

THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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I.

THE SECOND ADVENT NOT PREMILLENNIAL.

THE Church has always expected a Second Coming of Christ to the earth, ever since He ascended to heaven. Many Comings of the Saviour are spoken of in the New Testament. But a literal, personal advent is the great Coming to which Christians have been looking forward for more than eighteen hundred years. In our day a few scholarly men have maintained that there is no personal Coming to be expected—that only spiritual and providential Comings were promised, and that the *parousia* of the New Testament is nothing but the presence of Christ with His people which He pledged to His disciples before He left the world. This view, however, is clearly contradicted by the undeniable fact that the apostles in their writings often spoke of the *parousia* as an event still future, long after the promise of the Redeemer's spiritual presence with His Church had begun to be fulfilled; and Paul expressly cautions the Thessalonians against the belief that the *parousia* was just at hand.

But while almost all Christians are agreed in regard to a future personal advent of Christ, there is a wide difference of opinion in the Church respecting a future millennium, or reign of righteousness on the earth during a long period of at least a thousand years. Multitudes have believed and still believe that the predicted millennium is either wholly past or has long since begun. This view, it seems to us, has gained currency in consequence of a reaction from the extreme doctrines of the early Chiliasts, some of whom entertained grossly carnal ideas in regard to the millennium, or from other errors associated with the faith of those who have expected a future triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world. It has long been deemed the only alternative either to expect a literal reign of Christ in person on the earth,

VI.

THE DOGMATIC ASPECT OF PENTATEUCHAL CRITICISM.

THIS article is the last of a series devoted to the discussion of problems in the Higher Criticism, bearing upon the Pentateuch. The first article was by Dr. A. A. Hodge and Dr. B. B. Warfield, and contained a clear, temperate, discriminating and masterly statement of the doctrine of Inspiration. The subsequent articles have been written by professed students of Old Testament Literature who have brought to the performance of their respective tasks ripe Hebrew scholarship, minute acquaintance with current forms of thought in Old Testament matters, fine powers of expository statement, great wealth of historical material, and, in one instance at least, an unanswerable dialectic.

It was not to be expected that these articles would all evince equal ability or afford equal pleasure to the same readers; and it is not to be wondered at if some writers, by their concessive spirit, have given pain to the friends of conservative opinion even when engaged in honest warfare against naturalistic criticism. It is no part of our purpose to institute invidious comparisons between the several papers that have been contributed to this series, or to refer in one way or another to the strictures to which some of them have been subjected. Blind to facts, however, men ought not to be, whatever disagreement there may be between themselves and the writers to whom reference has been made. And it should be kept in mind that in the case of every writer the purpose for which this series was planned has been realized. In every case there has been a prompt and decided repudiation and refutation of naturalistic criticism. No support has been given either to Kuenen or Wellhausen or Robertson Smith. These articles may be fairly taken to represent the *status* of the Higher Criticism in our Theological Seminaries. That there is a difference of view among our Old Testament scholars is abundantly apparent, but if in our Church there is any acceptance of the doctrines taught by the last-named critics it has not come to light in the articles to which reference is here made.

The present writer has no qualifications that fit him for speaking as a professed Hebrew scholar; and though dealing with the dogmatic side of the question, he does not write as a professed dogmatian. Like a great many others whose special studies are not in the line of Old Testament Criticism or of Dogmatic Theology he feels that since the results of Pentateuchal Criticism sustain, of necessity, a logical relation to certain dogmatic faiths, he has an interest in these results. And since he will not go blindly with Robertson Smith and does not prefer to live blindly in possession of what is called a traditional theology, he has been obliged to ask himself to 'show cause' why he continues to believe as he was taught to believe respecting the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. It would be presumptuous to suppose that anything to be said here can add to the strength of the argument presented in Dr. Green's admirable paper. In fact our purpose is not so much argument as statement. If we shall succeed in separating the elements that enter into this complicated question and in showing the relations of the parts to each other and to the whole so as to aid any who are still perplexed, in their desire to understand the question and by understanding it to appreciate the force of arguments which others have already presented, our purpose will have been accomplished. We are to speak then of the Dogmatic Aspect of Pentateuchal Criticism. Whether this be Higher or Lower Criticism it matters not. It is criticism applied specifically to the Pentateuch. As it happens it is the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch which constitutes the field of controversy. We use the terms Higher and Lower Criticism in their accepted sense; that is to say, according to the *usus loquendi* of scholars and under the recognized limitations of Theological Cyclopædia. Used even in this sense they are not exclusively theological terms. They are technical expressions that denote two well-known departments of Literary Science. They are applicable to the study of Shakspeare as well as to the study of the Bible, and to the one as much as to the other.

As Christians, and particularly as ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church, many of us find ourselves in possession of certain definite dogmatic convictions. Apart altogether from the question whether critics like Kuenen and Wellhausen are right in what they say, it is important for us to know how far, supposing they were correct, their conclusions would affect our creed. For there may be Biblical questions of a purely literary character, which, however interesting to specialists, really need give the dogmatic theologian no great concern. One part of our work in the present article will be a

direct comparison of the results of the Higher Criticism with the dogmatic content of the Westminster Symbols. This, however, is only a part, though it is a very important part, of what is involved in a study of the dogmatic aspect of Pentateuchal criticism. For it is quite possible that we shall differ with some of the critics not only in regard to the conclusions they reach, but also in regard to some of the principles by which they guide their discussions.

I.

Before taking a single step in Criticism the important question emerges respecting "The Right, Duty, and Limits of Biblical Criticism." The critics must deal with this question, and Dr. Briggs has accordingly made it the subject of a very thoughtful article. But we must all deal with it; for it is a far-reaching question: it is a question that bears upon the whole matter of inductive investigation, upon the relation of reason to faith, upon the rights of the individual conscience, upon the ethics of creed-subscription, and upon the scope of ecclesiastical authority. We do not know how we can better present our views upon this subject than by comparing them with those of other writers.

CRITICISM AND REASON.

Behind the special question regarding the rights of Biblical Criticism there is the general question respecting the rights of Reason. The word 'reason' is not used here in any special and peculiar sense. We have no reference to the distinction which some make between the Reason and the Understanding; and the common antithesis of Reason and Revelation is not in our mind. We are thinking how far it is necessary that our religious beliefs should be rational. And since we are intelligent beings this is a matter that cannot admit of any doubt: the rationality or rather the reasonableness of a belief is the condition of its credibility. By this it is not meant that a belief must be capable of proof apart from Revelation, but that it is rational to believe in what is taught by Revelation. Nor yet again is it meant that every Christian is able to prove that the Bible is a Revelation, but that he has some reason for believing it to be a revelation, which may be the self-evidencing power of the Bible, or only the conviction that rational proof of his belief can be given by others if not by himself. A man believes rationally or irrationally. No man is called upon to believe irrationally, and no one would be willing to confess that he did so believe. Even the Roman Catho-

lic, who professes to subordinate Reason to Authority, has to settle the question what authority he will submit to, and when he submits to the authority of the Pope he does so because he supposes that this is a rational thing to do. In this way, as Sir George Cornewall Lewis has so aptly shown, he is obliged in spite of himself to exercise the right of private judgment. We, however, are Protestants. The right of private judgment is part of our inheritance. It is not for us to abridge the franchises of any man, even though he should use his liberty to his own destruction. Whenever we accept a church or a man or a book as infallible authority it is entirely reasonable for us to believe what we are told on such authority, even though we are told some things which we do not understand or which otherwise would never have occurred to us. But we certainly are not required to submit to any authority when adequate reasons for so doing cannot be given. Since, therefore, we believe that the Bible is the Word of God it is safe to assume that we believe for reasons. These reasons are either good or bad. If they are good we need not be afraid of Criticism, and if they are bad it is well for us to know it. Dr. Briggs seems anxious to protect Biblical Criticism against the interference of Dogmatic Theology. But nothing need be apprehended from that quarter. The right of Criticism is given in one of the great formal principles of Protestantism. When, therefore, Professor H. P. Smith virtually says that we must treat the Bible just like any other writings, he is entirely right. That is to say, we are to treat the Bible as we treat other writings. But we are not to treat the Bible as if it were like other writings, for it is not like them. We shall go as far as the critics in defending the rights of Criticism. In fact, any fetters that Criticism is now wearing have been forged, as we shall see, by the friends of Criticism themselves. For in answer to our statement that the reasonableness of Christianity is essential to its credibility, two objections would in all likelihood be made. It would be said, in the first place, that a faith resting on rational grounds, that is to say, on reasons which address themselves to the intellect, is only a human faith and is a very different thing from *fides divina*; and in the second place, that it is not possible to give rational proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. Let us notice these points briefly, considering first what Dr. Briggs has to say:

“ For unless these books have given us their own testimony that they are divine and therefore canonical, we do not receive them with our hearts; we do not rest our faith and life upon them as the very Word of God; we give merely intellectual assent, we receive them on authority, tacitly and without opposition and possibly with the dogmatism which not unfrequently accompanies incipient doubt, but also without true interest and true faith and assurance of their divine contents.”

Dr. Briggs might have quoted from John Owen in support of his position ; but had he done so, our respect for the great Puritan would not have made us accept this statement. In our belief of the Scriptures as indeed in all the processes of grace, the dependence of the soul upon the Holy Ghost is, of course, to be fully acknowledged. But we are not authorized to draw a line of distinction between faith which is due to reason and faith that is caused by the Spirit, in such terms as to make the former worthless. We address arguments to the intellect, desiring to produce conviction, and we recognize the need of the Spirit's co-operation in order to the securing of this result. But it is one thing to say that the result cannot be secured without the Spirit and another thing to say that if secured without the Spirit it is of no value. The Bible calls for faith, but it does not require the man who has it to give an account of its genesis. There are men who believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, because the structure and contents of Scripture force this conviction upon their minds. We may know that, but for God's help, they would never have had this belief, but we have no right to say that such belief supposing it could have been secured without God's help would be of no avail. And if a man may have "a mere intellectual assent" respecting the canonicity of Scripture, and be without "true faith and assurance of their divine contents" as the result of inquiry ; if, notwithstanding the most positive belief based on evidence, it is still necessary that the canonicity and inspiration of the Scriptures be revealed to the individual heart by the witness of the Spirit, might it not be better to abandon Criticism altogether and surrender ourselves without argument to the proofs of canonicity thus presented ? In this way mysticism might be an apology for indolence. Or, if the immediate testimony of Scripture to its inspiration be independent of Criticism, might we not continue to believe in its inspiration on the ground of the immediate witness of the Spirit, even when our critical studies had left us without any "intellectual assent," or, it may be, even in a state of intellectual dissent ? Mysticism would in this way aid faith and license Criticism at the same time. We could say with Tertullian, *credo quia impossibile*, and stand with Hegel in affirming the truth of contradictory propositions. For ourselves we say frankly we cannot occupy this position. A religion shown to be irrational is no longer a religion for us. On this account we bid criticism do its worst ; and if we find a man who, after knowing all that has been said against the truth as it is in Jesus, is able still to say that he has unabated confidence in the argumentative resources of Christianity :—whatever others may do, we shall not speak disparagingly of that faith by calling it a *fides humana* while

we reserve the higher epithet of *fides Divina* to describe the mental state of the man who applies subjective tests to the canon of Scripture and is satisfied to say with Coleridge that the Bible "finds" him.

Again, we have been reminded very frequently of late respecting the positions of the Reformed theologians and the Westminster divines in regard to the possibility of proving the inspiration of the Scriptures. The discussions in regard to Old Testament questions have given an undue prominence to a single clause in our Confession of Faith, and the authority of the Confession has been invoked in support of very erroneous views. Thus Dr. Robertson Smith remarks :

"The persuasion that in the Bible God himself speaks words of love and life to the soul is the essence of the Christian's conviction as to the truth and authority of Scripture. This persuasion is not, and cannot be, derived from external testimony. No tradition as to the worth of Scripture, no assurance transmitted from our fathers, or from any who in past time heard God's revealing voice, can make the revelation to which they bear witness a personal voice of God to us. The element of personal conviction, which lifts faith out of the region of probable evidence into the sphere of divine certainty, is given only by the Holy Spirit still bearing witness in and with the Word. But then the Word to which this spiritual testimony applies is a written word, which has a history, which has to be read and explained like other ancient books. . . .

"The first condition of a sound understanding of Scripture is to give full recognition to the human side, to master the whole situation and character and feelings of each human interlocutor who has a part in the drama of Revelation. *Nay, the whole business of scholarly exegesis lies with this human side.* All that earthly study and research can do for the reader of Scripture is to put him in the position of the man to whose heart God first spoke. What is more than this lies beyond our wisdom. It is only the Spirit of God which can make the Word a living word to our hearts, as it was a living word to him who first received it. This is the truth which the Westminster Confession expresses when it teaches, in harmony with all the Reformed Symbols, that our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority of Scripture is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts."

There is a sense in which what is said here is substantially true : though we do not sympathize with the opinions expressed regarding the worth of external testimony and the value of argument in behalf of Inspiration. And it does not tend in the slightest to reconcile us to these opinions to say that the Reformers entertained them. It would not be strange if in their opposition to the claims of the Church of Rome, they went to the opposite extreme and were in danger of falling into the errors of the Mystics. Luther did not fail to see that there was some analogy between the extravagant claims of the Mystics and the position taken by himself. Dr. Charteris tells us that their extreme position led the Reformer to withdraw some of his strong statements, though it did not affect him to an extent sufficient to make him recede from his strongly asserted subjective

principle. But it is a mistake to class Calvin with Luther in this particular. It is true, as Dr. Briggs states, that "Calvin denied the Pauline authorship of Hebrews, and doubted the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter," but if one will turn to his commentary on these books he will find that the historic doubts regarding these books were an important element in Calvin's judgment, and "free from traditional bias" though he may have been, he did not decide respecting the authorship and canonicity (in the case of 2 Peter, Calvin said that authorship and canonicity went together) of these books without regard to antecedent opinions. It is also true, as Dr. Briggs remarks, that Calvin believed that "those persons betray great folly who wish it to be demonstrated to infidels, that the Scripture is the word of God, which cannot be known without faith." This statement is made at the close of the 8th chapter of the first book of the Institutes, the whole of which, nevertheless, is devoted to an exhibition of the arguments in proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. We repeat, however, that our views would not be affected though it were shown that the Reformers held the extreme opinions which are sometimes imputed to them. Those, too, who protest so earnestly against traditionalism will pardon us if we seem to see a slight trace of inconsistency in the authoritative way in which they appeal to Protestant Patristics. Calvin does, indeed, emphasize the fact that faith is a product of divine grace, and that argument unaccompanied by the help of the Holy Spirit will not produce conviction. This we all believe. But Calvin was very far from saying that it is impossible to support the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures by abundant evidence. Nor does the Westminster Confession teach that Inspiration cannot be proved by argument. If it did we should not believe it. Let us, however, quote its words :

"We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scriptures ; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the concert of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellences, and the entire perfection thereof, *are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God* ; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts" (Chap. I, § 6).

The Confession gives no support to the statement of Dr. Robertson Smith, that "persuasion that the Bible is God's word cannot be derived from external testimony." On the contrary, it makes distinct mention of external testimony, and puts it first in a list of arguments in support of Inspiration, all of which are employed to-day

by dogmatic theologians. And it is furthermore stated in the Confession that by means of these arguments the Bible "doth abundantly evidence itself to be the word of God." It is true that these arguments will not carry us beyond probability: but this will not lessen their value for those who understand the meaning of terms, and know the limits of inductive logic. Nor is it a sufficient reason for disparaging these arguments, because as Dr. Robertson Smith so truly says, it is the witness of the Spirit which alone can lift "faith out of the region of probable evidence into the sphere of Divine certainty." It is very natural for us to look for something that will bridge the chasm between probability and certitude. Cardinal Newman finds it in what he calls an "illative sense." We are taught to find it in the witness of the Spirit. But the witness of the Spirit cannot be a common measure between minds. The man who has it feels certain, but he cannot expect his certitude to have argumentative value with another man. If, then, we are to continue in the endeavor to convince men that the Bible is the word of God, it is clear that we must do it by means of arguments addressed to the understanding. This, however, is not our only reason for attaching great importance to the proofs of Inspiration, for while it might seem unnecessary to make use of inductive arguments which result in probability when the Christian has the witness of the Spirit which gives certitude, we are clearly of the opinion that the doctrine of Inspiration would not survive the destruction of the arguments that support it. We believe that the argument for the inspiration of the Scripture can be made in the terms of the highest probability—that is to say, in the terms of moral certainty. But our confidence in this argument would be greatly weakened if we thought that it were based upon a partial survey of the facts, or that those interested in the construction of it had studiously disregarded anything that was supposed to bear adversely upon it. Our confidence in the argumentative strength of the doctrine of Inspiration must of necessity, therefore, make us welcome the most scrutinizing Criticism.

CRITICISM AND INSPIRATION.

It is easy to see why critics like Dr. Robertson Smith should emphasize the subjective tests of Inspiration. Their object is, as far as possible, to make Inspiration independent of Criticism. If it could be shown that the doctrine of Inspiration cannot, in the nature of the case, be affected by the results of Criticism, the fears which so many have been entertaining on account of these results would be taken away. The argument in support of this position is often

made in a way that seems so honoring to the Spirit, and in such close accord with the teaching of the Confession, and, withal, to have such an evangelical flavor about it, that it is to be feared a great many have been deceived by it, and have failed to see that it is a plea not for the rights of Criticism, but for the toleration of opinions that are the results of Criticism and that are, to say the least, unsettling in the extreme. Professor Candlish has defended the position that the authority of the Bible is independent of Criticism, in a pamphlet devoted to that purpose. The views of Dr. Briggs may be gathered from the following passage :

“We are convinced that the church has not been deceived with regard to its inspiration. Esther, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, the Apocalypse will more and more establish themselves in the hearts of those who study them. But we claim that it is illegitimate first to attempt to prove their canonicity, and then their inspiration, or to rely upon Jewish rabbinical tradition any more than Roman Catholic tradition, or to anathematize all who doubt some of them in the spirit of Rabbi Akiba and the Council of Trent. The only legitimate method is that of our fathers, the Reformers, and Puritans : First, prove their inspiration from their own internal divine testimony, and then accept them as canonical because our hearts rest upon them as the veritable divine word.”

