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FORTY YEARS OF NEW TESTAMENT RESEARCH.

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The forty years that have elapsed since the founding of the UNION SEMINARY REVIEW have been a period of such activity in the field of New Testament research that even the barest cataloguing of what has been done would exceed the limits of the present article. The most that we can possibly attempt here is a brief characterization of certain tendencies that have been at work.

In the field of textual criticism, there has been tireless activity. The really decisive labors, it is true, were performed prior to 1888; for by the researches of Tischendorf, Tregelles and others the principal documentary materials of textual criticism were made available; and the epoch-making edition of Westcott and Hort, which appeared in 1881, established on a firm foundation the principles of the science and the methods of its application to the New Testament. Nevertheless, there has been work in plenty for more recent scholars to do. No new critical apparatus has, indeed, succeeded in taking the place of Tischendorf's monumental eighth edition: for von Soden's apparatus, despite its undoubted value, suffers from an unsatisfactory method of presentation and is generally felt not really to meet the need; while Casper René Gregory, who might well have accomplished what is required, met an untimely end in the Great War. But if a satisfactory critical apparatus is still lacking, the materials for its production are being collected with an ever-increasing fulness. Best known,

all; it may be that even in the face of modern skepticism there may be those who will say, not to the reduced Jesus of naturalistic reconstruction and not to the vague figure of a Christ whom every race and every generation is free to interpret for itself, but to the mighty Saviour presented in the whole Word of God: "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

THE PRESENT STATE OF OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM.

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The Editor's request for an article on this subject meets, it must be confessed, with a hesitant and diffident response, not because of any lack of importance or timeliness in such a discussion, but only because of the difficulties necessarily involved. So wide a field of Biblical literature and controversy cannot be presented in a cursory magazine article with more than remote approach to adequacy. Such a discussion also requires so much of technical statement and so much of assumed familiarity with fairly useless hypotheses and speculations, any writer must shrink from so harassing a kindly disposed reader. And then, too, it is no longer possible to speak of Old Testament "Criticism" as of one, but in reality of "Criticisms", as of very many. In the countless shifts of the group of varied gentlemen somewhat underservedly known as Old Testament "critics" (*i. e.*, judges) there is found a mental agility comparable to the muscular alertness of a certain parasitic and aphanipterous insect. When overtaken in one theory they readily escape to another. The unity of the critics is still a dream. A criticism without prospect of a new theory is not better than potato without salt, or lips without ruby or pearl. It hath then no longer enchantment, no charms to soothe the

Unitarian breast. For what are new editions, but opportunities to change theories!

Realizing fully these handicaps, the writer will try to treat only of outline facts and most distinctive theories, and to be as monosyllabic as is possible when handling such an elaborated, animadverting, hypothetical, hyperspeculative subjectivism.

Just after the middle of the eighteenth century a French physician published an interesting "discovery" in the Book of Genesis: that the names of God, Elohim and Jehovah, indicate the existence of two documents or sources. But Dr. Astruc did not attack the Mosaic origin of Genesis: he only suggested that Moses used these two existing and different sources.

His "discovery" was promptly taken over by German critical students and carried through many stages of development with some reactions and many revisions and a new "discovery" or two, until there was evolved toward the close of the nineteenth century, after a century of discussion and minute analyses, the so-called and well-known "Wellhausen Theory".

Professor Wellhausen first taught in Göttingen as a heterodox theologian and afterwards in Marburg as an orthodox member of the philosophical faculty. His advanced theory gained wide advertisement through his contribution to the Ninth Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* of its article on the "History of Israel". This article proposed such radical readjustments of the Canonical records of the Old Testament and of its face-value and sequential history, some clear statement of the author's own principles and conclusions in the field of criticism became necessary. This necessity was met by the publication of his most readable and interesting "Prolegomena to the History of Israel", a book which marked a new epoch in Old Testament Criticism.

Wellhausen's theory in brief is as follows: None of the Pentateuchal literature is from Moses, unless *possibly* the Ten Commandments, and then only their first sentences—the so-called "Ten Words". No other parts are earlier than the period of Solomon. The Book of Deuteronomy dates from about

the year 621 B. C., being the transition stage from the old patriarchal and local worship to the elaborate Levitical ritual, which latter originated in the time of the Babylonian Captivity and the Return and Restoration, being brought into final form, and combined with earlier legal and historical documents, by some one, let us say Ezra, about 444 B. C. First, there were the patriarchal institutions and forms of worship, then the prophetic influence prevailed, and finally there was the highly elaborated Levitical, or priestly, system, with the priest supreme.

