented his sources. His misconceptions would have been of less consequence if he had preserved the documents entire and unaltered, so that adequate means would have been possessed for forming an independent judgment of their contents. But, on the showing of the critics themselves, the documents have been preserved in a mutilated form, that only being retained by the redactor which seemed to him suited to his purpose; and this was often modified considerably from its original intent by the new connections in which it was placed; and certain passages were besides seriously altered or additions made which still further obscure the genuine signification. So that he who would arrive at the real truth respecting the matters treated in the Pentateuch, must first ascertain and expunge what has been inserted by the redactor, and restore what he has changed to its previous form. He must then discover and correct the modifications to which the documents have been subjected in the various editions through which they are severally alleged to have passed. When this task has been successfully accomplished, and what is left of the documents has been restored in each case to its primitive form, these will put the investigator in possession of all that now remains of the traditions which were circulating about the Mosaic age six or more centuries subsequently. From these mutually contradictory legends he must evolve the facts. And this is the sort of voucher we have for the revelations made to Moses, and the institutions founded by him, which are the basis of the Old Testament religion and the foundation on which the New Testament likewise rests.

When in this condition of things it is said that the analysis of the Pentateuch

is a purely literary question, in which no article of faith is involved, it is difficult to attach any intelligible meaning to the words. To speak of inspired documents and an inspired redactor as factors in this critical hypothesis is to use language that is altogether misleading. The Pentateuch so constructed can only be said to be inspired by attaching such a sense to this term as will render it applicable to a mass of very unreliable materials, in which legends, misstatements and contradictions largely figure. If the church is to take her idea of the Word of God from what the Pentateuch becomes under the operation of this critical hypothesis, what becomes of its divine authority? And what becomes of the infallibility of Christ's teachings, who gave to it his own supreme sanction?

In the article from which the extract in the May number of this journal was taken, students are referred to "the completed works of Wellhausen, Reuss, Kuenen, and Dillmann" in their study of this question. It may be presumed that these leaders of critical opinion understand the bearing of the hypothesis of which they are the most distinguished advocates; and almost every page of their writings furnishes evidence of the readiness with which the truthfulness and reliability of the sacred records are dissipated in the critical crucible. The whole thing is in a state of flux. The critic disposes of facts and institutions and written records at will. Everything goes down before his analysis; and this is being constantly pushed further and further. Seams and flaws hitherto unsuspected are opening with every fresh application of critical tests. The Pentateuch is not only rent into four documents, new strata and further divisions are detected in the body of each separate document. When the limit of ultimate divisibility will be reached, none can tell. And what will be the end of the process, or how much will be left of Moses and of his institutions when it is finished, it is impossible to foresee. It really seems as though the critical documents, by the further application of the same methods that produced them, were on the verge of dissolution, and a reign of chaos approaching that of the old fragmentary hypothesis might be at hand. How far it is proposed to follow the critics into this dismal slough does not appear. There are no very clear signs of faltering yet.

It may be said that we should distinguish between the analysis of the critics and their deductions from it; the former may be accepted and the accuracy of the latter denied. We may admit the four documents that they find, and claim that though these are divergent, as the four gospels are, in their mode of presentation, they are, nevertheless, harmonious and mutually consistent. It would seem that this is the only attitude that believing scholars can consistently take, if in their opinion the existence of the Pentateuchal documents has been established. But if they accept the critical analysis in its current form, they will be as hopelessly entangled by their admissions as the fly that has unwarily ventured into the spider's parlor. The ready-made scheme of Pentateuchal documents proffered by the critics is throughout based upon and pervaded by gratuitous assumptions at war with the truth of the sacred record,—assumptions of doublets which are purely imaginary, of senses at variance with the existing context which are brought about by dislocations and hypothetical connections, of oppositions inferred from a silence which has itself been created by critical severances, of manipulations by the redactor justifying the summary ejection of whatever proves intractable by less violent means.

It is a first principle of fair and candid dealing that an honest and capable witness is to be believed unless there are positive reasons for discrediting his testi-

mony. Assuming the existence of the documents and the redactor, it ought to be firmly maintained that the latter, who had the documents in full before him, had the opportunity of knowing their genuine signification as the modern critic, who has them only in an incomplete state, cannot possibly do. Unless, therefore, his integrity or good sense (not to speak of his inspiration) can be successfully impeached and on valid grounds, it should be insisted upon that, however he may have combined or transposed his sources, he has faithfully preserved their original and proper meaning. If this be maintained, as the simplest regard to sound interpretation undoubtedly requires, the critical scheme now current will be found faulty at a thousand points, and Pentateuchal analysis will be completely shorn of its destructive qualities. Let the analysis be conducted on purely literary grounds, and apart from the sinister presuppositions that have been adverted to, and it may have the freest scope as in reality a literary question, in which no article of faith is involved. No one need object to an analysis which shall classify and re-arrange the materials according to their literary features, if it but leave them all unimpaired and retain their true and proper signification. But this would be a totally different affair both in its principles and its results from the current critical scheme, which discredits the Pentateuch at every turn by converting it into a repository of discordant traditions.

It does not annul the inherently vicious character or the evil tendencies of this hypothesis that men revered for their learning and piety have of late signified their acceptance of it, and that they consider its adoption compatible with whatever is essential to the Christian faith. It is a remarkable phenomenon that in European universities eminent biblical scholarship has been to so great an extent dissociated from faith in the Scriptures in any evangelical sense. We may wisely employ the Philistines to sharpen our spears and our swords; but we cannot join them in an assault upon the camp of Israel. No more perilous enterprise was ever attempted by men held in honor in the church than the wholesale commendation of the results of an unbelieving criticism in application both to the Pentateuch and to the rest of the Bible, as though they were the incontestable product of the highest scholarship. They who have been themselves thoroughly grounded in the Christian faith may, by a happy inconsistency, hold fast their old convictions while admitting principles, methods and conclusions which are logically at war with them. But who can be surprised if others shall with stricter logic carry what has thus been commended to them to its legitimate issue? If it be true that the great body of those who lead in biblical scholarship have been swept away by the recent popularity of this critical craze, it may be well to remember that questions of truth and right are not to be settled by the majority of voices, but by the strength of the arguments. And they who are slightly referred to as in a "hopeless minority," may derive some consolation from the thought that they have the infallible declaration of our Lord and his apostles and the inspired word on their side, and that a great array of former scholars, fully equal in all respects to any who have since swerved from their footsteps, have constructed defences which no ingenuity of perverted learning will ever be able to overthrow.