It is not essential to our present inquiry to ask here what is meant by proving Canonicity, though this is a very important question, and one about which writers are not agreed. When we say that a book is canonical, do we mean that *we* ought to regard it as authoritative, or, that, as a simple matter of fact, the early Church so regarded it? If, irrespective of tradition, we are to decide on the canonicity of a book, that is to say, its authoritativeness for us, the proof of Canonicity would not differ much, if at all, from the proof of Inspiration. If, however, Canonicity be, as we believe it is, a purely historical question, it is only in a very limited way that subjective tests can be employed in determining it. For however the formation of the New Testament Canon was effected—whether by a selection from inspired writings, whether apostolic authorship was the criterion of Canonicity, or whether an inspired community recognized and set the seal of authority on inspired books—it is clear that when we ask the question whether this epistle, say 2 Peter, is canonical, we cannot avoid the necessity of a direct appeal to external testimony. It would be very difficult, we imagine, for any one to take an epistle like the one just named, and, considering it without reference to its historic relations, pronounce dogmatically upon its inspiration. And though he could do this, it would still be necessary to know that all inspired books were known to the apostolic church, and held by them to be canonical, before one could prove Canonicity from Inspiration.

But the attempt to prove Inspiration even, without appeal to external testimony, has great difficulties. Dr. Briggs, however, tells us we are to prove the inspiration of the Scriptures by recognizing "their own internal divine testimony," and the context shows that, according to Dr. Briggs, the authoritative value of a book in the Canon, in fact its right to be there, is conditioned by this internal Divine testimony. By means of the witness of the Spirit, then, we are to discover, let us suppose, whether Esther is inspired. How shall we reach a decision? To whom will the witness be given? Not to any organization of Christians, for we have rejected the doctrine of corporate infallibility; not to the general body of Christians, for we could not know what the general body of Christians believe except by tradition and external testimony, and we are told that tradition and external testimony do not enter into the question. The witness must be given, then, to the individual; and, as no one can make his own experience of Divine guidance the rule of another man's faith, it must come to this: that every Christian makes his own Bible, or, rather, that he is to judge for himself what books he will treat as authoritative.

Let us inquire, however, more particularly respecting the relation of Criticism to Inspiration. It cannot be denied that there would be obvious advantages attending the belief that Criticism cannot affect Inspiration; for then we might feel assured, no matter what may come, that the Bible is inspired. Our comfort in reading it would be no more affected, in that case, by the theories of Kuenen and Wellhausen than our enjoyment of the Iliad is spoiled by the Homeric controversy. It is not possible, however, to take such a comfortable view of the subject. Suppose, for example, we were satisfied that the Holy Spirit bore witness in our hearts to the inspiration of John's gospel. How under these circumstances would we stand related to the questions in the Higher Criticism pertaining to this gospel? It is conceivable, in the first place, that Historical Criticism might show that the fourth gospel was not written until long after John was in his grave. We should then have a book inspired, indeed, but false. What good in that case would Inspiration do us? Or we might affirm *a priori* that the authorship of John's gospel could not be set aside by Criticism. But then we should be simply begging the question. Or we might stay the hand of the critic, and say that he must not enter upon any examination of fact respecting matters decided already by implication through the witness of the Spirit. But then we should be allowing a foregone conclusion to determine the limits of historical inquiry. We should fall into the vice which we condemn in the

naturalistic critics who enter upon inquiry with the postulate that miracles are impossible. Or lastly, we may admit that, possibly, what is believed to be inspired may be proved to be uninspired by being proved to be untrue. This is the only logical position. Then Criticism may affect Inspiration; and it follows that to have an interest in Inspiration is of necessity to have an interest in Criticism.

But, it will be asked, How can mere human reason overthrow the witness of the Spirit? It cannot, of course; but it may show us that what we supposed to be the witness of the Spirit must be accounted for in some other way. This is a matter that need not give us serious difficulty though it may be necessary for us to seek a more discriminating mode of dealing with it. Let us interpret our belief in the doctrine of Inspiration. There is a certain body of facts constituting an inductive basis for this belief. Besides these facts, and standing by itself as an experience which all Christians may alike participate in, is a certain mental state of conviction respecting the divine authority of the Bible. How we account for this mental state is another question. Suppose then that our faith in Inspiration were made up of these two elements: the argumentative or inductive element *plus* the feeling of certitude just described. And suppose now that the argumentative element were to drop away—would the certitude remain? Would it be possible for a man to retain his certitude regarding Inspiration after he had seen the insufficiency of every argument in support of Inspiration? We cannot think so. Would it help to make the certitude remain to say that it was produced by the Holy Ghost? Hardly; for should we not ask then whether we were not mistaken when we imputed our certitude to the witness of the Spirit? Should we not say that since it was the Bible which taught us to interpret our subjective state in this way, the loss of argumentative support for the truth of the Bible carries with it the loss of confidence in the interpretation we had been accustomed to put upon our subjective state? This is the way it looks to us, and if we are right it follows that we cannot take refuge in mysticism when pressed hard by the foes of our faith; and that the doctrine of Inspiration stands or falls with the results of critical investigation. Dr. Robertson Smith is certainly right, however much the statement may make against his own position, when he says that “all sound apologetic admits that the proof that a book is credible must precede belief that it is inspired.”

CRITICISM AND TRADITION.

It is of some importance to have a clear understanding as to the meaning of Tradition and the place it holds in this discussion. In

the articles contributed by Dr. Briggs to this series, very frequent reference is made to "traditional" opinions, and, though it is not expressed in so many words, the idea is nevertheless conveyed that there is some necessary or natural antagonism between critical conclusions and traditional beliefs. Thus it is said: "It will not do to antagonize critical theories of the Bible with traditional theories of the Bible, for the critic appeals to history against tradition." We are told that the vast majority of professional Biblical scholars "demand a revision of traditional theories of the Bible." When it is asked what peril critical study is attended with, the answer is: "The peril is to scholastic dogmas and to tradition." Throughout the pages of Dr. Robertson Smith's *Old Testament in the Jewish Church* there is the same antithesis between criticism and tradition; and accustomed as our Protestant ears have become to the association of Tradition and Romanism, it is quite likely that this earnest repudiation of tradition by Dr. Robertson Smith and others may be taken by some as a mark of fidelity to Protestantism. Much that Dr. Briggs has said upon the subject is undoubtedly true, though he has failed to distinguish between the different senses in which, even in his own articles, the word 'tradition' is employed. Yet it is of the utmost importance that the distinction should be made, for the place that Tradition should be allowed in this controversy depends altogether upon the meaning of the word. By Tradition we may mean, (a) the supposed teachings of our Lord and His apostles, perpetuated orally for a time though subsequently reduced to writing, but which are extra-Biblical. Traditional statements of this kind we reject as not binding the conscience, even though possibly true; and as untrue when inconsistent with the known teachings of Scripture. (b) By traditional doctrines we may mean the opinions entertained by theologians and church doctors (whether they have been professedly derived from the Word of God or not) as distinguished from the direct words of the Bible or the formulated statements of Church confessions and catechisms. We most certainly agree with Dr. Briggs in saying that the individual beliefs of theologians do not constitute our standard of orthodoxy. There is no room for a difference of opinion on that point. (c) By traditional belief we may mean an unreasoned as distinguished from a reasoned belief. Thus the popular belief in the facts of geology and astronomy as well as of theology is of this kind. The fact that it is traditional is not an argument one way or another respecting its truth. Of course if the reasoned convictions of men change, the unreasoned or traditional convictions of men (so far as they pertain to the same things) will also undergo change. If as-

tronomers should give up the accepted theories of their science by proving them to be false, the popular belief in them would soon die out. In the nature of the case a large element in the beliefs of men, whether in science or theology, must be of this unreasoned or traditional kind. But in the sense here used the word tradition has no place in this discussion. (*d*) By traditional belief is sometimes meant belief which, however perpetuated,—it is generally perpetuated orally—has no historic warrant. It is not correct usage, but it is common, nevertheless, to use tradition as the antithesis of History; and in this sense, again, it has no place in this controversy. (*e*) Tradition is sometimes used, without embodying any judgment as to truth or falsehood, to denote anything that has been orally transmitted as distinguished from something that has been committed to writing. So used the word may have a place in Pentateuchal investigation. (*f*) But Tradition is also another word for History, and in this sense it has an important bearing on the matter in hand. As history it may record an occurrence, or a current belief. In doing this it places us alongside of those who saw the one and introduces to the company of those who entertained the other. On the authority of tradition, then—meaning by this not a floating rumor, a statement orally perpetuated, but history—we know that the Jews in the time of Christ believed that the law came by Moses. That is a very important element in this question. It may be that the direct railway line of History will not avail us in our further journey, and that we shall have to make use of other appliances in working up the stream; it is of no small moment, however, to have reached this point, and the critics are bound to give proper weight to the facts just referred to, which come indeed through tradition, but through tradition in the sense of History. If, moreover, there has come down by an oral transmission, from the times before Christ, a belief in the Mosaic authorship of the law which the Jews in Christ's day fully entertained, this fact cannot be overlooked by the critics, even though they may not agree respecting the value they assign to it. We are compelled, therefore, to differ with Dr. Briggs respecting the method which he thinks should be followed in these inquiries. The evangelical spirit, he says, would apply the critical tests thus:

“(1) Inquire what the Scriptures teach about themselves and separate this divine authority from all other authority; (2) apply the Principles of the *Higher Criticism* to decide questions not decided by Divine authority; (3) use *Tradition* in order to determine as far as possible questions not settled by the previous methods.”

The objections to this method are very obvious. As to (1) it is evident that this begs the whole question. No critic who did not

expect to put himself outside the pale of argument would be willing to say that the doctrine of Inspiration was the postulate with which he began his labors in the Higher Criticism. This method may breathe an evangelical spirit, but it is unscientific and, therefore, unsatisfactory. We rejoice in the conviction that the doctrine of Inspiration can stand every critical test ; but if the critic who proposed to apply these tests should tell us that he assumed the doctrine of Inspiration at the outset, his assurances would not give us much comfort. And a similar objection lies against (2). It is the Divine authority of Scripture that constitutes the question in debate. The rationalistic critics are bringing forward arguments to invalidate this Divine authority. The evangelical critics must meet the rationalists on their own ground. We do not wish them to assume the points in issue. It requires no learning to do that. We do not wish them to erect a wall of stolid dogmatism as a barrier to rationalistic criticism. We do not mean by this that dogma has no place in the defence of the Pentateuch. We believe it has. We mean only that evangelical critics must not be satisfied with certain subjective warrants for the inspiration of the Pentateuch and go into a controversy which hinges upon this doctrine with the doctrine itself a foregone conclusion. And so far as (3) is concerned, there seems to be no room for it on the programme, for if Divine authority settles some questions and Criticism settles the rest, what is there left for Tradition to do?

Instead of adopting this threefold division of labor, we prefer to say that every man has the right and that it is the duty of some men to investigate the problem that deals with the historical significance of Old Testament literature. We ask only that those who engage in this work shall have the necessary equipments of scholarship, that they take full cognizance of all the facts, and that they govern themselves by the recognized canons of inductive investigation. The parties in the controversy, should the inquiry take a controversial form, must be fair. It will be insisted on the one side that the critic shall not assume the impossibility of miracles, and with equal fairness it will be demanded on the other side, that evangelical critics shall not postulate plenary Inspiration. All pertinent facts should be considered. Questions regarding text and style, archaisms, anachronisms or what seem to be such, historical allusions or the lack of such allusions—these are all to be considered. But so must the claims of Scripture be considered as well as their coherency, the harmony of their facts and their unique position. It must be remembered, too, that the Pentateuch was currently believed among the Jews in the time of Christ to be Mosaic: and that apart alto-

gether from the Pentateuchal question, there is the highest possible reason for regarding the words of Christ, when their precise meaning has been ascertained, as conclusive in the case. If it be the function of the Higher Criticism to determine the historical place and significance of a given book in a national literature, it is its function also to make use of all the facts that bear upon the question. Some of these facts will be found in the sphere of the Lower Criticism. The student of the Higher Criticism must use these facts. Some of them will be furnished by tradition. He must likewise make use of tradition. And it is evident that the older the tradition, the better it is. The nearer we can get to the head-waters of this stream, the better; and whether our pilot be a Christian or a Jew does not affect the question. Dr. Robertson Smith did not do full justice to his undoubted power as a dialectician when in the following passage, under the guise of an *a fortiori* argument, he undertook to heap contempt upon the Jewish tradition respecting the Old Testament. He says:

“ But it would be absurd to suppose that a man who refused to accept the authority of *Christian* tradition as to the number of books in the Canon, the best text of the Old Testament, or the principles upon which that text is to be translated, adopted it as a principle of faith that the *Jewish* tradition, the unchristian tradition upon all these points is final. Luther again and again showed that he submitted to no such authority; and if the Reformers and their first successors did practically accept the results of Jewish scholarship upon all these questions, they did so merely because these results were in accordance with the best light then attainable.”

Dr. Smith is including different forms of Jewish tradition under one general sentiment of disparagement; and in this he is singularly inconsistent with himself. There would be good reason for not accepting Rabbinical interpretations of the Old Testament like those of Rashi and Kimchi. But Dr. Smith bears testimony to the accuracy with which an unchanged text has been perpetuated by Jewish tradition from the days of our Lord. And though he believes that before Christ there were variations in the versions of the Old Testament, he also says that there is “no doubt that the Law which was in Ezra’s hand was practically identical with our Hebrew Pentateuch.” This is a high compliment to the trustworthiness of Hebrew tradition as to the Old Testament text, and though even this might not be a “final” authority—that is to say, though we would not hesitate to criticise the traditional text if there were materials to serve the purpose of comparison, we could not say that it would be “absurd” for a man to prefer a Jewish to a Christian tradition in a matter of this sort. And since critics like Dr. Robertson Smith are fond of reminding us that the Old Testament is to be regarded as a national literature, they cannot blame us if we give the preference to Jewish tradi-

tion over Gentile tradition in regard to questions pertaining to the authorship of that literature. So far, however, as the Pentateuch is concerned, there are two questions which the critics are bound to consider. Is it true that the Jewish mind at the time of Christ, and before His time, was pervaded with the belief that Moses wrote the Pentateuch? And supposing it to be true, how far should this fact be taken into account in solving the Pentateuchal problem?

CRITICISM AND SYMBOL.

In affirming the rights of Reason, and, therefore, of Criticism under the general Protestant principle of the right of private judgment, it is not forgotten that these rights are held by ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church subject to the qualifications implied in subscription to a Confession of Faith. In other words, a voluntary surrender of rights that belong to a Christian *quâ* Christian is involved in holding office as a minister or an elder in a Church that has adopted a particular symbol. It is not easy to set forth the relation of creed-subscription to individual liberty, and it is particularly difficult to state the bearings of existing problems in the Higher Criticism upon the Westminster Confession: yet this is too important a matter to pass over without any notice at all. With what Dr. Briggs has said on this point, we are in full accord. He says that "Biblical critics cannot afford to carry the load of school theology into the conflicts of the nineteenth century, but must strip to the symbols for a conflict with rationalism and materialism." Ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church accept the Bible, in the first place, as the Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice: and they accept, in the second place, a certain confessional and authoritative interpretation of that Word. There may be an area of belief not covered by the Confession, and within that area differences of opinion may be freely entertained and they most certainly exist. If any one were to say that there are not different types of theology and different theological tendencies in the Presbyterian Church, he would betray great ignorance of the prevalent currents of opinion. Extra-confessional belief cannot, however, be heretical belief; or in other words, a heresy must, in the nature of the case, under our confessional system, be something that is contrary to confessional statement. We say *Heresy*, for we are not speaking of those practices which are in violation of the law and usage of the Church, and which belong to the sphere of government rather than of doctrine. In making the Symbol the norm of orthodoxy, we do

not put it above the Bible. The Bible is the rule of faith; the symbol is the authoritative interpretation of the Bible. By the word 'authoritative,' again, we make no concessions in favor of the right of the Church to give an infallible interpretation of the Bible. It is the implicit doctrine of our Confession that confessions of faith are not infallible. The Confession of Faith is not imposed upon any one. It is authoritative and obligatory only after it has been voluntarily accepted. It is clear, moreover, that the meaning of the Symbol would be vacated the moment it ceased to be the norm of measurement in regard to heresy. For why should a man be required to subscribe to a creed if such subscription does not place him under specific obligations, and if, moreover, he is equally liable to be called to account for his views touching other questions respecting which the Confession is silent and he has given no pledge? And hence, too, it will appear that while the Confession may, in a sense, limit a man's freedom, it is also a great protection against tyranny. A man may very reasonably avow his acceptance of a certain doctrinal system set forth in a creed statement, who would be slow to accept the exegesis of particular passages of Scripture for which the approval of past or future General Assemblies may be quoted. Our belief upon this subject has been very well expressed by Dr. Briggs:

"The symbols have been accepted and subscribed by honest and faithful men for their *face value*, for all that is fairly contained therein, and not for certain unknown and undiscovered consequences, which may have a chance majority, or the most authoritative teachers. Symbols of faith are the expression of the faith of those who constructed them, and of those who subsequently adopted them as far as they give expression to Christian doctrine; but with regard to those questions not covered by their statements, which may have been held in abeyance, or purposely omitted on account of disagreement, and in order to liberty, or because they were not suited for a *national* confession or a *child's* catechism, or because they had not yet arisen on the field of controversy—to bring these in by the plea of logical deduction, is to elaborate and enlarge the creed against the judgment of those who framed it, is to usurp the constitutional methods of revision, is to dogmatize and obstruct those active, energetic scholars, who, having accepted them for their face value as a genuine expression of their faith, push forth into the unexplored fields of theology, in order, by the inductive method, and the generalization of facts, rather than by deductions from symbolic or scholastic statements, to win new triumphs for their Divine Master."