This fine evolutionary adaptation of the Old Testament laws and literature made by Wellhausen gained rapid and widespread popularity in Germany, but more especially in Great Britain and among liberal American scholars, and remains to-day the general and popular form of Old Testament criticism and interpretation, which is run into our critical Old Testament histories and other text books, and purveyed through our colleges and high schools. A closely imitative and antiquated emergence of the Wellhausen theory within this year will be found in Miss Czarnomska's "Authentic Literature of Israel", a book without merit of originality or authority.

But, in fact, many of the fundamental features of this fine and bold scheme have years since been invalidated and have passed into disrepute. Indeed, the Wellhausen adaptation had never been at any time in full possession of the critical field. Another school of criticism had always disputed its claims, that school of which August Dillmann and Rudolf Kittell were the notable leaders. This was a moderate or mediating school, and back toward it more recent critical theories have been trending.

The crucial point of difference between the Wellhausen and Dillmann camps had to do with the time of the origin of the Priestly, or Levitical, system and literature, or its relation to the prophetic Book of Deuteronomy. Wellhausen had placed the beginnings of the Levitical literature in the Babylonian Exile, with the so-called "Law of Ezekiel", chapters 40-48, as the initial development, or "missing link", in the evolution,

with Ezra and Nehemiah completing the development in the tensely legalistic period of the restoration; whereas the more moderate school held to the older view of a ritual development before the palming off of Deuteronomy as Mosaic in 621 B. C. With Wellhausenism the legal system was the highest and final development. With the more moderate critics Deuteronomy appeared better as a spiritual and prophetic reaction from an earlier legalism. The modern recession of higher criticism of the Pentateuch has had to do with this very point.

There were always certain difficulties in the way of the Wellhausen notion that the Mosaic ritual law, from Exodus 25 through Leviticus and including many chapters of Numbers, was a narrow and legalistic development of the postexilic days. And these difficulties remain just as clearly in our view today as they were in the view of the older scholars who went before Wellhausen, and in the view also of those who opposed him. Since they have had quite practical bearing on more recent changes and drifts of opinion, it is worth our while to specify one or two of these difficulties.

Wellhausen's theory laid him under the necessity of revising the whole of the Old Testament narrative. Now Moses is quite a prominent figure in the Bible as well as in world history. But whoever essays to enter into the house that Wellhausen built must lift his eyes to read on the main gate's lintel this legend: "Who enters here, cuts Moses out. Bring your best scissors!" Moses, as this learned German opined, was not indeed the son of ancient Jochebed, but was conceived by Hebrew fictionists, enveloped for centuries in the womb of growing legalism, came to birth in postexilic days, to be wet-nursed by Ezra. The good old priests of early days must be laid as whole burnt offerings on this great, brazen altar of Wellhausen. Dear old Eli, if he ever was at all, was a rough old Israelite, adopted long centuries afterward into the Aaronic family and invested with priestly robes by some generous Deuteronomic scribe of 585 B. C. or thereabout. Let us receive our consolations also from the kindly heart of Herr Critic Wellhausen. He has saved for us the pious skin of our Aaron;

for does not this criticism tell us that he really made no golden calf at Sinai? Some unkind legalist of another millennium put that thing over on him. Now there really are some who call this Wellhausenism "criticism". There are others so old-fashioned as to regard it as old-fashioned dishonesty.

In addition to rewriting the history of the Hebrews, this theory discredits the best known and most loved of Hebrew heroes. David was no lineal prince of Judah, but a Jerahmeelite buccaneer. He joins the wraithy company of Abraham and Moses. He did not set up the worship of Jehovah under Aaronic priest at central altar accompanied by chorus-ing Levite song. Solomon did not centralize the worship around a noble temple built after the similitude of the Tabernacle, for there had never been a tabernacle, nor an Exodus, nor wilderness wandering, nor a twelve-son family of Jacob. Hezekiah could not reform the worship and life of Judah around a central sanctuary at Jerusalem, since such centralization was not to be the "Law of Moses" until a century later under Josiah. All of these things were imagined of these men by later chroniclers. Such mutilations of record put their strain not on faith, but on our common sense.