The relation of the Biblical critic to the Standards is the same as that of the dogmatic theologian. He is free to investigate, but he is not free to teach contrary to the Confession of Faith. This is not a great hardship, though it may be true that men who have not been called to engage in special theological work or who are conscious of no centrifugal tendencies in their own experience, may sometimes fail to deal judicially with the real difficulties of the case. Of course we have no right to say *a priori* that our Confession of Faith or any

other instrument drawn up by fallible men, is incapable of improvement. It is not heresy to propose a revision of the creed. Happily it is a very difficult thing to accomplish such a revision constitutionally, and a proposition to revise would not and ought not to be favorably entertained. But if a man must utter himself in terms that contradict the Confession, the Church may prefer to part with him rather than jeopard her own peace or purity; and in such a judgment the Church would undoubtedly be right. We say the Church *may* prefer, for while it is true that no extra-confessional belief is heretical, it is also true, that every contra-confessional belief is not to be dealt with as heresy; for in order that it should be so dealt with, it should be shown to "impair the integrity of the Calvinistic system," or to "strike at the vitals of religion." Whenever, therefore, any alleged heresy is brought to the judicial notice of the Church two questions are to be determined: first, Has there been any contradiction of the Confession of Faith, or other doctrinal symbol? and, secondly, Is it of sufficient gravity to be made the subject of a judicial process? It may be a great deal easier sometimes to determine the first question than to settle the second. And here we see the difficulties that beset the General Assembly, clothed as it is with the double function of pronouncing in a declaratory way against error, and of sitting in appellate jurisdiction as a court of last resort. It is not to be wondered at that when rumors are in the air respecting erroneous teachings or tendencies in the Church, the General Assembly should feel called upon to utter a warning against these errors. But it is hard to do this in any effective way without danger of doing harm. It would be a great mistake to discourage study and thorough investigation, and to suppose that by putting a premium on ignorance the cause of truth would be promoted. It would be a great wrong for the highest judicatory in the Church to fasten suspicion upon one Seminary by naming it, or upon all Seminaries by not naming any, without a particle of technical evidence to support the charge of doctrinal unsoundness. It would be very unjudicial to decide a great question by adopting a set of resolutions under the impulse of an orthodox sentiment, which ought to be decided only after a full, patient hearing of a concrete case, and under the provisions of the Book of Discipline applicable to appellate jurisdiction. And it is surely not too much to say that a committee of the General Assembly, however scholarly and wise, can hardly be expected in the short time allowed them during its sessions and without having previously given special attention to the subject, to deal in a satisfactory way with a new and complicated theological problem. Therefore while

we are in fullest sympathy with the spirit that actuates the General Assembly in these matters, we are nevertheless of the opinion that it would contribute to the peace of the Church, and to the influence of the General Assembly, if deliverances on doctrinal questions were more sparingly made, and the mind of the court of last resort were revealed through "sentences" given in accordance with the solemn and patient methods of appellate jurisdiction. Having said so much, we, of course, shall not undertake to express any opinion respecting the ecclesiastical aspect of certain alleged departures from the Confession of Faith. We shall confine ourselves altogether to the theological aspect, and shall accordingly compare certain results of Pentateuchal investigation with the statements of the Westminster Symbols.

II.

The results of the Higher Criticism in regard to Pentateuchal investigation are so various that it is not safe to undertake any estimate of their dogmatic import until they have been very clearly distinguished. For while there are critics whose conclusions result in an entire abandonment of all supernaturalism in Christianity, there are also those who not only hold the traditional view respecting the origin of the Pentateuch, but are likewise in sympathy with our whole confessional system. Between these extremes are to be found representatives of various shades of what Kuenen calls the "ecclesiastical theory" of religion, including those whose divergence from traditionalism is definitely avowed as well as those who profess to accept the traditional theory with slight modifications. There is room, therefore, for some such distinction as that which Dr. Briggs makes between Rationalistic and Evangelical Criticism, though we have no partiality for either of these misleading epithets.

Kuenen may be taken as a type of the rationalistic critics. His theory of religion is naturalistic from beginning to end. As interpreted by him, there is nothing supernatural in either Christianity or Judaism. All religion is the manifestation of the religious feeling, and all religious history a process of development. It is not necessary to compare Kuenen's theory of religion with the Confession of Faith, for as interpreted by Kuenen, and, indeed, by all who adopt his naturalistic postulates, Christianity means ethical monotheism and it means nothing more. It is possible, however, to separate the postulates from the so-called historical facts, and it is important to do so; for, while we do not believe the facts to be as alleged, neither are we willing to concede that if they were as alleged they would

justify Kuenen's conclusions. Dr. Robertson Smith, it is true, has not been successful in the attempt to hold Kuenen's view as to the history of Israel while rejecting his conclusions as to Christianity; but it does not follow from this that the reconstruction of Jewish history as proposed by Kuenen and Wellhausen would necessitate the downfall of Christianity. It has been common, we know, for the theological controversialist to defend orthodoxy by giving his antagonist the choice between atheism and his own view; and to the superficial reader this has the appearance of a crushing refutation. To those, however, who look below the surface, it is evident that in the act of sharpening these dilemma-horns he has in reality been unconsciously surrendering positions which are of great advantage to Christianity. We shall not follow these unwise precedents, but, on the contrary, shall maintain, that though Kuenen's interpretation of the Religion of Israel were true—though it could be proven that the Jews rose out of polytheism into belief in one God, that the prophets of the eighth century B. C. were simply great preachers of pure morals, that the Levitical institutions were post-exilic and a compromise between the popular religion and prophetic teaching: it would be impossible, even then—without the aid of naturalistic postulates—without doing violence, moreover, to the facts of the New Testament—to make the reconstructions of Jewish history proposed by Kuenen and Wellhausen, the logical warrant for denying the supernatural character of Christianity. For Judaism, however explained, is genetically related to the Christian religion. Were there no exceptional facts that accredit the divine authority of Christ, it might be possible to say that Jesus was simply a successor of the prophets, that the significance of His work resides exclusively in His ethical precepts, and that Paul taught a reactionary theology. And but for these exceptional facts it might be possible, supposing Kuenen's account of Judaism to be true, to put a naturalistic interpretation upon the course of Jewish history. If, however, there is a miraculous element in Christianity, there must be an inspirational element in Judaism, no matter in what order the events in Jewish history occurred. Men may refuse to believe that God appeared to Moses and delivered to him a completed system of jurisprudence and a complex sacrificial ritual. But they cannot ignore the correspondence between the Old Testament and the New. Grant, then, that a rude people rose gradually out of polytheism toward faith in the living God; that they gradually realized the need of ethical purity, and voiced it in their prophets; that they had a growing sense of sin which found expression at last in a priestly system; and, finally, that priest

and prophet stood in sharp antithesis to each other, emphasizing different sides of life, and not knowing the true relation between them, until Jesus came as the climax of both developments and their synthesis:—it would be necessary still to ask, How did Judaism happen to sustain this relation to Christianity? And there is but one answer to this question. Mere naturalism will not explain Judaism, unless it will explain Christianity as well. The man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God cannot resist the belief that Jewish history was a series of preparations for His advent. He may reject the inspiration of the book that records this history, but he cannot doubt the inspiration of the history itself.

It is, however, with the results of evangelical criticism that we are more immediately concerned. Let it be understood that the word 'evangelical' is not used here as the opposite of sacerdotal, nor as a shorthand equivalent for a few doctrines which some people suppose are so fixed that their number can neither be increased nor diminished. In describing certain critics as evangelical, all that is meant is that, however much they may be at variance with one another and with the church creeds, they nevertheless believe that Christ died the just for the unjust, that we have redemption through His blood, and that there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved. In other words, they believe in the Gospel. Among these there are wide differences of view. Some accept our full confessional theology, others are clearly opposed to it in regard to some points, while of others it can only be said that their views have "an unsettling tendency"—if we may make use of a current phrase to denote an idea which is very palpable so far as we see it ourselves, though sometimes very intangible when we undertake to show it to others. This expression, since it has been used, may serve to introduce the discussion of an important question; for it may be conceded that it is very hard to make a comparison between the "tendency" of a certain statement, and the teachings of the Confession of Faith. Yet, one should not take advantage of this difficulty: and though critics may have some excuse for not rating very highly a great deal of what is said by those who attack them, they should remember if they are Presbyterian ministers, that they are ministers first, even if they are literary men as well. Nor are we as clear as many seem to be that "tendency" can never be made a matter of judicial investigation. But we cannot deal fully with this question here. All that it is necessary to say about it will come before us in the comparison it is now proposed to make between the Confession of Faith and some of the results of Pentateuchal criticism.

This comparison cannot be made simply by placing the words of the Confession and the utterances of critical writers side by side. It is necessary first to understand what constitutes a contra-confessional opinion; and unless one has deliberately pondered this question, it is quite likely that he will not know how much real difficulty there may be in determining it. Thus, it must be admitted that to a great extent it is true that the logical consequences of confessional statements being no part of the Confession, a man may hold them or not without prejudice to his orthodoxy. And yet the Confession cannot be taken for its "face value" in such a sense as to imply that there is no such thing as inferential heresy. If, for example, a man should hold an opinion contradictory to the teaching of Christ, such an opinion would be anti-confessional by being inconsistent with the teaching of the Confession regarding our Lord's authority; but the inconsistency would be made apparent inferentially, and not as a direct contradiction of the Confession. It must also be admitted that great care should be taken when it is proposed to hold a man responsible for the logical consequences of his own views. A certain conception of the relation of God to the world may be logically related to Pantheism, but we may have no right to charge a man with Pantheism because he entertains this conception. Yet, here again, this must not be pressed to the extent of saying that a man must never be charged with the logical consequences of his own doctrine. For even though he should earnestly disavow his belief in those consequences, they may be so obviously related to the belief avowed that it would be impossible to find any rational ground for separating them. If a man should say that the Bible teaches error, it would be of no avail for him to avow his belief in plenary inspiration, since the two ideas are palpably inconsistent. There may be, therefore, different degrees of contra-confessional belief. An utterance may be a direct traverse of the words of the Confession or it may be simply inconsistent with confessional teaching. This may be illustrated by the doctrine of Inspiration. The Confession of Faith teaches that all the books of the Canon are inspired; that God having made a revelation has been "pleased to commit the same wholly unto writing," and that we have a full persuasion and assurance of the "infallible truth and divine authority thereof." It is not held that we know how God's agency stands related to human agency in the production of an inspired writing. It is not denied that what is a revelation in the sense that it is God's message to man may also be Literature in the sense that it had a human genesis as well. But it is held that whatever influence was exerted on

the writers of Scripture, and however different that influence may have been in different cases, inspiration can be, and is, predicated of the *writings*, and that by being inspired writings they are infallible. Any opinion inconsistent with the inerrancy of Scripture (meaning by Scripture the autograph copies of Scripture) is contra-confessional. For it is obvious that a man may as well deny Inspiration as deny the results secured by Inspiration, or make statements inconsistent with these results. It is not always easy to say whether statements possess this character, for regard must always be had for the literary form of the writing, and we must be sure before we make the charge of contra-confessional teaching, that we have properly interpreted the passage which constitutes the basis of the allegation. We must distinguish between poetry and prose; we must not force literalistic meanings upon metaphors or mistake dramatic statements for history; nor must Inspiration ever be held responsible for wrong exegesis. Hence the generally accepted interpretation of the "days" of Genesis does not conflict with the Confession's doctrine of Inspiration. Yet, if one should affirm that the story of Samson is a myth, we should not hesitate to say that such a view would be incompatible with Inspiration; and, speaking generally, we should say that any sober historical statement professing to relate fact must be factually true, or it cannot be inspired. It is clear, then, that all alleged departures from confessional teaching on the subject of Inspiration are not equally obvious. Thus, a man may simply contradict the Confession by saying, "The Scriptures are not inspired," or he may utter what is inconsistent with Inspiration and say, "The Scriptures teach error." Or, he may say, "The world was not made in six days of twenty-four hours each"; and on the assumption that the days of Genesis are days of twenty-four hours, it may be alleged that he believes that the Scriptures teach error, and therefore does not believe in their inspiration. Or, he may say, "The Pentateuch was not written by Moses"; and on the assumption that the words "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" can refer only to something that Moses wrote, and on the further assumption that the writing thus referred to is the whole Pentateuch, it might be alleged that to affirm the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch involves the imputation of error to the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, and consequently a denial of the Confession's doctrine of Inspiration. It is perfectly clear, however, that the assumptions just referred to serve to invalidate the inferences that depend upon them; and it is just as clear that in cases similar to those just mentioned there may be more or less room for differences of opinion respecting the import

of particular passages of Scripture, and, consequently, that an alleged departure from confessional teaching where it is not expressed in the terms of direct contradiction of the Confession, or in terms that are necessarily inconsistent with it, may be a matter of greater or less probability. This probability may be so great, it may concern such vital questions, it may be expressed in so many specific forms, as to support the charge of heresy. An opinion, moreover, may seem to involve a contradiction of confessional doctrine, in the terms of such decided probability, that it may safely be pronounced unsettling or perilous, and the inculcation of it may be forbidden, though it might be improper to impute to the party holding it, the conclusions to which it seems to point. If a man affirm his belief in the infallibility and inspiration of the Scriptures, this should not be challenged without the strongest reasons; yet it may easily happen that sentiments which in his case do not involve heretical results, may in the minds of most people inevitably involve these results. Hence a proper regard for the rights of the individual on the one hand, and the purity of the Church on the other, may sometimes require that an opinion be condemned, even though no charge of heresy can be sustained against the individual who entertains it. In a large number of cases, however, it will be found that alleged incompatibility between certain interpretations of Scripture and confessional teaching regarding Inspiration are only apparent, and on this account any form of ecclesiastical action whereby a case of contra-confessional opinion is decided, by deciding prematurely and without sufficient consideration a question of exegesis where different views are, to say the least, possible, is greatly to be deprecated.

Remembering the distinctions that have been made in regard to the different forms of contra-confessionalism, let us compare with the Confession of Faith the opinions of certain evangelical writers which have been presented or criticised in this REVIEW. Dr. Green has defended the traditional belief that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. By others this belief is either denied or accepted subject to certain modifications. It is very important at the outset to make a sharp distinction between the post-Mosaic origin of Pentateuchal institutions, and the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch itself. The first position involves the second, but the second by no means implies the first, and there is danger of doing injustice to those who hold the latter view by a failure to keep this distinction steadily in mind. We propose to deal with these two questions separately.

IS BELIEF IN THE POST-MOSAIC ORIGIN OF THE JEWISH SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM CONTRA-CONFESSIONAL?

This question should be answered without hesitation in the affirmative.

I. First, because it is opposed to the teaching of the Confession respecting the covenant of grace. And that this may be seen let us quote the words of the Confession that are supposed to be impugned:

“Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life by that covenant the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace” (c. vii. § 3). . . . “This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law and the time of the gospel; under the law it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all fore-signifying Christ to come, which were for that time sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins and eternal salvation” (c. vii. § 5). . . . “Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy and benefits thereof were communicated unto the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world in and by those promises, types and sacrifices wherein he was revealed and signified to be the seed of the woman which should bruise the serpent’s head and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, being yesterday and to-day the same and forever” (c. viii. § 6). . . . “The justification of believers under the Old Testament was in all these respects one and the same with the justification of believers under the New Testament” (c. xi. § 6).

The account of the Jewish sacrifices presented by Dr. Robertson Smith in his *Old Testament in the Jewish Church* is very different from that given above. Prior to the exile, he says, sacrifices were not commanded. He affirms that “through the whole period from the Judges to Ezekiel the law in its finished state and fundamental theories was never the rule of Israel’s worship.” The prophets are represented as teaching that Jehovah “has not enjoined sacrifice.” He contradicts the traditional theory by saying that “the theology of the prophets before Ezekiel has no place for the system of priestly sacrifice and ritual.” Sacrifice existed, it is true, before the exile, but it formed “part of natural religion which other nations share with Israel.” In fact, it formed part of the “popular religion” where “the people hoped to influence Jehovah’s disposition toward them by gifts and sacrifices, by outward tokens of penitence.” The passover might seem to be an exception to this rule, for its Mosaic origin is not denied, but it was a national feast, resting on a “historical basis” and possessing also an “agricultural significance.” Dr. Smith gives no intimation that it had any sacrificial significance. He hints broadly in the opposite direction. Prior then to the exile forgiveness

of sin through sacrifice was unknown. When the Jews disobeyed God they were punished; when they repented they were forgiven. There was no atonement. "The law of forgiveness works directly and without any ritual sacrament." From the beginning of the world, then, down to the exile, the covenant of grace was not by sacrifices and the paschal lamb, as the Confession teaches. Any correspondence between the teaching of the Confession and the facts of the Old Testament concerning sacrifice must be looked for, if we are to trust Robertson Smith, after the time of Ezra. But why should a sacrificial system be commanded then? Was it to typify forgiveness through the blood of a greater sacrifice? Was it to mediate the blessings of the covenant of grace? No; it was simply an expedient to secure the separation of the Jews from the surrounding heathen. "It served only to direct the religious attitude of the people, to prevent them from turning aside into devious paths and looking for God's help in ways that might tempt them to forget His spiritual nature and fall back into heathenism. . . . The spontaneous unregulated character of the old service gave room for the introduction of heathen abominations. The new service shall be reduced to a divine rule, leaving no door for what is unholy." And this indeed is all that could be said. For, if Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and the people of God generally were saved without sacrifice, it would be hard to see why sacrifice should be necessary to salvation in the time of Ezra. Salvation without atonement before Ezra is apt to carry with it salvation without atonement after Ezra. And though Dr. Smith may say that the post-exilic sacrifices were divinely appointed there is nothing in his pages to show that they were expiatory, but much to imply that they were not. Dr. Smith admits that the Levitical system introduced by Ezra presented a lower type of religion than the non-sacrificial system of the prophets, and it might have occurred to him to ask why, after the exile, God borrowed a leaf from the prayer-book of the popular religion, seeing He had aforetime denounced that religion by the mouth of all His holy prophets? How is this retrograde movement explained? Why condemn sacrifice in one age and in the next insist upon punctilious attention to a sacrificial ritual? And how does it happen, moreover, that the lower Levitical system rather than the higher prophetic teaching has been chosen by the apostles for the purpose of expounding the mission of our Lord? Dr. Smith has not answered these questions though they are important, and it seems to us that he might have postponed some of his researches in historical jurisprudence rather than leave such *lacunæ* in his argument. We

do not say that Dr. Smith holds Socinian views regarding our Lord's atonement, but every one knows that a very close logical relation subsists between the sacrifices of the Old Economy and the sacrifice of Christ, and Socinian theologians will thank Dr. Smith for laboring so earnestly to show that the doctrine of satisfaction finds no support in the Levitical institutions. If, however, Dr. Smith has not surrendered his belief in our Lord's satisfaction, he must hold that the Old Testament economy of grace was very different from that of the New Testament, and in this way he stands squarely antagonistic to the Confession's statement that the justification of believers was in all respects the same in both Testaments.

2. To affirm the post-Mosaic origin of the Levitical system may also be fairly regarded as contrary to the teaching of the Confession regarding Inspiration. According to Dr. Robertson Smith the Deuteronomic code (Deut. xii.–xxvi.) is identical with "the book which Hilkiyah, the priest, found in the house of the Lord" (2 Kings xxiii. 24) in the reign of King Josiah. Dr. Smith is sure that this book was not a forgery perpetrated by the temple priests. This is proved by the provision made for the rural Levites in Deut. xviii., which Dr. Smith discerningly considers far too liberal to be due to metropolitan magnanimity. But if it was not a forgery, how did it happen to be so opportunely discovered? Dr. Smith may suppose that in exonerating the temple priests from the charge of forgery he has eliminated the element of fraud from his own theory. But we cannot see that he has. For, according to that theory, there is a very remarkable coincidence between the reforms of Josiah's reign and the discovery of a book which served as the legislative programme of these reforms. Nothing could be more seasonable than the discovery of a code that professed to speak in the name and with the authority of Moses. The operative significance of the code consisted in the weight that it would have as the law of Moses. Grant then that it was not a forgery committed by the priests. Somebody is responsible for palming this Deuteronomic code upon the public as the work of Moses. Who committed the fraud? Dr. Robertson Smith says that "the authority that lay behind Deuteronomy was the power of the prophetic teaching." Then we are to conclude that the prophets of that period sanctioned a proceeding by means of which a body of jurisprudence went into Jewish literature as the work of Moses which did not originate for a thousand years after Moses' death, and which simply "gathered up in practical form the results of the great movement under Hezekiah and Isaiah and the new divine teaching then given to Israel." Undoubtedly a book

that gathered up these results might very well "become the programme of Josiah's reformation"; and under certain circumstances it might have been "of no consequence to Josiah . . . to know the exact date and authorship of the book." But according to Dr. Smith this book was identical with our Deuteronomic code, and that code claims to have been delivered through Moses. Under these circumstances it was a matter of great importance to Josiah and it is a matter of great importance to us, to know whether it originated in the time of Moses, or not for a thousand years thereafter. Did Josiah use a pious fraud in prosecuting his reforms? Did prophetic authority aid and abet him in so doing? And, moreover, did God commit to writing as part of His infallibly inspired word a body of jurisprudence which was composed in the reign of King Hezekiah, but which professes to have been delivered by Moses, and which is inseparably connected with a historical narrative that deals with the occupation of Canaan as an event still in the future? Dr. Smith may try to reconcile us to this belief by saying that the ideas entertained in early times respecting literary property were very different from those that we are accustomed to: but he has not yet ventured to maintain that the ideas of truth which God entertained then are at all different from those which He entertains at this moment; and until he does this we shall be obliged to say that his theory respecting the origin of the Deuteronomic code is incompatible with any doctrine of Inspiration worthy of the name.

Let us, however, turn to the New Testament, for the utterances there are plain and unequivocal. Whatever doubt there may be regarding the bearing of the New Testament upon the authorship of the Pentateuch, there is no room for a reasonable doubt respecting the assertions of the inspired writers concerning the Mosaic legislation. Thus Jno. i. 17: "The law was given by Moses." Heb. ix. 19: "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop and sprinkled both the book and all the people." Heb. vii. 14: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood." The context shows unmistakably that in the mind of the writer of this epistle the provisions respecting the "Levitical priesthood" came through Moses. On the supposition that the Levitical priesthood was developed after the exile, how are these references to be accounted for? When a part of the Pentateuch is quoted as proof that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch it is replied that the portions quoted prove only that he wrote the parts ascribed to him. When laws are ascribed to Moses

it is said that he might have been the author of the laws without being the author of the books that contain the laws. But we are not seeking to prove just now that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. We affirm that the New Testament imputes to him the Pentateuchal Codes. How can those who believe that the Levitical institutions began with the reforms of Josiah or of Ezra explain the fact that the New Testament writers impute them to Moses? How can Inspiration make a mistake of a thousand years? How can we believe that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost after we discover that the entire analogy between Christ and Aaron is founded upon an anachronism? How can Christ be a priest like Aaron if Aaron was not a priest? And how can Aaron be a priest unless he have somewhat to offer? And how could he have somewhat to offer if sacrifices were unknown, save as adjuncts of natural religion, until after the exile? And what is the value of a book whose whole dogmatic significance is destroyed with the discovery that the institutions whose origin it imputes to Moses were the outgrowth of a later development? And what value would Inspiration have after we had ascertained that it was employed to produce a worthless book? And, finally, who will hesitate when he is called to choose between an Inspiration that secures no good result and no Inspiration at all?

3. The question under discussion must be answered affirmatively for yet another reason, and that is, the absolute incompatibility between the teaching of the Confession respecting the authority of Christ and belief in the post-Mosaic origin of the Levitical law. Jesus repeatedly speaks of Moses as the giver of the law, and He speaks so specifically in regard to this point that there can be no doubt that He meant the Levitical system. Thus: Jno. vii. 19, "Did not Moses give you the law? Moses therefore gave you circumcision" (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers.) Mark i. 44: "See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded" (compare Lev. xiv. 2, 32). Matt. xix. 7: "They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give her a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so" (com. Deut. xxiv. 1). Those laws referred by our Saviour to Moses are to be found in the Deuteronomic code which Dr. Robertson Smith assigns to the period between Hezekiah and Josiah, and the Levitical code which he put as late as the time of Ezra. Here, again, there can be no doubt as to our Saviour's

meaning. He is not naming books which go by the name of Moses. He is not using the word 'Moses' to describe a religious system. He is speaking of a well-known body of law as given by Moses. He names certain specified laws and says that Moses was the author of them. How, then, can we deny the Mosaic origin of the Deuteronomic and the Levitical codes without denying the authority of Christ? We hold that this is impossible, and we understand Dr. Briggs to agree with us upon this point. He says :

"The New Testament proves the *historical* character of the narratives of the Pentateuch, the fact that Moses was the great *lawgiver and prophet*, the *fundamental* position of the Mosaic legislation to the Old Testament, and above all the *divine authority* of the Pentateuch ; and those who antagonize *these things* come into collision with Jesus and the apostles."

Dr. Robertson Smith, however, finds himself under no necessity to choose between the authority of Christ and the post-exilic origin of the Levitical code. He saves his orthodoxy by means of a *tertium quid* which deserves notice as one of the curiosities of literature. Thanks to what must have been a hasty reading of Sir Henry Maine's *Ancient Law*, he has made the discovery that the Levitical code, though originating in the time of Ezra, was imputed to Moses by a "legal fiction." Why our Lord should have sanctioned this legal fiction, he does not say. Nor does it seem strange to him that our Lord, who was so careful to remind the Jews that circumcision antedated the law of Moses, and that the law of divorce began with Moses and did not represent the divine ideal of marriage, should have so completely ignored the historic falsehood upon which popular faith in the so-called Mosaic institutions was based. But Dr. Smith has misread Sir Henry Maine. For, according to this eminent jurist, unwritten custom represents the first stage of law. Following consuetudinary law comes the Code or body of written though not necessarily systematized law. After this the adaptation of the law to the changes in society proceeds according to three methods: Legal Fiction, Equity, and Legislation. A legal fiction is simply a device which affects to conceal that the law, though actually changed, has been changed. It thus mediates between the spirit of prescription and the necessity for change ; and as Sheldon Amos remarks, by this means "the form of the old law continues to be maintained in procedure as a sort of tribute to the sentimental and unprogressive instincts of the bulk of the nation, while the wants of a nascent age are provided for through an artificial interpretation of that law." But the case before us is something utterly different. It is not some new departure from the Code every now and then which by legal fiction is imputed to and read into the Code, as where the *Responsa Pruden-*

tum among the Romans were supposed to be based upon the Laws of the Twelve Tables. Here we have an entirely new code containing an elaborate sacrificial ritual, and "the new laws of the Levitical code are presented as ordinances of Moses, though when they were first promulgated every one knew that they were not so." And Dr. Smith presents us this as an illustration of legal fiction analogous to that which appears in the common law of England and the *jus civile* of Rome. Very appropriately it stands upon the last page of his book as marking the climax of absurdity; for it is as conceivable that the Statute of Frauds in the reign of Charles II. should have been referred by legal fiction to Magna Charta, as that a body of laws which Ezra introduced should have been referred by legal fiction to Moses. We concede to Dr. Smith the personal benefit of his own apologetic, untenable logically as his position undoubtedly is; but no Church that is jealous of the honor of Christ can afford to tolerate the inculcation of the doctrine that the Levitical sacrifices are post-exilic.

IS BELIEF IN THE NON-MOSAIC AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH
CONTRA-CONFESSIONAL?

We are obliged to answer this question in the affirmative for reasons that will presently appear. At the same time it should be kept in mind that there are some very important considerations bearing upon the interpretation of this question and consequently upon the answer that has just been given.

1. A great deal depends upon what is meant by affirming that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. Do we mean that Moses was the sole author of the whole of each of the five books that go by his name? or do we mean that Moses stood in such a relation to these books that we can without any impropriety speak of them as his writings and refer to him as their author? These questions are not exactly the same; and it is in the latter sense that we have given an affirmative answer to the question just propounded.

2. We must distinguish yet further between two very different ideas. It is one thing to say that all fair dealing with recognized canons of interpretation establishes the conclusion that in all probability Moses was virtually the author of the entire Pentateuch; and another thing to say that Moses is declared by Christ and His apostles to be the author of the entire Pentateuch in such terms that to question the statement that Moses wrote the entire Pentateuch is to contradict Christ and His apostles. The former position may be maintained; the latter cannot be.

3. It must be remembered that there is room for great divergence of opinion among those who dissent from the traditional belief that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch. This has been abundantly illustrated in the series of articles under discussion. Thus all who deny the Mosaic origin of the Codes in Exodus, Deuteronomy and Leviticus deny of course the Mosaic authorship of these books. Dr. Robertson Smith belongs to this class. Prof. H. P. Smith's position is not defined. He urges some strong objections to Wellhausen's theory that Ezra was the author of the priest-code and that the tabernacle was "the shadow of Solomon's temple cast upon the background of the Mosaic age by the imagination of later times." Moreover, he energetically repudiates the naturalism which is the foundation of Wellhausen's theory. But he does not affirm (though he does not deny) that the three codes came through Moses, and he has left room for the surmise that he may not regard them as Mosaic by a criticism of Dr. Green's article, in which he says "that while his argument sufficiently establishes a very early Mosaic tradition it does not seem to us to prove that any large portion of that tradition was fixed in a written form before the time of the monarchy." He accepts the results of Pentateuch-analysis and holds therefore to a plurality of Pentateuchal authorship. Dr. Briggs teaches unequivocally that the Pentateuch gives us three codes of Mosaic legislation, "a judicial code, a people's code, and a priest code." His position, therefore, is in literal accord with the statement that the Law came by Moses. But holding as he does that the Pentateuch is a fourfold narrative he cannot hold the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch in any literal sense. It should be observed, however, that it is not claimed that there is anything in the style of the Pentateuch to militate against the idea that the four writings supposed by Dr. Briggs to compose it were produced in the time of Moses. Thus Dr. Briggs says :

"The interrelation of the four writings and their combination by a redactor is independent in itself of any theory or theories as to the *order* or the *time* of their genesis. There is nothing in this variation of documents as such to require that they should be successive and separated by wide intervals or that would prevent their being very nearly contemporaneous. There is nothing in this distinction of documents as such that forces us to abandon the Mosaic age as to the time of their origin."

Dr. Curtiss maintains that the three codes are Mosaic, and that Moses is virtually responsible for the entire Pentateuch, though not the author of all of it. He says :

"There seems to be no reason why we should deny that at least those parts of the Pentateuch were written by Moses which are assigned to him ; and that other parts may have been penned under his direction or sufficiently soon after his death to assure their essential truthfulness as history."

4. Returning, then, to the question respecting the attitude of the Confession to the problem under discussion, it should be observed that the Confession nowhere states that Moses wrote the Pentateuch or any part of it. It should be noted also that none of the doctrines of the Confession are affected in any way by the question respecting the authorship of the five books of Moses, unless it be the doctrine of Inspiration or that of our Lord's authority. The question, then, reduces itself to the inquiry whether the inerrancy of Scripture and the supreme authority of Christ are involved in the denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. And here, let it be observed, our attitude to the evidence is not the same as when we are asking the question, What is the fair conclusion respecting the authorship of the Pentateuch, indicated by the words of our Lord and the New Testament writers? For although when we are asking, What do the words of Christ teach respecting the authorship of the Pentateuch? it is not enough to show what they *may* mean, and it is quite proper to expose the fallacies of those writers who propound a possible meaning as the true meaning: the case is very different when the object is to show that to put a particular meaning upon the words of Christ is to contradict Christ. When the allegation is that one has come into collision with Christ and His apostles, it is a sufficient reply to that charge to say that the words of Christ will bear the meaning that was put upon them. And though the probability be but slight that such is the true meaning, the burden of proof lies fairly upon the party making the charge of contradiction to show that such a meaning is unreasonable. This distinction is of great importance in a discussion of this nature.

Let us ask then whether the Pentateuch itself claims throughout to have been written by Moses. This is the inference we should naturally draw from Deut. xxxi. 9. And so Hengstenberg, Keil, and others interpret it. But it would not be fair to insist on this interpretation in such strong terms as to bring those who do not accept this interpretation into collision with the doctrine of Inspiration. In five instances portions of the Pentateuch are said to have been written by Moses. The Mosaic authorship of these portions could not be denied without contradicting the doctrine of the Confession regarding Inspiration, and the Mosaic authorship of these portions may constitute a strong argument for the Mosaic authorship of the rest, but it does not, of itself, shut us up to this belief. Again, do the writers of the New Testament and particularly does Jesus declare that Moses wrote the Pentateuch? We must answer this question in the affirmative, even though we admit that the words of Christ

and His apostles do not shut us up to the choice between a rejection of their authority and the avowal that Moses wrote the whole of the Pentateuch. Thus we read Acts xv. 21: "Moses hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day." And our Saviour said, John v. 47: "If ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" There can be no room for doubt that a body of literature substantially identical with our Pentateuch was known and named by Christ and His apostles as the writings of Moses. We believe that a fair examination of all the facts will lead to the vindication of the traditional belief in the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch. Nor can men accept the authority of Christ as final and reach any other conclusion, if they allow themselves to be guided by the logical implications of our Saviour's words. If, however, it were held that the words of Christ and of the New Testament writers are sufficiently accounted for by supposing that a fourfold document was composed under the direction of Moses, parts of it being written by Moses himself; or that Mosaic writings were the basis of our present Pentateuch, we should be obliged to admit that though this view may fall very far short of the truth, it nevertheless cannot be held to be inconsistent with the teachings of the Confession of Faith.

III.

Admitting now that it is more important to believe that Moses gave the Law than that he wrote the Pentateuch, and admitting, moreover, that the denial that Moses wrote the entire Pentateuch is not contra-confessional, it appears that we are nevertheless required, by all fair interpretation of the words of Christ and the writers of the New Testament, to believe that Moses was in some sense the author of the books that go by his name. That being the case, the authorship of the Pentateuch ceases to be merely a literary question and becomes invested with important dogmatic significance. In looking at this question from a dogmatic point of view, we do not choose to assume the inspiration of the Scriptures, and on this ground close the discussion without facing the objections that have been urged to the traditional belief that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Neglecting minor considerations, as the alleged anachronisms involved in Gen. xxxvi. 31, Deut. ii. 12, and Deut. i. 1, it is safe to say that the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is contended for on three principal grounds: (1) Certain naturalistic postulates; (2) The

alleged post-Mosaic origin of two of the Pentateuchal codes; (3) The alleged composite character of the Pentateuch itself. Let us consider these arguments in the order named.

NATURALISTIC POSTULATES.

It would be very hard, if it would not be impossible, for a student not to be influenced in this discussion by his theory of the universe. When, therefore, men deny the personality of God, or, being theists, nevertheless believe that all religious belief is the outcome of a process of development, they cannot help construing the history of Israel in the light of these naturalistic presuppositions. Accordingly, when they find Moses represented as inculcating a lofty type of religious belief, as the centre of a great miraculous dispensation, as the giver of a complex system of Law which was destined to remain without improvement or material change through the entire life of the Jewish nation, the historicity of the Pentateuch is denied by them at the start. For men like Kuenen, then, to reconstruct Jewish history so as to harmonize it with their theory of the universe becomes a perfectly intelligible thing. Their postulates of course are absurd; but conceding their theory of the universe to be true, they have no choice. And having interpreted the Jewish law according to the canons of naturalistic criticism, they do not stop half-way, but give us a naturalistic Christianity as a sequel to naturalistic Judaism. In this way their work assumes the form of unity and coherence although the system throughout illustrates the domination of theory over fact, of foregone conclusion over historical testimony. When, however, a critic repudiates naturalism and works without the momentum and inspiration of a great presupposition like this, and yet wishes to take advantage of the results reached through this hypothesis, he labors under great disadvantages. It might be greatly to the credit of the critics who belong to this class that they do not depend upon these postulates of naturalism, but that their conclusions are based upon an inductive investigation of the fact. And certainly this would be the case if the facts warranted their conclusions or they were ready to be governed altogether in their conclusions by the facts that have been subjected to scrutiny. But when evangelical critics confine themselves to the Old Testament facts without any naturalistic bias, they will find that though a post-Mosaic authorship of the law were a plausible explanation, a Mosaic authorship is also a plausible explanation; and that being the case why should they say that the law was post-Mosaic? Or if the facts show that the priest-code of Leviticus could not have

existed until after the exile, they also show that it might have been developed in the ordinary course of events about that time. Why, then, do they not hold that it was due to natural causes? Because, at this point in the argument they cease to be inductive and seek information from the lips of Christ, so that they reject supernaturalism at the first only to accept it at a later stage. But if men can accept the supernaturalism involved in accepting the authority of Christ, there should be nothing to hinder their accepting the supernaturalism involved in believing that the Jewish nation started out with a complete system of divinely revealed jurisprudence; and least of all should this be difficult when, having accepted Christ's authority, they have His authority for saying that Moses gave the law. We do not say that the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch might not possibly be rejected on grounds that are purely literary and historical; but it should be kept in mind that when one has abandoned the naturalistic postulates he has abandoned one of the strongest reasons for rejecting the traditional view. And the critic cannot be allowed to occupy the double position, of first repudiating naturalism and then using an *a priori* argument that naturalism suggests. This is the position occupied by Dr. Robertson Smith. In his first lecture, in the book already referred to, he says: "If you find me calling in a rationalistic principle, if you can show at any step in my argument that I assume the impossibility of the supernatural, or reject plain facts in the interest of rationalistic theories, I will frankly confess that I am in the wrong." Yet further on, he says:

"On the traditional view three successive bodies of law were given to Israel within forty years. Within that short time many ordinances were modified and the whole law of Sinai recast on the plains of Moab. But from the days of Moses there was no change. With his death the Israelites entered on a new career, which transformed the nomads of Goshen into the civilized inhabitants of vineyard land and cities in Canaan. But the divine laws given them beyond Jordan were to remain unmodified through all the long centuries of development in Canaan, an absolute and immutable code. I say, with all reverence, that this is impossible."