The Wellhausen theory took over from earlier theories an elaborate system of literary analysis, which assigned not only chapters but verses, not only verses but fragments of verses, to various authors or documents. The fourteenth chapter of Exodus, for example, has its thirty-one verses divided into twenty-three sections, ascribed to at least four authors, not less than six of these verses split into two or three authorships, and all the complex splices blended into a wonderfully lucid and harmonious narrative. Wellhausen literary analysis requires for its scientific invasion of the Pentateuch not less than sixteen different editorial contributors. Now the queer part of all this wonderful discernment of our critics is that while they can discover dozens of very diverging contributors, they are not able to offer what is, even to themselves, a satisfactory separation of the two ancient and originally discovered documents, the Elohist and the Jehovist, one from the other. Dr. James

Orr, in his "Problem of the Old Testament", has presented this dilemma of the critics in a chapter, which has never yet been answered. Here is the absurdity: these modern magi, who are able to divide J into fractions and E into layers, cannot separate the already separated from each other. On the one hand there is the divisibility of J and the divisibility of E, while on the other hand there is the indivisibility of J and E. Such a criticism might be taken as a pious joke, if it were not an impious sacrilege. And such a contradiction in the literary analysis of criticism has had much to do with the return of more moderate views.

The Wellhausen theory failed, still further, to give due consideration to the conservatism of the Jew, which has held fast to the institutions of his religion for two thousand years, has preserved the consonantal text of the Hebrew Bible intact, letter for letter, for an equal length of time, has maintained the genealogy of his family and his family names unchanged through nearly a hundred generations, and yet raised no protest when Ezra forced upon him as ancient something about which his fathers knew nothing. The skeptical Jews of Jeremiah's day were in no mood to accept a forged Deuteronomy as of Mosaic authority, when its commands ran so strong against the current of their own selfish living. Such a self-evident reason has led later criticism to accept an earlier date for Deuteronomy, this older book having disappeared and been recovered in the days of Josiah. Professor Welch suggests that the book has much in common with the age of Solomon. Criticism must now regard much of the ritual system of the Pentateuch, not as of Babylonian or even later origin, but as of ancient origin. Sellin, in the third edition of his Introduction, holds that much of the priest-code (Exodus 25 through Leviticus) is to be considered as among the oldest Pentateuchal material.

This fine theory of the late development of the Hebrew Literature and legislation does not reckon with archaeology and comparative history. No monumental evidence of this remarkable evolution and its various stages has of course ever been

found. History and archaeology supply a much more ancient setting for the Old Testament story than the literary critics are willing to concede. Archaeologists have a way of leaning toward conservative interpretations. In their researches they have found a fine background for the Old Testament just as it is. And today the archaeologist is having his inning. The literary and analytical critic has not been able to gather from the driftwood of archaeology enough debris to raft a fat rat from a sinking ship. The spade in Palestine and elsewhere has a remarkable way of digging up nothing which contradicts the Old Testament record; but on the contrary only confirmations. In very recent years a number of books such as Naville's "Higher Criticism in Relation to the Pentateuch", Gaster's "The Samaritans", A. T. Clay's "Empire of the Amorites", and "A Hebrew Deluge Story in Cuneiform", Peters' "Bible and Spade", and others have shown a decided revulsion from the Wellhausen theory. It may now be assumed as almost axiomatic that the progress of archaeological research in Bible lands must mean a recession in the radical theories of literary analysis, the popularity of which has been suffering a marked diminution within the last two decades.

Reference has been made in the preceding pages to the value of Professor A. C. Welch's "Code of Deuteronomy", as indicating the trend toward a saner view and a more conservative dating of the Mosaic legal codes. He has clearly indicated the irresistible probabilities against the forging of Deuteronomy in the days of Josiah and Jeremiah, and the evident necessity of assigning it to an older date. Now this conclusion is fatal to all the critical theories, both Wellhausen's and those preceding him, from the time more than one hundred years ago when De Wette "discovered" Deuteronomy as the "book of the law of Jehovah given by Moses", which Hilkiah discovered during the repairing of the Temple in 621 B. C. By such a conclusion Wellhausenism becomes worthless, and the school of Dillman and Kittell is heavily discounted. In his more recent appendix to "Genesis" in "The Study Bible", Dr. Welch confesses that the J and E division of Genesis is an hypothesis

which has not been proved, although it has been found useful in explaining some of the literary problems of Genesis. He also advises caution about assuming P (the priest-code) as an independent and complete document, which Ezra combined with JE. In short, after fifty years of the popular supremacy of the Wellhausen theory, this Scotch teacher and author suggests that it may be a "pure guess" and "a very unlikely guess".