Dr. Smith is not assuming here the impossibility of miracles, but he is using an argument that has no force without that assumption. Here, therefore, as is so often the case with those who deny the traditional view, all that he gains in orthodoxy is so much subtracted from his consistency.

ARE THE PENTATEUCHAL CODES POST-MOSAIC?

With the giving up of naturalism, the critic who denies the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch gives up one of the three great arguments in support of his position, though we do not say that he gives

up one-third of his case. The second great reason relied on to prove that Moses did not write the Pentateuch is the allegation that the Deuteronomic and Levitical codes came into existence at a late period in Israel's history. In support of this position several historical facts are alleged, the most important of which may be grouped under the following heads: (1) Variations in the Codes; (2) Witness of History; (3) Ezekiel's programme. Before dealing specifically with these facts and the conclusions based upon them, let us notice the different positions that it is possible to take respecting them. The facts may be admitted and the conclusions admitted. This is Dr. Robertson Smith's position. Or both facts and conclusions may be denied. This is Dr. Green's position. Or the facts may be admitted and the conclusions denied. This is Dr. Briggs's position.

Turning now to the allegations of fact grouped under the three heads just mentioned, it is evident that they do not stand on the same level, and that they must not be treated as so many separate proofs of the post-Mosaic origin of the Levitical code. In order that they may be properly estimated, it is necessary to know how they stand related to one another in the critics' argument. In the first place, certain alleged variations in the codes constitute the basis of the hypothesis that in their genesis they were separated from each other by long intervals. These variations are: plurality of altars in Exodus as opposed to a central altar in Deuteronomy; undifferentiated functions of priests and Levites in Deuteronomy in contrast with the sharp antithesis between the two orders in Leviticus and Numbers; a small number of ceremonial requirements in Exodus, followed by a more developed ritual in Deuteronomy, and by one still more elaborate in Leviticus. To account for these variations, it is said that we must allow a long period of time. Again, it is said that if we compare the codes with the actual history of Israel, we shall find that the latter reveals just such a state of things as the hypothesis implies: entire ignorance or unrebuked violation of the Levitical system up to the time of the exile and of the Deuteronomic code prior to the reign of Hezekiah. In the third place, it is alleged that in Ezekiel's programme we can watch the actual process of development and see in the degradation of the Levites how the Deuteronomic Torah passed into the Torah of Leviticus. So that we have first the variations in the codes that give rise to the hypothesis; then the witness of subsequent history in support of the hypothesis; and finally, the verification of the hypothesis by the discovery of the "missing link" in the 44th chapter of Ezekiel. It must be admitted that this has the appearance of being a very plausible theory. If we were to reason

inductively on the basis of these facts alone and without regard to the words of Christ, we should say that if we admit the facts we cannot help admitting the theory. Therefore, the boldest and best way to defend the Mosaic authorship of the Deuteronomic and Levitical codes is to challenge the facts in support of the contrary hypothesis. This is the method adopted by Dr. Green; and he has maintained his position, we feel bound to say after repeated perusal and most patient study of his article, with an array of fact and argument absolutely overwhelming.

It is alleged, and Dr. Briggs supports the allegation, that in Exodus xx. 24, a plurality of altars is contemplated, whereas in Deut. xii. provision is made for a central altar. Dr. Briggs writes the words "in all places" of the first passage in italics, as though the idea of a simultaneous plurality of altars were necessarily implied in the original. Dr. Green, on the other hand, says that this translation "does not accurately represent the Hebrew," and goes on to show that the plurality referred to in the passage is a plurality of succession and not a plurality of co-existence: a very natural thing, considering the fact that Israel was on the march when this law was given. Such a plurality of altars is surely not incompatible with the provision for a central altar in Deut. xii., made when the Jews were on the eve of entering Canaan, and having reference to their settled abode in the land of promise.

It is said, moreover, that the distinction between the priests and the Levites, which is so sharply made in Leviticus—Numbers is not recognized at all in Deuteronomy. Priests and Levites are supposed to be dealt with in Deuteronomy as interchangeable terms, and this not only on the ground of the oft-recurring phrase, "the priests the Levites," but also because the Levites were said "to stand before the Lord." We do not agree with Dr. Briggs when he says that "the effort to show a distinction between the priests and Levites in the Deuteronomic code must be regarded as a failure." Any one who will read Dr. Curtiss' *Levitical Priests* or Dr. Green's *Moses and the Prophets*, with his English Bible in his hand, can satisfy himself on this point. It has been shown that "standing before the Lord" was not a function of the priests exclusively; that "the priests the Levites," meaning the Levitical priests, was a very natural mode of designating the priests in a book written some time after the institution of the priesthood, and contemplating the priesthood in general, rather than Aaron and his sons in particular; and that in Deut. xviii. 1, the Levites are distinguished from the priests, otherwise there is tautology in the expression "the priests the Levites and all

the tribe of Levi." Again, it is said that in Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Leviticus, respectively, the feasts, sacrifices, and purifications are presented with increasing number and with growing minuteness of ceremonial detail. But this may be granted without conceding that it is any reason for separating by a long interval Deuteronomy from Exodus, or Leviticus from Deuteronomy, and making Leviticus the last in the series. For upon the supposition that Deuteronomy was written last; that it was intended to be the "people's book"; that it took for granted, without reiteration, the more minute provisions in Leviticus: all the difference between Deuteronomy and the middle books of the Pentateuch can be accounted for.

It is fair, then, to say that there is not such variation in the three Pentateuchal codes as to warrant an hypothesis respecting the genesis of two of them which is so plainly in conflict with the historical context. It is, moreover, just as correct to say that the alleged discrepancy between the two codes referred to and the history of the Jewish people does not sustain and certainly does not demand the post-Mosaic hypothesis under consideration. Indeed we are unable to see that any such discrepancy exists, though Dr. Briggs says it "must be admitted by every candid investigator of Scripture." As illustrating this discrepancy we are told that during the time of the Judges, and even in the days of Samuel, local sanctuaries abounded, and that, contrary to the Deuteronomic law, sacrifices were offered by laymen. In answer to this, however, it has been very satisfactorily said that the so-called violations of the Deuteronomic code were exceptional, and in all recorded instances prior to the defeat at Ebenezer were associated with special manifestations of Jehovah's presence; and furthermore, that throughout the period referred to, or rather until the Ark was taken by the Philistines, the house of God was at Shiloh, and the Aaronic priesthood performed their functions there and there only. After the desertion of Shiloh by Jehovah there was "no place which God had chosen to put his name there," and before the building of the temple "the people sacrificed in high places because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord until those days" —1 Kings iii. 2. These "high places" in time became associated with idolatrous worship; and when pious kings undertook a reform in religion they were only partially successful, so that while the idols were destroyed the high places were not taken away. This too is one of the discrepancies referred to above. But it only proves that a good king may be unable to realize a coveted ideal, or that the ideal of a good king in an idolatrous community may not be very exalted. Nor do the utterances of the early prophets regarding sacrifices give

any color to the idea that the Levitical code was post-exilic. Isaiah does, indeed, represent God as saying, "My soul hateth your new moons and your feasts, they are a burden to me"; but any one who has not a theory to maintain can see that this language is only a natural and vehement protest against an externalism that had taken the place of vital piety. And in the same spirit Amos asks the question: "Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" but Dr. Smith has no right to say that this "proves God's indifference to ritual," and Dr. Briggs is taking too much for granted when he supplies a plain prosaic negative as the answer to this question. Micah teaches that thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil are a poor substitute for an elevated ethical nature that shows itself in doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God. But it betrays a great lack of spiritual as well as literary perception when these passages are made to yield the dogmatic statement that "Jehovah has not enjoined sacrifice." These are the passages, however, with which Dr. Robertson Smith opposes the belief of the Church, and on the ground of which he says: "It is impossible to give a flatter contradiction to the traditional theory that the Levitical system was enacted in the wilderness." In further illustration of the discrepancy between the laws of Deuteronomy and Leviticus and the history of Israel prior to the exile, it is common for the critics to speak of the silence of Scripture regarding certain features of the Levitical law. Thus we are reminded by Dr. Briggs that in the time of Samuel the only sacrifices mentioned are burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, though he admits that the priest-code must have been known since the Urim and Thummim were consulted; that in the organization of the temple services the Levitical purifications are not mentioned, although that organization "points back to the simpler Mosaic legislation of which it is an elaboration"; that the sin-offering is not found "in the pre-exilic prophets, or in the entire Psalter save Ps. xl., or in the ethical writings"; and finally, that there is no allusion to the day of atonement. Dr. Briggs holds that notwithstanding these silences, there is clear proof in the facts just referred to that the Levitical code was in existence. But though there were no such positive proof, the absence of it could not be called a "discrepancy." For as Dr. Briggs very justly observes: "To an evangelical man transgression and silence do not prove the *non-existence* of the code." Dr. Briggs seems to think, however, that transgression and silence prove "a general *neglect* and *ignorance* of it"; and it is with reference to this that the traditional belief must, in his opinion, undergo some modification.

We come now to that part of the discussion which deals with the verification of the hypothesis under notice. The 44th chapter of Ezekiel bears in a very important way upon this hypothesis. For, granting the variations in the codes, it might be said that these variations do not prove that they are not contemporaneous; and granting that Scripture were silent respecting some of the more important provisions in at least one of them, it might still be said that the argument *e silentio*, always unsafe, is in the present instance reduced to zero, by the positive averments of the Pentateuch. But if it were to be proved that during the exile, a law came into existence which gave every indication of being based upon that of Deuteronomy, assigning a reason for one of the chief points of difference between the Deuteronomic and Levitical codes, and seeming to be the bridge between the two: this fact would deservedly have great weight. It would not only constitute an argument in itself, but it would serve to resuscitate the other arguments just referred to, and it might be necessary to inquire whether all these considerations taken together do not give strong support to the post-exilic hypothesis, even though taken separately they may not have much force. We should be very slow, therefore, to agree with Dr. Briggs in saying that "the intermediate position of the code of Ezekiel between the Deuteronomic code and the priest-code seems to be proved." We do not believe that this intermediate position has been proved, though if proof is to be found anywhere it is in the so-called degradation of the Levites. But the degradation of the Levites, as this is understood by the critics, can be proved only by assuming that in the expression "the priests the Levites," we are to understand that the relation of these terms is one of identity instead of inclusion in a class. That a class called Levites were degraded so that they would no more appear before God "to do the office of a priest," is perfectly clear. If all Levites were priests, then in the degradation of the Levites we may have the origin of these two orders. But this is the point to be proved, and this chapter cannot help the hypothesis it is supposed to verify without begging the question at the start. All priests were Levites, and might be called Levites. But all Levites were not priests, as we learn outside of Leviticus in 1 Kings viii. 4. Those Levites who were degraded so that they could no more "do the office of a priest" were priests. And the statement in Ezekiel must be understood to mean that because the priests of Zadok's line had been faithful to God, they alone should appear before God in the priest's office; and because other priests—the priests, that is to say, of Abiathar's line—had been unfaithful and had compromised themselves by idolatry, they were degraded and sent

back to the ranks and made to do the subordinate work appointed unto the Levites. But in no event can Ezekiel's Torah be assigned a place between Deuteronomy and Leviticus, for, as Dr. Green has shown, it contemplates a division of labor among the Levites, that the priest-code says nothing about; and in its limiting the priesthood to the family of Zadok, it represents a stage of differentiation more advanced than that of Leviticus, where the priesthood is allowed the wider area of the family of Aaron. If, therefore, we are to determine the relative ages of Ezekiel's Torah and the priest-code by the philosophy of evolution, we must conclude that the prophet's forty-fourth chapter presupposes the prior existence of Leviticus.

We are able now to understand the relations which critics of different schools must sustain to this hypothesis. Naturalistic critics are obliged to interpret Jewish history so as to support the theory that the Levitical system was a gradual growth. History must be made to support their theory or the theory must be sacrificed. Critics who have no antecedent bias, who interpret the Jewish sacrificial system on the basis of facts furnished by the Old Testament, have no good reason for adopting this hypothesis. For granting that some facts seem to favor it, others as decidedly oppose it; and nothing has been offered in evidence to set aside the presumptions founded on the plain narrative of the Pentateuch. Christian critics, on the other hand, are bound by every consideration to disavow the hypothesis. The priest-code is woven into the historical context of Leviticus. It would be as hard to separate it from that context as it would have been to take the figure of Minerva out of the shield of Achilles. If Moses did not give the law of Leviticus, then the narrative in Leviticus is not true; and if it be not true, it cannot be inspired; for Dr. Robertson Smith has said that all sound apologetic admits that "the proof that a book is credible must precede belief that it is inspired." And that is not all: our Saviour referred the law of Deuteronomy and Leviticus to Moses; the New Testament writers say that Moses gave the law; the entire epistle to the Hebrews proceeds upon this assumption. How is it possible to believe that Christ is Divine and that the New Testament is inspired, and at the same time believe that the Levitical law originated after the exile? This is a hard question. It is a question which no amount of Semitic learning will solve. It is a question upon which none of the departments of theological inquiry can throw any light. Philosophy, which has so often been the advocate of heresy, will accept no retainer from Robertson Smith; and in his dire distress, as we have seen, he invokes the aid of historical jurispru-

dence. His hope of reconciling his allegiance to Christ and his belief in the post-exilic origin of the Levitical priesthood depends upon his ability to prove that the priest-code, as they call it, was a legal fiction. But where in the history of jurisprudence is there another case of legal fiction like this? Did legal fiction ever make a Code? Did it invent the decemviral text? or the Brehon code? or the code of Menu? Legal fiction has modified existing codes, but it never made one. In the present case, however, if Robertson Smith's theory be true, legal fiction has not only invented a code, but it has manufactured a history to match it; it has set the code in operation and fabricated the story of Korah as an illustration of its violation; as represented in Ezra, it has anticipated the doctrine of evolution and invented the Ark and the Tabernacle in order to complete the Levitical pedigree and find a prototype for Solomon's temple. Can the juriconsults of all ages match this case of legal fiction? Is there anything like it in the bench-made law of England or the bar-made law of Rome? Is the Roman doctrine of adoption, is the English doctrine of fine and recovery, is the Indian doctrine of water-supply in the remotest degree analogous to this supposed case of "legal fiction", which, in Dr. Smith's opinion, is to serve such a conciliatory purpose in the history of apologetics? Speaking of the traditional view, Dr. Smith declares, "with all reverence, this is impossible." And with like confidence Dr. Briggs says "Impossible!" in reference to this theory of legal fiction. Whose "impossible" shall we accept?—the "impossible" of Dr. Smith or the "impossible" of Dr. Briggs?

We are glad to avail ourselves of our colleague's strong support in opposing the theory of Dr. Robertson Smith, and it will do no harm if we call attention at this point to the fact that these two representative evangelical critics, both Presbyterians and both antagonizing what is called the traditional view, stand in irreconcilable antagonism to one another. And since traditionalism has had the help first of Dr. Smith and Dr. Briggs in opposing Kuenen and Reuss, and then of Dr. Briggs in opposing Dr. Smith, the simple question seems to be whether traditionalism is able single-handed to grapple with Dr. Briggs himself. The article in which Dr. Briggs presents his views respecting this Pentateuchal question has deservedly attracted attention by reason of the great command of historical material which it evinces. Those who differ most decidedly with Dr. Briggs must acknowledge the erudition evinced by this article, and will own their indebtedness to him for having placed before them with such definiteness of grouping and in such condensed form, a his-

tory of the Higher Criticism which is certainly not to be found elsewhere in the English language. The theory which Dr. Briggs proposes in his article will also receive attention on account of its novelty and its claims. We have no doubt that it will be subjected to very searching examination by critics whose names will stand for authority in the department of Old Testament criticism. But inasmuch as the theory is put forward for the acceptance of Christians in general, and not simply for the consideration of Semitic scholars in particular, no apology need be made for the appearance of a few words in examination of it by one who does not belong to the learned body last named.

The position taken by Dr. Briggs may be roughly represented as a plea in confession and avoidance. He admits the main facts alleged in support of the post-Mosaic origin of the codes, but sets up other facts which neutralize them. Thus, according to the traditional view, the Deuteronomic and Levitical codes were given by Moses, and going into operation immediately, continued in operation, though subject to interruption, throughout the history of Israel. According to Reuss the codes referred to did not enter into the historic life of the Jews until the reign of Josiah and the return from captivity, and cannot, therefore, have been given by Moses. The theory offered by Dr. Briggs adopts half of each of the foregoing theories: Reuss is right in regard to the place of the codes in the national life of the Jews; the traditional view is right in saying the law was given by Moses. It must be observed, however, that while the three groups of facts in support of the post-Mosaic hypothesis are accepted by Dr. Briggs, it is also affirmed by him that traces of the priest-code are found all through the history prior to the exile, and that the theory of Reuss will not explain them. Now, it will occur to any one that the theory of Dr. Briggs must, in the nature of the case, be in unstable equilibrium between the traditional theory on the one hand and the theory of Reuss and Wellhausen on the other. Either of these is consistent: whether Dr. Briggs's theory is consistent remains to be seen. But it would not be strange if it failed to satisfy either its companion on the right or its companion on the left. For the critic of the Reuss school will say, that having admitted all that is claimed as to variations in the codes; having admitted the "discrepancy" between the codes and the history of the Jews; and finally, having admitted the "intermediate position" of Ezekiel's Torah, consistency would require that the post-Mosaic authorship of the codes should also be admitted. To the statement on the part of Dr. Briggs that allusions to Urim and Thummim and the like presup-

pose the existence of the priest-code, the critic might reply that these traces cannot avail to upset a conclusion pointed to by the whole trend of fact, and further, that they can be explained as stages in a process of growth, as elements in the popular religion subsequently embodied in the elaborated *cultus* of the Second Temple. So that it might well be argued that the position taken by Dr. Briggs is one where the Old Testament facts point in one direction and the words of Christ in the opposite; and that, while he affirms the Mosaic origin of the codes, he does so by leaving the inductive basis of Old Testament fact and falling back upon the authoritative word of Christ. The traditionalist will, of course, approve his decision, and honor him for going with the word of Christ rather than with the natural consequences of his admissions: but he will say that there is no need of placing historic fact and Christ's authority at variance in this way; that having avowed his belief in the Mosaic origin of the codes the traditional view as to their place in Jewish history is the logical result; and that there is nothing in the facts, when properly construed, to contradict it.

But let us look more closely at the position taken by Dr. Briggs. The following passages taken from our colleague's article on the Higher Criticism will serve to exhibit his theory:

"It will be observed that these variations are the *chief* features of the ceremonial system. They present the appearance of development from the more simple to the more complex, and in the order, covenant code, Deuteronomic code, and priest code. The traditional theory is certainly at fault here in regarding the Deuteronomic legislation as *secondary* over against the priest code as *primary*. The Deuteronomic code is secondary to the covenant code, but not to the priest code. This fault of the traditional theory had not been overcome by the theories of Eichhorn, Geddes, or DeWette. Here is an advantage of the Reuss theory over all previous ones. We must admit the *order* of development, but we deny that it is necessary to postulate a thousand years to account for this development. A code for the elders and judges of tribes or clans in their various localities; a code for the instruction of the nation as a whole in rhetorical and popular form, and a code for the priests from the holy place as a centre, in the nature of the case, will show a progress from the simple to the more and more complex and elaborate in matters of ritualistic observance. . . . Thus comparing the three codes with the history, we must regard them as three grand ideals in an ascending series from the covenant code through the Deuteronomic code to the priest code, which could not be realized in the historical experience of the nation, owing to their failure to fulfil the underlying *covenant* obligations. . . . The Mosaic legislation was a magnificent *Prophetic ideal*, even more so than the legislation of Ezekiel. This ideal and prophetic element of the Pentateuchal legislation has been buried under the traditional theory of the Pharisees, which has come down as a yoke of bondage and a dark cloud of superstition to the Christian Church. Stripping these off, we behold in the Pentateuch vastly more than it has been the custom to find there. We find not only the Deuteronomic prediction of a prophet like Moses fulfilled in Jesus Christ, but that the *whole law is prophetic of the gospel*. . . . The Mosaic legislation was *delivered* through Moses, but it was enforced only in part, and in several stages of advancement in the historical life and experience of Israel from the conquest to the exile. It was a *divine ideal*, a supernatural revealed instruction, to guide the people of Israel throughout their history, and to lead them to the prophet greater than Moses who was to fulfil and complete his legislation."

These codes, we are told, give evidence of development from the simple to the more complex. This does not mean that they emerged in successive periods of history, for they were practically synchronous. Nor can it mean that in the space of forty years the simple covenant code passed by a process of natural development into the priest-code, remaining fixed forever afterwards. It can only mean that there were three distinct levels of Mosaic legislation in which the covenant code contemplated the simplest, and the priest-code limiting the sacerdotal function to the family of Aaron, the most complex form of worship. This, however, only means that the logical order of the three codes, though not the order in time, is covenant code, people's code, priest-code. And we grant that this presents a very definite conception to our mind. We grant, moreover, that if this view were warranted by the facts, we should see in the converging lines that represent the narrowing area of the sacerdotal function, the prophecy of the great High Priest of our profession. But this view is based altogether upon the assumption that the priesthood in Deuteronomy is co-extensive with the tribe of Levi—a position which cannot be maintained. If, however, we must find a logical relation between these three codes, we shall reach just as satisfactory an arrangement by regarding the priest-code as the determining factor in Jewish history. Its distinction of outer court, holy place, and holy of holies; its hierarchy of Levites, priest, and high priest; its scheme of sacrifices culminating in the great day of atonement; its Sabbath, sabbatical year and year of Jubilee were prophetic of the Christian dispensation. The covenant code in Exodus anticipated the priest-code, and must not be taken as something standing by itself. The people's code in Deuteronomy presupposed the priest-code and makes repeated allusions to it. So considered, the Mosaic system is symmetrical, and though one's insight into its prophetic significance should not go beyond that possessed by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, we should be able even then without the aid of Dr. Briggs's hypothesis to see that "the whole law is prophetic of the gospel."

Again, we are told that the Mosaic legislation was "a divine ideal." What can this mean? Does it mean that by being enacted it became the norm of duty to Israel? In that sense we all believe that it was an ideal. Does it mean that though the norm of duty, the people of Israel by reason of their wickedness did not obey it, or by reason of their political conditions were sometimes unable to obey it? We notice here no point of contrast with the traditional view. And to find such a point of contrast we are obliged to suppose that in speaking of the Mosaic legislation as an ideal, the idea intended to be con-

veyed is that this body of law was a grand scheme of proleptic legislation; that Moses did not intend the people's code and priest-code to go into operation at once, but that he was making legislative provision for the reign of King Josiah and the *cultus* of the Second Temple. This, again, is a conceivable thing, though it is flatly contradicted by history, and is a rebound from the idea of development more pronounced than the most ardent opponent of development could ask for. Again, it is said that this legislation was "a magnificent *prophetic* ideal." But "prophetic" of what? If the writer means to say that it was prophetic of Christ, this is exactly what we all believe; and Dr. Briggs has certainly not given us any stronger reasons for believing this than we had before. Was it prophetic of itself? of its fulfilment that is to say, by the Jewish people? But in this sense all law is prophetic. For in so far as it commands, it predicts; the supposition being, of course, that the sovereign power issuing the command can and will enforce it with appropriate sanctions. We can attach but one meaning to this statement, namely: that inasmuch as the Jewish people in their national life passed through the stages represented by these three codes, we are to regard these codes as prophetic of that history. This, again, is a perfectly conceivable idea, and when first presented to the mind is rather attractive. Yet it is impossible to fit the theory to the facts without meeting with difficulties that rob it of all credibility. If, for example, in the spontaneous life of the Jewish people the religious *cultus* gradually assumed a more complex form; if the reforms of Josiah culminated in the Levitical system, Ezekiel's Torah representing the transition from the one to the other, it might be said that we have in the inspiration which guided the nation, the parallel of the inspiration that gave these prophetic ideals. But here, again, we are beset with the difficulty that the correspondence between the history and the law is based on two assumptions: the assumption that this ascending series is seen in the law, and the assumption that these three stages of development are seen in the history. But as we have seen neither assumption is warranted by fact. Does it not look rather as though the so-called facts were made to fit the theory when it is assumed that after the Mosaic legislation had been lost sight of and cast aside, the Deuteronomic code and it alone was opportunely discovered so as to serve as a programme of reform in Josiah's day; while the priest-code was left in darkness and in obscurity until in Ezra's time it comes to light as the basis of his reform? Dr. Briggs would say that these coincidences were Providential; and so they may have been, but ordinarily Providence is not so mathematical.

In making these criticisms of the theory advocated by Dr. Briggs, we are aware, of course, that the question cannot be settled by *a priori* considerations. The theory may give us a very symmetrical conception of the covenant people, and illustrate the progress of doctrine in the Old Testament, but this does not prove its truth. On the other hand we should not hesitate to treat it with hospitality because it is contrary to our traditional beliefs. We have no beliefs which we are not ready to surrender whenever they can be shown to be false. The question therefore is, whether admitting that Moses gave the three Pentateuchal codes the facts call for a modification of the traditional view regarding their relation to one another, and whether, in any event, the facts will warrant the theory proposed by Dr. Briggs. If as to origin the covenant code, the people's code, and the priest-code were separated from each other by long intervals, it would be very natural to say that these so-called variations were proofs of development; that is to say, the known history of the codes would inevitably color our interpretation of them, and of two possible meanings we should take the one that was most in accord with the idea of development. But when it is held that the three codes all came through Moses, there are no antecedent reasons for supposing that the codes will show traces of development from the simple to the more complex, and it could only be under the stress of exegetical necessity, that we should regard the variations between them in this light. The facts revealed in the codes themselves are all satisfied when the Levitical code is regarded as the central and complete system contemplated by the Exodus code, and presupposed in the Deuteronomic code. The facts call for no new hypothesis in order that the relations of these codes to one another may be better understood. And we certainly cannot accept the hypothesis offered by Dr. Briggs. For, assuming that the priest-code was a prophetic ideal which was not designed to go into immediate operation, how does it happen that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were punished because they had presumed to perform the functions of the priesthood? Nothing can be clearer than that the distinction between the priests and the Levites was known in the wilderness. Korah's rebellion settles the question that the priest-code was not a prophetic ideal having reference to some future day. It proves, too, that the distinction between priests and Levites was not a matter that took definite form in the generation immediately succeeding Moses. We say this because unless some such thought is in the mind of Dr. Briggs, we are at a loss to understand the following sentence:

“This code [the priest-code] is represented as given by Jehovah to Moses or Aaron, or both, but it is not represented as written down by Moses, as is the case with the

two other codes. It claims to be Mosaic legislation, but if we should suppose that Eleazar or some other priest gathered these detailed laws and groups of laws into a code in the time subsequent to the Conquest, all the conditions of variation and development might be explained."

We are not sure that we grasp the full meaning of this passage. But it seems to teach: (1) that the priest-code was given by Jehovah to Moses; (2) that it represents a stage of development in advance of the Deuteronomic code; and (3) that this development might be explained by supposing that the laws embraced in this code "were gathered. . . . into a code" by Eleazar or some one else, in the time subsequent to the Conquest. If we do not misunderstand the passage, then some obvious reflections are admissible. Thus: (a) If the priest-code, as to the features wherein it varies from Deuteronomy, was given by God to Moses, there is no need of supposing that it was "gathered into a code" in the time subsequent to the Conquest, in order to explain these variations. (b) If the priest-code given by God to Moses said nothing about the limitation of the priesthood to the family of Aaron, it will account for the difference between Deuteronomy and Leviticus, to be sure, to suppose that this element in the priest-code was introduced subsequent to the Conquest, but this would only be saying that the priest-code, as to one of its very essential features, was not Mosaic. (c) Unless subsequent to the Conquest elements were introduced into the code that were not in it before, there is no need of supposing Eleazar had anything to do with it. And, if subsequent to the Conquest anything has been introduced into the code, how are we to know how much was introduced, and how long "subsequent to the Conquest" this took place. (d) But while this passage leaves it doubtful what "conditions of variation and development" Dr. Briggs had in his mind, the account of Korah's rebellion proves that the priest-code was in full operation in the wilderness.

PENTATEUCH-ANALYSIS. •

The alleged composite character of the Pentateuch constitutes the third principal reason for denying its Mosaic authorship. And it must be remembered that with those who reject the naturalistic postulates already spoken of and hold that Moses is the author of the codes, this is the only reason. Dr. Briggs evidently thinks that the proof of a fourfold authorship of the Pentateuch is conclusive. Astruc's speculation he calls a "real discovery." Eichhorn's analysis has been "the basis of all critical investigation since his day," and is characterized by the "*invincible* strength of the evidence." It should be observed that by believing in the composite nature of the Pentateuch,

one does not necessarily deny that the literary responsibility of Moses was coextensive with the five books that are called "his writings." For, as Dr. Briggs has said, there is nothing in Pentateuch-analysis to forbid the idea that substantially the entire Pentateuch was produced in the Mosaic age. And yet we cannot overlook the fact that those who are the most strenuous advocates of the documentary and supplementary hypotheses, are at the same time engaged in the reconstruction of Jewish history, and that some of their strongest arguments in support of these hypotheses are based upon their speculative treatment of history. This application of the *a priori* method in history to the Pentateuchal question is not confined to matters pertaining to the order of priority in the documents and the time of their genesis, but it covers the question as to the existence of such documents as well. We have an illustration of the way in which historical postulates control this discussion in the revolution of sentiment respecting the relations of the Jehovist to the Elohist in the Pentateuch. Assuming that two documents described by these names can be traced in the Pentateuch, the opinion formerly was that the Elohist was the older document. This opinion was based on Ex. vi. 2. But inasmuch as the priest-code, an Elohistic writing, is held to be post-exilic, the Elohist is now regarded as the youngest of the four Pentateuchal authors. We do not forget that some consideration is due to the fact that while critics differ respecting the relative ages of the Elohist and the Jehovist, they do agree pretty generally respecting the portions of the Pentateuch to be assigned to these writers. It nevertheless remains true that belief in the late origin of our existing Pentateuch is the presupposition of nearly all Pentateuch-analysis. If the Deuteronomic code dates from the reign of Josiah, and the priest-code from the time of Ezra, the composite character of the Pentateuch is certain. And if a critic comes to the study of the Pentateuch already sure that it is composed of several documents separated from each other by long intervals, one of them being as late as the exile, he will very naturally devote himself to the work of separating the parts that compose the Pentateuch from one another. And if, acting on this assumption, he extends Astruc's hypothesis so as to make it cover the whole Pentateuch, and after making the best use of allusion, anachronism, and difference of style, presents us with an analysis of the Pentateuch under the hypothesis of a fourfold authorship: we shall say that, however much the analysis may testify to the critic's ingenuity, it derives its main support from the historical presuppositions that underlie it; and, therefore, that when these historical presuppositions are wanting, the theory of a fourfold authorship loses a large part of its

support. We agree with Dr. Briggs when he says that in criticising the supplementary and crystallization hypotheses, "we must distinguish between these theories and the facts upon which they are grounded." We agree with him also when he says that we should not be influenced "by the circumstance that the majority of the scholars who have been engaged in this discussion have been Rationalistic or semi-Rationalistic in their religious opinions." Yet it cannot be denied that these writers, with the view which they entertain regarding the Pentateuchal codes and their place in Jewish history, have reasons for believing in the composite character of the Pentateuch which Dr. Briggs cannot have. For, if the codes were Mosaic and the books of the Pentateuch were produced in the Mosaic age, why should they not have been written by Moses himself? The Rationalistic critics must believe in the composite character of the Pentateuch. Their whole theory of Jewish history is bound up with it. Dr. Briggs has no reason for believing it, save on the ground of literary criticism. If any one wishes to satisfy himself as to the place that is given to historical arguments in recent attempts at Pentateuch-analysis, he may read Strack's article, "Pentateuch," in Herzog's *Real-Encyclopädie*; but it is sufficient for us to cite a passage from Merx, quoted by Dr. Briggs, in which that writer, speaking of the fragmentary and documentary hypotheses, says that they "have this in common, that they seek to attain their aim chiefly by the way of literary criticism, and neglect or use only as a subsidiary help the realistic, antiquarian, and historical criticism of the contents of the Pentateuch. This element De Wette chiefly brought into the scientific investigation in his *Kritik der Israelitischen Geschichte*."

It is perfectly clear that critics have no right to the results that follow from a certain view of history while at the same time they reject that view of history. When, therefore, Dr. Briggs affirms that we have in the Pentateuch a fourfold narrative, he must remember the great difference between his position and that of critics like Wellhausen and Dillmann; and that while they can use historical criticism in behalf of the first and second Elohists, the Jehovist, the Deuteronomist and the Redactor, he is shut up to the resources of literary criticism alone. We may go further and say that Dr. Briggs is shut up to a smaller area of testimony than Professor H. P. Smith, for the latter declares his belief that the age of the Pentateuchal documents is altogether uncertain, and from the application which he makes of what he calls his third "axiom" of criticism, it is very natural to believe that he favors the late origin of the Pentateuchal literature. Thus he says: "The writers whose works are now known

to us by the extracts we find in the Pentateuch probably do not differ from others. They will betray the point of religious development at which they stand, even if they have only put on record *what they received by oral tradition.*"

We agree with Professor Smith so far as to say that if the Pentateuchal narrative gave clear evidence of being colored by the conditions of a particular period, this would be strong evidence that it was written in that period. But Professor Smith has not given us an instance of such coloring; and we must remember that it is one thing to have the coloring so marked that it suggests the date of authorship, and quite another thing to have the date of authorship so decided upon that one must needs be on the lookout for some confirmatory coloring. We venture to say that it will be in the latter sense alone that Professor Smith's third "axiom" can play any part in Pentateuch-analysis. In the same way, we should assent in general terms to the second canon of Professor Smith that "the historical circumstances in which an author writes are apt to be reflected with more or less definiteness in his work." And because the Pentateuch gives evidence of such minute acquaintance with Egypt, because the narrative of the exodus and the wilderness journey has so much local coloring, and is so manifestly written by one who was personally familiar with the events described, we say that the narrative cannot be assigned to the time of the monarchy. But it is a poor application of this rule when the prevailing indications of the story are upset by a casual verse, and because some allusion is made to "the king" it is inferred that the document containing it was written in the time of the monarchy. Such trifling matters ought to occasion no serious difficulty to critics who, no matter how many original documents the Pentateuch may be resolved into, can under no circumstances get along without a Redactor. It is, however, with Professor Smith's first "axiom" that we principally have to do. And here we are told that "differences of style imply difference of author."

Considering the question of Pentateuch-analysis from Dr. Briggs's point of view, that is to say, without the benefit of the historical pre-suppositions which influence writers like Wellhausen and Reuss, the question is whether as a simple matter of pure literary criticism the "fourfold narrative" in the Pentateuch can be made out. Dr. Briggs speaks so approvingly of Professor Smith's article that we assume he will not object to have this question tested by Professor Smith's axioms. But only one of these axioms is at all applicable to the problem viewed under the limitations just spoken of. If, there-

fore, there be a fourfold narrative in the Pentateuch, it must be discovered by the aid of "axiom" one: "differences of style imply difference of author." This is the reagent whereby the Pentateuchal chemist is to find a trace of the Elohist in Lev. xxii. 1, of the Jehovist in Lev. xxii. 2 (see Kleinert's tables), and again of the Elohist in Deut. xxxiv. 1-3, the Jehovist in Deut. xxxiv. 4, 6, and the Deuteronomist in Deut. xxxiv. 5, 10-12.