Reference was also made to Professor Sellin's *Old Testament Introduction*, of which the third edition in English translation appeared two or three years ago. This volume is one of the most decided of recent revulsions from the old evolutionary hypothesis, and its author is, just now, Europe's leading Old Testament critic. Professor Sellin, as has already been indicated, holds that much of the material in the priest-code, which, according to Wellhausen, was the last development in the Pentateuchal evolution, is in reality to be considered of ancient origin. He offers the unique suggestion that the various codes once existed in parallel columns, as it were, like to Robinson's *Harmony of the Gospels*, in an old book of worship, one column or the other being read in the public services, according to the taste or the geographical location of the reader. If there be *any* truth in what Sellin says, then there was none at all in what Wellhausen said.

The limits of this article do not permit further elaboration. It must not be supposed that criticism in very recent years has returned to conservative positions, for it is still radical and speculative beyond reason or warrant. But it is true that there has been a vigorous reaction from the daring and fictional notions of Wellhausen. It can be accepted as an assured fact that the foundations of criticism, upon which Charles Foster Kent and his associates built up their varied and voluminous publications, have to a considerable degree been discredited, and undermined beyond the point of safety. Unfortunately, these publications have been popularized for the training of young people, and so have passed into wide use in our schools and colleges. It is nothing less than a moral disaster that such

instruction and influences, based upon unsound theories, can never be recalled nor overtaken.

A minor, but noteworthy, incident in the recession of radical criticism is its changed attitude toward the Pentateuch as the Jewish arrangement of the earliest Old Testament books. A generation ago we heard only of the "Hexateuch", the combination of Joshua with the preceding five books being an axiom of criticism. Scholarship has now returned to the old Jewish classification, the Book of Joshua having slipped back into its proper place with the succeeding historical books. An interesting anomaly of this part of the critical theory is that their oft cited "Deuteronomic revisions" never applied to the earlier books, particularly Genesis. Now why did not the *zealous* Deuteronomists revise Genesis as well as Joshua and Judges? We are rather inclined to infer that the ancient recorders understood well that Genesis was more ancient than Deuteronomy, and that the Deuteronomic evidences are in Joshua and succeeding books, for the evident reason that the events recorded in these books transpired after Deuteronomy and were influenced by it. In his early years the writer of this sketch spent many days in the critical study of Wellhausen's analysis of the Hexateuch, love's labor lost, for now we have no more a Hexateuch. That ghost walks no more to stir the fears of timid student souls.

In the attitude of criticism toward the Book of Isaiah there has been little change except that of further advance into radicalism. There are no longer just two and only two Isaiahs, the first Isaiah and Deutero-Isaiah. Criticism has uncovered a host of Isaiahs. The first part of the book (chapters 1-35) is no longer a unity from the great prophet's pen. Chapters 24 to 27 are an apocalypse from the days of Alexander, full four hundred years later than Isaiah, other chapters being also of exilic or postexilic origin. Then, the old-time Deutero-Isaiah (chapters 40-66) has now become four or more Isaiahs, and the once-known one "Great Prophet of the Exile" has burst into fragments. The writer of this article saw early in his student days that the idea of an exilic Second Isaiah was