It is not necessary to criticise Prof. Smith's "axiom," for while he states it in such an absolute way, he afterward qualifies it so as to make it apparent that a more uncertain test could hardly be supposed. The rule must be "applied with some limitations, especially in Hebrew," "differences of style are here [in Hebrew] more difficult to discover than elsewhere"; but then when they are discovered "they argue all the more strongly for difference of author." In view of these "limitations" it is a safe rule, we should think, to "disregard fractions of a verse" as Professor Smith has done. Let us place ourselves now in an attitude favorable to the serious contemplation of some great scheme of Pentateuch-analysis. Take Schrader's as described by Dr. Briggs. We are to imagine the Pentateuch as composed originally of two great documents: the annalistic and the theocratic. In each of these earlier written sources were used. The annalist wrote in the reign of David; the other soon after the division of the kingdom. Then in the reign of Jeroboam II., a third prophetic narrator (Jehovist) combined these two documents, at the same time "freely appropriating, and rejecting, and enlarging by numerous additions." And finally, the Deuteronomist composed the law of Moses contained in the Deuteronomic code and became the final Redactor of the Pentateuch in its present form. It becomes one who is not a specialist to speak modestly, for a critic's powers may far transcend those of ordinary men and we may err in judging him by a merely human standard; but let us ask, Is it possible that a critic can take a book like the Pentateuch—having no contemporary literature with which it can be compared—absolutely silent as to an age subsequent to Moses—offering no point of contact with the monarchy—and then on the basis of the single axiom just stated disintegrate it: show what the annalist wrote, and pick out the documentary sources which he has incorporated in his material; do the same with the theocratic writer; then undo the work of the Jehovist, ripping up the seams and showing how he combined these two documents and where he added original material; and after that show us the traces of the Redactor's hand in four of the books, and identify this unknown with the author of Deuteronomy? Is it necessary that one should devote his days and nights to Semitic study in order

that he may earn a right to say that this is inconceivable? Yet if we believe that the codes were Mosaic, and the Pentateuchal documents were Mosaic, literary criticism—the criticism of style is all we have to help us in this analysis. English readers are not unfamiliar with the precarious nature of arguments based on style. Some of us have not forgotten the discussion of the question whether Bacon wrote Shakspeare. Stanley Leathes, himself a Hebraist, makes admirable use of a controversy carried on in the columns of the London *Times* respecting the authorship of a poem, and says :

“ If, some two hundred years after Milton’s death, a number of educated Englishmen, versed in the many known writings of Milton, cannot agree about the authorship of a certain poem upon internal evidence, are we to believe that great weight should be attached to the assertion of a German critic, who some twenty-five centuries after the death of a Hebrew prophet declares positively upon internal evidence alone (for here there is no handwriting to help us) that a series of poems are not by him ? ”

He is speaking of what he calls “ the imaginary figment of a second Isaiah,” but the illustration suits the question in hand equally well.

It would have been better for the theory of a “ fourfold narrative,” so far as we are concerned, had Professor Smith contented himself with the *argumentum ad ignorantiam*, and told us that this is a matter that no one but a critic can understand. For in attempting to make us see the argument upon which criticism relies, he has confirmed our scepticism. We may assume that in illustrating difference of style between Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy, he would not choose the passages in which it is least apparent ; indeed, when we read the parallel passages in which he holds up this difference of style to the gaze of eyes that are kindly supposed to be unfamiliar with the Hebrew text, we take it for granted that we have before us a crucial instance. As such we have studied it according to our lights, and our conclusion is that, judging by the differences apparent in these passages, the critics have most ungrudgingly obeyed the law of parsimony when they assign only four authors to the Pentateuch. Why not forty? For we have no hesitation in saying that by the same rule which gives four authors and a redactor to the Pentateuch, we will undertake to show that four authors and as many redactors were concerned in each of the articles written respectively by Professor Smith and Dr. Briggs.

But let us listen to what specialists have to say upon this subject. Professor Smith admits that “ literary criticism, though a good and delicate tool,” is subject “ to special limitations in the case of Hebrew,” and that “ when carried beyond a certain point it arouses suspicion.” Professor Curtiss tells us there is “ need of great caution

in accepting the analyses of the critics." Dr. Green regards the recent right-about-face as to the order of the Elohist and the Jehovist as "a fresh demonstration of the precarious and inconclusive nature of their entire process of argument." Stanley Leathes pronounces unsatisfactory and unsound the results of criticism "which arise from the application of the Elohistic and Jehovistic theory to the composition of the Pentateuch." "Imaginative" and "unreasonably arbitrary," says Dr. McCaul, speaking of the Elohistic question; and Dr. Harold Browne puts his estimate upon the theory that denies the Mosaic authorship of Genesis when he says: "The romance of modern criticism is as remarkable as its perverse ingenuity."

These testimonies are sufficient to confirm us in the *a priori* belief that it would be absurd to suppose that any reliance can be placed upon an analysis conducted according to a single canon of literary criticism that ends in distributing the responsibility of producing the Pentateuch between four authors and a Redactor. We are still further confirmed in this conclusion by the fact that Astruc and Eichhorn did not attempt to carry their analyses beyond the book of Genesis. It is admitted that there is less evidence in the subsequent books of the Pentateuch for plurality of authorship than is to be found in Genesis. And it was only when criticism wanted evidence that Moses' writings were written in a post-Mosaic age that Astruc's "discovery" of the Jehovist and the Elohist in Genesis was found to serve the purpose of effecting a disintegration of the entire Pentateuch.

Unaided by historical prepossessions, it is safe to say that literary criticism can not carry the distinction between the Jehovist and the Elohist further than Exodus vi. 3. And the value of this is reduced to a *minimum* by Quarry's analysis of the first eleven chapters of Genesis, as any one can see by consulting the first volume of *The Bible Commentary*. If, however, it were held that Moses made use of pre-existing documents in the composition of Genesis, there would be nothing antecedently improbable in this, nor anything to the prejudice of the authority and inspiration of his book. It is a matter, however, of grave question whether Astruc's "discovery" is worthy of "the consent of the vast majority of Biblical scholars," though Dr. Briggs says it has "won" it. Worthy or not, however, it is applicable to Genesis alone, and it can be extended over the whole Pentateuch only by the aid of foregone conclusions respecting the history of the Jewish people which are repudiated by Dr. Briggs.

We cannot regard the theory of a fourfold narrative in the Pentateuch as proved or even as tenable. There is no adequate evidence for

it, and the lack of evidence cannot be supplied by a supposed analogy between this narrative and the fourfold Gospel which we must be allowed to regard as fanciful although it has the support of Delitzsch and Bredenkampf as well as Dr. Briggs.

IV.

If now it were asked why we continue to believe in the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, our answer would embrace the following considerations:—

1. There is no good reason for disbelieving it. Of course, absence of proof that Moses did not write the Pentateuch is no evidence that he did write it. But we may very properly consider it a good reason why a belief already in possession should not be exchanged for disbelief, unless we happen to agree with the author of *Regal-Rome* that "*wisely to disbelieve* is our first grand requisite." We do not accept this *dictum* as a safe canon of historical investigation: whatever may be said for the method of Doubt, there is nothing to justify the method of Disbelief. But even Doubt at the beginning of investigation is a very different thing from Doubt at the end of an investigation, the results of which show no reason for a surrender of a former belief. But we agree with what Professor Beecher has so well said in his powerful criticism of *The Logical Methods of Professor Kucnen* :

"In Biblical studies it is not essential to genuine critical acumen that the student be without convictions as to the divine authority of the Word. The most ruinous of all processes of thought is that in which one undertakes to abandon, arbitrarily, the convictions he has been accustomed to hold, for the sake of allowing fair weight to new evidence."

In the preceding pages we have noticed briefly the arguments against the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch which have most weight at the present day. No notice has been taken of the objections made long ago by Hobbes, Spinoza, and Clericus, because they are nearly all instances of alleged anachronism that can be accounted for in various ways without assuming the post-Mosaic authorship of the books wherein they occur. They were very satisfactorily dealt with by Witsius, whose chapter, *An Moses auctor Pentateuchi*, is well worth reading.

2. Tradition offers very strong presumption in favor of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

Throughout this article no protest has been made against what some seem to regard as a stigmatizing epithet. The view that we advocate is undoubtedly the traditional view, but that is no reason

why it should be a false view. Traditions are often untrue, but this is not the same as saying that tradition has no evidential value. There is room for difference of opinion as to the evidential value of tradition, we concede; and the evidential value of different traditions varies indefinitely according to circumstances. In the case of the New Testament Canon, of course, the period covered by oral tradition is so short, that is to say, we get written testimony as to authorship and authority so early, that the traditional evidence is of the strongest possible kind. Still, it is tradition; and when men enter upon an indiscriminate disparagement of tradition, as some are so disposed to do, they should take care lest they unwittingly deal a blow at the canonicity of the New Testament.

In the present case the tradition respecting the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch has decided evidential value, though, partly through devotion to the Cartesian method of Doubt, partly through the abuses of tradition in the Roman Catholic Church, and partly through the influence of the common-law doctrine of Hearsay, it has been greatly overlooked. Like any other witness, tradition may be impeached, and its credibility lessened or set aside; but we are speaking now of competency, not of credibility. Therefore, in urging the evidential value of tradition, we are making no concession to the claims of Rome, nor shall we have occasion to say anything that might prove embarrassing in a discussion regarding the Isidorian decretals or the epistles of Ignatius. Moreover, we do not presume to criticise the common-law rule excluding hearsay evidence; and yet when writers like Sir George Cornwall Lewis wish to make canons of historical inquiry out of common-law practice, it may be well for us to remember that the exclusion spoken of does not prevail on the continent of Europe, is closely related to the system of trial by jury, and, therefore, is not so common in countries where the Bench tries issues of fact as well as issues of law. And even in common-law the recognized exceptions to this rule prove the absurdity of making it a canon of historical inquiry to exclude all derivative evidence. With as much propriety it might be insisted on that no testimony of an eye-witness ever should be received as historically credible unless it were given under oath and the witness subjected to cross-examination. The common-law gives us two instances of hearsay or traditional evidence germane to our inquiry in the cases of testimony as to public matters beyond the memory of men, and testimony regarding pedigree given by relatives *ante litem motam*. And it is worth noticing, that in the sphere of jurisprudence, where the largest volume of experience has been gathered respecting the qualifications affecting

the truth of human testimony, and where the utmost vigilance is exercised to exclude anything that ought not to affect the minds of a jury, hearsay testimony, which in cases of pedigree is almost always in the form of tradition, is freely allowed. Now, it is not sufficient to say that this is allowed simply because it is the best to be had. For unless experience justifies the expectation that testimony of this kind (either because *ante litem motam* in cases of pedigree there is no motive to falsify, or because in regard to public matters it is comparatively difficult to falsify) is likely to be true, it ought to be admitted. That it is admitted we take to be a tacit induction (which has great weight by reason of the exceptional opportunities of observation which jurists have) that hearsay testimony or tradition in regard to these matters is probably true. If, then, in a system which makes the exclusion of hearsay the rule, this rule is suspended in regard to matters that partake more specifically of the nature of unwritten history, it is very absurd to suppose that history itself can be reduced to the methods of judicial evidence. There is a great difference between judicial proof and historical proof, and a statement might have high historical authority whose legal value would be zero. None of the text-writers has stated this distinction more clearly than Best, who makes the following very pertinent remarks :

“Suppose the events, either sacred or profane, which took place in the first year of the Christian era existed solely in oral tradition, and taking a generation to last thirty years, the account which those who lived at the beginning of the present century had of those events seems to have come to them by hearsay at the *sixtieth* hand—evidence, the value of which in a court of justice would be rightly estimated at zero. And although many of these events having been committed to writing affords a better security for their truth, still the custody and genuineness of the documents in which they are recorded rest, in part at least, on oral tradition. But it is a great mistake to suppose that the real probative force of the evidence of these facts which we possess in the present century rises no higher than this. The fallacy consists in treating each generation as *one* single person, by whom a bare relation of the fact has been handed down to the next, and not as consisting of a number of persons interested in ascertaining its truth, besides wholly overlooking the corroborative proofs supplied by permanent memorials and the acts of men. In short, as a modern historian has well expressed it, ‘The presumption of history, to whose mirror the scattered rays of moral evidence converge, may be irresistible when the legal inference from insulated actions is not only technically but substantially inconclusive.’”

Niebuhr’s method of reconstructing history on the basis of internal evidence through some “occult faculty of historical divination” is undoubtedly wrong. But just as wrong is Sir George Cornewall Lewis’s method of disbelieving every fact alleged until it is substantiated according to the methods of judicial proof. Mure is right when he says that “the more rational principle of research . . . is: that in regard to the remoter ages of any people, where written records fail, where, consequently, the primary condition of all inquiry

is an absence of positive proof, the historical critic is entitled to test the truth or falsehood of national tradition by the standard of speculative historical probability." Let the tradition of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch be tested in this way.

Philo and Josephus speak of Moses as the author of the Pentateuch. Their testimony has been rightly taken to express the belief current among the Jews in the time of Christ. There is not a shadow of reason for believing that they have put into their writings a belief on this subject that was not shared by the community with whom they lived. There is not the slightest reason for saying, as Professor Brown suggests, that this might have been an Alexandrine sentiment which the Palestinian Jews did not share; and we may reply to this suggestion in the words of Dr. Robertson Smith: "That would imply such a schism between the Hellenistic and Palestinian Jews, between the Jews who spoke Greek and those who read Hebrew, as certainly did not exist." But it adds to the evidence that the Jews in Christ's day believed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch to know that the Jews before Christ's day believed this. In the first place, they identified the Law with the Pentateuch; and in the second place, they called the Pentateuch by the name of Moses. Professor Brown does not admit this, yet here again Dr. Robertson Smith, who is no friend to the traditional view, has expressed himself very clearly. Speaking of the time of the Maccabees, he says: "The Jews identified religion with the Law, and the Law with the words of Moses. . . . According to the son of Sirach the sacred Wisdom . . . is identical with the book of the covenant of God most High, the Law enjoined by Moses. . . . What place was left, then, for the Prophets, the Psalms, and the other books? They were inspired and authoritative interpretations and applications of the law of Moses, and nothing more. . . . And so clearly was this the Jewish notion that the same word—*Kabbala*, doctrine traditionally received—is applied indifferently to all the books of the Old Testament except the Pentateuch, and to the oral tradition of the Scribes. The Pentateuch alone is *Mikra* 'reading,' or, as we should call it, 'Scripture.'"

Dr. Robertson Smith being witness then, the Jews in the time of the Maccabees identified the Law with the Pentateuch, and called it the Law of Moses. But Dr. Robertson Smith says that this view of the law goes back to Ezra:

"This Canon of Ezra was the Pentateuch. The people entered into a covenant to keep the law of Moses which Ezra brought with him from Babylon (Ezra vii. 14). That was the establishment of the Pentateuch as the canonical and authoritative book of the Jews, and that is the position it holds ever afterwards. . . . In the strictest sense of the word, the Torah is not merely the Canon of Ezra, but remained the Canon of the Jews ever after."

How this is to be reconciled with the author's doctrine of legal fiction does not concern us here. It is enough for us that the author testifies that in Ezra's day the Law was identical with the Pentateuch, and was called the law of Moses; and that the same thing was true subsequently, as is proved by the Apocrypha. When to this we add the statements of Philo and Josephus referred to a little ago, stronger proof that the Jews in Christ's day believed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch need not be asked for. This, in fact, is so generally conceded, even by those who most strenuously deny the traditional belief—Bleek, for example—that one is surprised that Professor Brown should undertake to challenge it (we refer to his recent articles in the *Independent*) without being able to urge any stronger argument than that the contrary view is possible.

Moreover, if the Law means the Pentateuch in Ezra, why should it mean anything else in Kings and Chronicles and the book of Joshua, where it is repeatedly referred to as "the law of Moses," "the book of Moses," "the book of the law of Moses"? What is to prevent us from believing that the Jews as continuously identified the Torah (= Pentateuch) with Moses from Joshua to Ezra, as from Ezra to Josephus? And though the perpetuation of this belief were entrusted to oral tradition alone, which is not likely, what was there to prevent the Jews from handing down a true account of the writing of that literature which contained the history of their deliverance from bondage as well as their political constitution? Judging the matter by what is known of the Jews respecting their scrupulous care in the transmission of the text of Scripture; considering, too, that if the Pentateuch was written in the time of Ezra or in a time not long prior to his reform, there is no reason why it should have been believed to be written by Moses, and that if it was written long before the time of Ezra there is no one more likely to have written it than Moses: we should say that a tradition that Moses wrote the Pentateuch ought to be regarded as having pretty strong "speculative historical probability."

3. The Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch may be fairly inferred from statements in the Pentateuch and other parts of the Old Testament.

The force of this argument will depend somewhat on the view taken respecting the Old Testament dispensation. Dr. Robertson Smith says of the traditional view of this matter "that it is perfectly logical and consistent in all its parts." That is a great deal more than can be said of his theory, as we have tried to show. According to this "perfectly logical and consistent" theory, then, we hold, for

reasons already stated, that the codes of the Pentateuch were given by Moses. That being the case, there is no reason for believing that the narrative of the Pentateuch was written at a period later than Moses. And if written in Moses' day, why not by Moses himself? And if there is no antecedent reason for saying that the Law (= Pentateuch) was not written by Moses, why should we impose a non natural sense upon the passages that speak of the book of Moses, the book of the law of Moses? Why not take them as teaching what one would naturally suppose them to teach: that the book thus described was written by Moses? If Torah meant Pentateuch in the days of Ezra, who shall say that it did not mean Pentateuch in the days before Ezra? When, therefore, we read in Deuteronomy xxxi. 9 that "Moses wrote this Law," why should we restrict the meaning of Torah to the legislative portion of Deuteronomy? It is conceded that one could not prove the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch from the passages in Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy which speak of Moses as writing or being commanded to write an account of certain transactions. But Professor Brown's treatment of these passages impresses us as an effort to make out a case rather than an inquiry respecting the inference which we should fairly draw from them: We confess that the unjudicial aspect of his writing would have been materially lessened if some of his suggestive parentheses had been omitted. Thus, after referring to the command: "Write this [the defeat of Amalek] in a book," the following caveat is needlessly inserted: "(the absence of any statement that Moses did so is, of course, not to be pressed)." Far more reasonable, it seems to us, it would be to say: 'Here is a book which the Jews call the book of Moses. It consists, for the most part, of a narrative of the wilderness journey and of the Mosaic legislation. It gives evidence of being a contemporaneous record of the events described. Specific passages prove that Moses was commanded from time to time to commit certain accounts to writing. We might antecedently expect that Moses, educated as he was in Egypt as the son of Pharaoh, would be the historian of the Exodus. These specific passages fall in with that expectation and constitute a strong argument for the Mosaic authorship of the entire Torah.' But if it be true that these passages "do not singly or collectively afford any proof whatever that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch," how does it happen that writers like De Wette and others, who are most opposed to the traditional view, are forced to admit that the author of the last four books of the Pentateuch wished at least to be taken for Moses?