a myth, for many of these chapters are unmistakably Palestinian. The guileless and complacent smart-aleck, who now talks about the Isaiah of Hezekiah's day and the Deutero-Isaiah of the Exile is in reality not a fine scholar, but a very dumb creature. "Real Criticism" has strung out a thin line of Isaiahs from 740 to 160 B. C. *Miraculum miraculorum!* If a man *must* be a higher critic, he should be required to keep up with the procession. In his contribution to the Harper Memorial Volume, Charles A. Briggs ventured a novel theory: that Deutero-Isaiah consists, like the Genesis of Astruc, of two documents, a Daughter of Zion document and a Servant of Jehovah document, interwoven by a later editor. But this fine bait caught no fish; not even a sucker rose to it. Sellin, on the other hand, climbed to more conservative ground, claiming at least half of the book for the historical Isaiah. Two mutilations of the book in rather popular literature claim passing notice. George Adam Smith's effort, in his "Expositor's Bible" volume, to arrange the chapters according to the radical critic's age assignment, changed an otherwise charmingly written book into a crazy quilt affair. And Professor Moffatt's readjustment before translation of chapters and verses according to one of many radical manipulations made his work confusing for practical readers, and was one of the contributing causes to the general failure of a very interesting Old Testament translation. In view of all this semi-insanity of mangling critics, this writer needs to present no apologies for his conservative adherence to the unity of Isaiah. If some aspiring young neoquester must have a dismembered Isaiah, let him first ask himself "which dismemberment shall it be"?

Radical views as to the age and authorship of the Psalms will always be with us, for in this book we have a literature giving expression to general and universal experience, which any critic can subjectively argue into any age. Perhaps such radical criticism reached its lowest depths with Cheyne, who reduced the whole collection, with an exception or two, to Persian and Maccabaeon ages, chiefly the latter. That was the low ebb. Eiselen, Kirkpatrick, Briggs and many others have

taken more conservative ground. A recent curious outbreak was the Oxford symposium of lectures, chaperoned by Professor D. C. Simpson, in which the Psalms are hooked up with and interpreted by Babylonian and Egyptian ditties and musings. The fancy that the Psalms are of very late origin must now be definitely abandoned. One of the freaks of Wallhausen and his followers was their determination to reduce all of the great literature to a much later date than it claims for itself, with the purpose, of course, of robbing it of Divine origin and authority. In other parts of the Old Testament, as in the Psalms, this radical discounting by the radicals has in its time been discounted by the sober judgment and the wider information of recent years.

Nevertheless it must be confessed candidly and faced honestly that a large proportion of our own ministers are accepting the general outline of this popular critical propoganda, which in reality saw its best days many years ago, but still holds that place of influence into which it pushed itself in our popular literature. Not infrequently it has been my misfortune to hear in our own Church the suave and honied plea that the radical criticism has "saved the Old Testament for us" and that it "has explained away the errors and found solutions for the problems of the Old Testament". If we believe in the Divine authority and truthfulness of these ancient books, how can we also believe in a criticism which denies this Divine origin and also flaunts in our face the untruthfulness of the narrative? As an illustration, Deuteronomy makes the clear and confident statement, "Moses wrote this law" and "Moses made an end of writing all the words of this law in a book", whereas criticism asserts that some men, or group of men, concocted this book in 621 B. C., eight hundred years after Moses. Certainly a falsehood is out somewhere, and we can be confident that it will not be found in Deuteronomy. How can a criticism be beneficent and saving, when it repudiates, falsifies and destroys! An all too frequent attitude toward criticism is the apologetic and submissive. Too many of our own household are now in a state of compromising and soft-

soaping toward a group of theories, which are hostile to our faith, and many of which were in scientific discard before these brothers so sweetly swallowed them. We are reminded again of those oft-quoted and apt words ascribed to the old arch-critic, Wellhausen himself: "I always knew that the Old Testament was a lie, but I never attempted, like the Scotch, to make God the author of it." The present attitude toward radical criticism is too much of a supine and unwarranted condoning. There has not been a time in the past hundred years when the integrity of the Old Testament may be maintained, and its great messages and declarations proclaimed at their face value, more confidently and with sounder reason than in these good days of ours.

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE ORGANIZED WOMEN'S WORK OF THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

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Few people have any conception of the immensity of the change that has taken place in the last seventy-five years in the status of women. While many of the so-called stronger sex are still unreconciled to the change, yet we are disposed to believe that in the far future, when another Buckle sits down to write the history of civilization, he will see as the outstanding fact of our present era not the Great War, but the coming of women into their own.

Nor have preachers been the only sinners in this matter, as some cynical sisters would have us believe. Most illuminating and amusing are some features of the early history of the National Educational Association which was organized as far back as 1857. The Constitution provided that any "gentleman", a teacher or superintendent, could join. About ten years later somebody moved to strike out "gentleman" and put in "person". But this was defeated by a more than three