4. As has been already said, there is strong internal evidence to

support the belief that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Of course, this internal testimony, apart from the express statements of authorship just referred to, can only prove directly that the last four books of the Pentateuch were coeval with the events described in the narrative. If it will do this, however, it will go far toward establishing the Mosaic authorship of these books. For if the author of the books was one who participated in the experiences of the wilderness, there is not the shadow of a reason for denying or calling in question the belief that imputes the authorship of the Pentateuch to Moses. But, as has been repeatedly shown by Hengstenberg and others, the narrative is full of indications that it was written by an eye-witness of the events described. This is seen in the legislative provisions that had special reference to the wilderness, and in the minute familiarity with Egypt which, say those who have a right to an opinion on the question, is everywhere apparent. So strong a case does Hengstenberg make out of this fact alone, that Rawlinson records in the following terms the impression made upon his own mind by Hengstenberg's argument :

“ That either a person born and bred in Egypt about the time of the Exodus wrote the Pentateuch, or that a writer of a later age elaborately studied the history and antiquities of the Egyptians for the purpose of imposing a forgery on his countrymen, and that he did this with such skill and success that not even modern criticism, with its lynx-eyed perspicacity and immense knowledge of the past, can detect and expose the fraud or point out a single place in which the forger stumbled through ignorance.”

It appears, then, that Moses, educated as he was, could have written the Pentateuch; that the chapters in the history of Israel recorded in this book are so important that we should naturally expect them to be written by a contemporary and with official sanction; that the books show every sign of being written by one who took part in the scenes described; that antecedent probability would point strongly to Moses as the historian of the Exodus; that portions of the Pentateuch are distinctly said to have been written by Moses according to Divine command; that the book of the law of Moses is a common form of expression in the Old Testament; and, finally, that a uniform tradition from Ezra to Josephus assigns the authorship of the Pentateuch to Moses. What stronger argument than this could we ask for? How many ancient books there are, the authorship of which is never called in question, where the proof of authorship will not compare with the evidence already offered to show that Moses wrote the Pentateuch! But we have evidence far more weighty still.

5. In support of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch we urge the testimony of Christ and the writers of the New Testament.

Inasmuch as this argument can have no value except upon the

basis of certain dogmatic presuppositions regarding the Divinity of Christ and the inspiration of the Scriptures, a few words are called for in explanation of our position. For, having said that the doctrine of Inspiration (and we might have said the Divinity of Christ) stands or falls with the results of Criticism, we must be prepared to meet the objections of those who say that the authorship of the Pentateuch is a literary question that should be judged by the canons of literary criticism and not be prejudiced by dogmatic considerations. Taking our own words, in fact, critics of the class referred to may say that very possibly as the result of criticism we shall be obliged to modify our notions of Inspiration, and perhaps even of the attributes of Jesus. They may, therefore, say that statements made by Christ or the New Testament writers to the effect that Moses wrote the Pentateuch are not necessarily conclusive.

Now, it is clear that we must choose between these positions: either (1) that Moses wrote and Christ said that he wrote the Pentateuch; or (2) that Moses did not write though Christ said he did write the Pentateuch; or (3) that Moses did not write the Pentateuch and Christ did not say that he wrote it. If on literary grounds alone, the critic is convinced that Moses is not the author of the Pentateuch, it is evident that his main hope of defending his belief in the Divinity of Christ against the inferential consequences of this conviction is in being able to show that Christ nowhere taught that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. In fact, if Moses did not write the Pentateuch, every Christian is interested in exculpating Jesus from the charge of saying that he wrote it. We are able, therefore, to realize the intellectual exigency in the case of Professor Brown, which has led him to repel with so much earnestness the suggestion that Jesus said that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. And he has managed his case so well, that perhaps it would be difficult to find a jury who would be unanimous in saying that Christ affirmed the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, though it will never be possible for the best advocate to change the general belief that on this subject our Lord agreed with the sentiment prevailing in His day. And so hard to reconcile with Christ's divinity are non-Mosaic authorship on the one hand and Christ's assertion of Mosaic authorship on the other, that one cannot help feeling we are in great peril when our hope of saving the central dogma of Christianity lies mainly in the dexterous use of forensic skill, whereby a construction can be put upon the words of Christ which is foreign to their natural sense.

If, then, the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch be considered as inductively settled, the divinity of Christ can stand related to the

problem only in two ways. Some will defend this doctrine by the method adopted by Professor Brown; but it is to be feared that others not satisfied with such defence will feel that the doctrine itself or at least our understanding of it needs modification to suit the facts. But the problem which critics would put before us as an objection to the line of argument we are about to consider is this: 'How can you use the Divinity of Christ and the Inspiration of the Scriptures to settle facts, which, except as they are contradicted by these dogmas, would go far toward modifying these dogmas? How can you say that criticism conditions belief in Inspiration, and at the same time settle questions of criticism by assuming Inspiration? You say that the writers of the New Testament being inspired, were infallible; but if it turn out that they were wrong about the Pentateuch, they were not infallible. Is it not better to gather from the facts the meaning that we can properly impose on Inspiration, rather than settle facts by assuming Inspiration?' We think we do fair justice to the thought that lies in the minds of many men in this form of statement, and it is worthy of consideration.

It is forgotten by those who use this line of argument that every doctrine as soon as it has recognized value as an induction resting upon a fair amount of evidence, becomes the premiss of a deductive process—its value as a premiss in a deductive process depending, of course, upon its value as the conclusion of a previous inductive inquiry. Thus, assuming (which is, indeed, the real question in debate) that Christ said that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, then if it be true that Christ is Divine, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch seems to follow. If on the other hand it be true that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, the Divinity of Christ seems to be compromised. If each of these premisses were equally supported by independent proof, then we should be in the position where arguing from either deductively the other would be challenged. In other words, we should have a case of irreconcilable antagonism. But surely no Christian will say that for that most difficult negative—the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch—there can be any such evidence as that which can be urged for the positive doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. Putting the critics' case, indeed, in much stronger terms than the facts as we understand them will warrant, we may even then safely say that the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is not supported by an amount of evidence that will warrant us in making it the premiss of a deductive process. On the other hand, the Divine authority of Christ is vouched for by such a consilience of proof, that we can have no hesitation in making it the premiss in a process of reasoning

whereby we say that what contradicts that authority must be wrong. There is a legitimate place, then, for reasoning in this Pentateuchal question, which proceeds upon the assumption that certain doctrines are so settled that they can be made use of as arguments. It is wrong, therefore, to say that the Pentateuchal question is one which dogmatic theologians have nothing to do with, and those who say it seem to have forgotten that where we are dealing with doctrines that are related to one another as well as to the specific facts that support them, we must take account of deduction as well as induction. Such a book as the well-reasoned treatise by Dr. Watts on *The Newer Criticism* fills a very important place in this discussion, and we agree with the author in saying "that it is indispensable that the critic have a thorough acquaintance with the structure of the economy whose closely correlated provisions have been revealed through the agency of the sacred penmen—whose writings furnish not merely grammatical exercises, but theological problems, which are immensely the profoundest with which the human mind has to deal."

Why we believe in the infallible inspiration of the New Testament writers and in the supreme Divinity of Christ, we of course cannot undertake to state here; it is enough to say that the convictions of which we intend to make argumentative use rest upon evidence which has nothing to do with the Pentateuch. And in so using these convictions it is not forgotten that an argument based upon the Divinity of Christ will have weight with many who would not feel it a great strain upon their Christian faith to be persuaded that inspired writers had fallen into error regarding the authorship of the Old Testament. Let us, therefore, deal with the testimony of these inspired writers before considering the specific utterances of our Lord.

We have already shown that there is no possible room for doubt that in the New Testament Moses is treated as the author of the Pentateuchal codes: and that there is conclusive proof that the literary responsibility imputed to Moses in the New Testament covers the whole Pentateuch, however the results of Pentateuch-analysis might require us to interpret that responsibility. But leaving Pentateuch-analysis out of view, and studying the New Testament not to ask what meaning it may possibly have, but what meaning is fairly to be gathered out of a study of all the passages bearing upon the question in hand, there can be little doubt that Moses was regarded by the New Testament writers as being in the strictest sense the author of the Pentateuch. In order that this may be seen it must be remembered that in the time of our Lord the division of the Old Testament into "the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms" was

known and recognized; that whatever doubt there may be as to the books that then composed the Canon, there is no doubt, Dr. Robertson Smith being witness, that the Law was identical with our Pentateuch; and that the Pentateuch was called the law of Moses. In fact, Professor Brown comes dangerously near making a similar admission when speaking of 4 Ezra he says that it "dates from the first Christian century," and is intended to teach "that the Law (= Pentateuch) in the hands," etc. In the first century, then, according to Professor Brown even, Law = Pentateuch.

Of course we are not to look for statements of Mosaic authorship categorically affirming that Moses wrote the whole of each book of the Pentateuch. Such an assertion would never be made unless authorship were challenged or there were some other special reason for technical formality. But we find the name of Moses associated with the Pentateuch in the various forms that would naturally occur to writers who shared a popular belief that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Thus: (a) Passages from the Pentateuch are quoted as containing what Moses said: "This is that Moses who said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you," etc.—Acts vii. 37. It was God who said this first (see Deut. xviii. 18); Moses said it as the author of the book recording it. (b) A quotation from the Pentateuch is referred to in Rom. x. 5 as something that Moses had written: "For Moses describeth [writeth] the righteousness which is of the Law," etc. The reference is to Lev. xviii. 5. But why should the apostle affirm and expect those to whom he wrote to believe that Moses wrote this, unless it be that he believed and knew that the Jews believed that Moses wrote the whole book in which this occurs? What right have we to say that Shakspeare says that "conscience makes cowards of us all," if it be not based upon the conviction that Shakspeare wrote the play in which these words occur? (c) Moses is quoted as an author in Rom. x. 19: "First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people." It is true that these words occur in the song of Moses recorded in Deut. xxxii. 21, but from the reference in the next verse to Isaiah it is fair to suppose that the apostle had in mind not this song, but the entire body of literature that currently went under Moses' name. (d) Moses is repeatedly spoken of in relation to the Law. Jno. i. 17: "The Law came by Moses." Acts xxi. 21: "And they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children," etc. 1 Cor. ix. 9: "For it is written in the law of Moses," etc. Acts xiii. 39: "And by him

all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." It is gratuitous to say that the law spoken of in these passages means the legislative portions of the Pentateuch when we know that "the Law" meant, in the current usage of those days, the whole Pentateuch. (e) The Pentateuch is repeatedly referred to as a collection of writings under the name of Moses. Luke xxiv. 27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded," etc. Acts xv. 21: "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day." 2 Cor. iii. 15: "But even unto this day when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart." Grant, now, that a book may be called by the name of a particular man, because, as Prof. Brown says,—as Hobbes said—as Spinoza said—"he wrote it," or "is the author of an important part of it," or "is the most prominent figure in it"; still we cannot be at a loss to know what sense to put upon these passages. For construing them in the light of the current belief that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and reading them in connection with previous passages where quotations from the Pentateuch are made as quotations from Moses, there is nothing to justify any other supposition than that the New Testament writers shared the popular sentiment that Moses wrote the books that are called by his name. Believing, then, as we do, that the inspired writers were infallibly guided, and believing, moreover, that they may be fairly held to teach that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, we add this argument to those already offered in support of the traditional view.

Let us turn now to the testimony of our Lord. And here again we find the same unmistakable reference to a current belief. The specific laws are quoted out of the Pentateuch as given by Moses. The Pentateuch itself is quoted as the "book of Moses." The accepted division of the Old Testament is recognized in the twice repeated phrase, "Moses and the Prophets." Says our Saviour, "he [Moses] wrote of me"; and He adds, "If ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe My words?" How would these passages strike an unprejudiced reader? Would any one hesitate for a moment to say that our Saviour affirmed the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch if he did not wish to extort another meaning from His words? And now it is our turn to quote Spinoza, for we find him making this apt remark, intended, it is true, to serve a very different purpose, yet suiting our purpose just as well: *Quid cum illis agas, qui nihil vident, nisi quod lubet? quid, inquam, hoc aliud est, quam ipsam Scripturam negare et novam ex proprio cerebro-cudcre?* Men are engaged in a very perilous undertaking when they begin to interpret Scripture by

asking what meaning it will possibly bear, instead of seeking what it may be fairly understood to teach. Very easy is it also to make a plausible argument against the traditional view by taking proof-texts one by one and showing that not any single passage conclusively and without the possibility of doubt proves the traditional belief. This, however, is an old device, and those who know anything of the Arian and Socinian controversies need not be reminded of the fallacy that underlies it. Undeniably true, moreover, it must be confessed, is the statement that because Moses wrote a chapter in Deuteronomy or a verse in Leviticus, it does not necessarily follow that he wrote the whole Pentateuch; that is to say, we cannot logically infer the authorship of the whole from authorship of a part, in the same way that we can demonstrate authorship of a part from authorship of the whole. But in reasonings of this sort we must make some use of common experience, and that experience justifies us in assuming sometimes that the part implies the whole. So at least we reason when we credit the apostolic fathers with a knowledge of the New Testament by reason of scattered passages from the Gospels and Epistles to be found in their writings. It would be interesting, by the way, to see how Professor Brown's method of dealing with quotations would operate in the discussion of Canonicity.

The effort to show that Christ did not teach the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch cannot be regarded as successful. Those who make it forget that texts must be interpreted by history as well as by grammar and lexicon: they forget that psychological presuppositions expressing tacit understandings between speaker and hearer underlie all speech; and that propositions generally convey more meaning than when measured by a merely logical quantification they seem to imply: they forget that the aggregate value of textual proof is something different from the sum of the separate values of individual texts; that the texts relied on to prove the traditional view are not links in a chain where the weakest represents the strength of the cable; and that the traditional view is not overthrown when the texts that seem to teach it have been sorted, when some have been thrown aside as worthless, when others are found to be capable of bearing a meaning different from the one ordinarily given them, and it is concluded that no single text is strong enough to bear the strain imposed upon it by the traditional interpretation: and finally they forget that they do not tell us what the words of Christ *do mean when taken together*, in attempting to show us what these same words *may mean when studied one by one*.

It is not surprising, however, that this effort should be earnestly made;

for an element of extreme perplexity would be introduced into the Pentateuchal problem were we required to believe that Moses did not write, though our Saviour said he did write the books that are called by his name. If by a fair examination of facts one felt himself obliged to hold these two conflicting views, and still in his heart were loyal to his Lord, we should be disposed to allow him every personal advantage that his apologetic could afford. Yet we cannot fail to see the endless difficulties into which one must be led by these beliefs. How could Christ say or imply that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, if Moses did not write it? Was He ignorant? How then can He be God? Some may answer this latter question by referring to the limitations of His finite human nature, or they may take refuge in some of the Kenotic theories of His Person. But the voice of Christendom will repel the suggestion of ignorance as an insult to the Divine majesty of Jesus. And if it were possible to suppress emotion and calmly ask whether a mistake about Moses were compatible with the Divinity of our Lord, if it were possible even to hold that the Divinity of Christ would not be compromised by supposing that He did not know who wrote the Pentateuch, there would arise the further question respecting the value of Inspiration. For how much can we depend upon it if it were not sufficient to keep Him to whom the Spirit was not given by measure from falling into the common errors of His day?

Or shall we say that Jesus knew that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, but that He accommodated His language to popular conceptions. Professor Brown looks upon this as at least a not untenable hypothesis, and accordingly says:

“If, indeed, it should ever appear that Jesus, for the purpose of avoiding a strife with the Jews which might have obstructed His work, and in which no principle was at stake, used His absolute discretion in omitting to make any statement as to the authorship of the Pentateuch, because He knew the popular belief to be false, while He freely and rightly appealed to Moses' *authority* whenever it could serve His purpose, we could only admire His wise caution.”

If “wise caution” is something to be admired in Christ it is also something that becomes the students of the Higher Criticism, especially when their studies lead them to the discussion of themes as serious as this. We cannot assent to Professor Brown's hypothetical concession, because we cannot help seeing the logical consequences with which that concession is attended. For if the reference to Moses on the part of our Lord were capable of being explained as an accommodation to popular belief, why might we not explain other features in His earthly life in the same way? How do we know that His doctrine of the kingdom of God was not borrowed from the pop-

ular Messianic conception for the purpose of giving form to His own ethical teaching? How do we know that He did not fall in with the current notion regarding demoniacal possessions while understanding all the time that there was a natural explanation of these phenomena? How do we know that the doctrine of atonement, as He taught it, was anything more than the adaptation of His teaching to the current system of sacrifices, "wise caution" teaching Him that it was better to utilize these ready-made conceptions as the vehicles of His own ethical system than shock the religious sentiment of the age by a premature attack upon an ancient faith? These are only some of the questions that start up when the accommodation theory is suggested as a possible explanation of our Lord's reference to Moses.

But we need not dwell longer upon this attempt to defend the conduct of our Lord, for we prefer to believe that it calls for no defence. We do not undertake to say how near the precipice our Jehus of Criticism may wisely drive; but we shall choose the company of those who value safety more than skill and who in the exercise of a "wise caution" have learned to leave a wide margin. We believe that the Law was given to Moses by Jehovah and not imputed to him by "legal fiction." We believe that the Pentateuchal codes were meant for the immediate use of the Israelites in the wilderness and that they were not merely "prophetic ideals." We put the words of Jesus above the inductions of the critics, and are sure that the responsibility of Moses for the books that are called by his name must be understood according to the plain implication of the passage which speaks of them as "his writings." We do not believe in the composite character of the Pentateuch; and if we did we should have no confidence in the critical omniscience that pretends to determine within "fractions of a verse" what part was written by the Jehovist, what by the Elohist and the Deuteronomist, and where the handi-work of the Redactor is visible. We believe that Moses wrote substantially the whole Pentateuch. This view is in harmony with antecedent probability, with the presumptions of tradition, with the internal testimony of the books, with the unvarying voice of Inspiration, with the words of Christ. And after all that has been said, the leading reason in support of the contrary idea seems to be founded on the deep conviction that God cannot work miracles and the critics can.

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