

Israelites had an old outstanding claim upon the land which they had seized,"¹

Abraham having bought Hebron, and Jacob Shechem, these two places being the chief centres of royalty in later days for the kingdoms of Judah and of Ephraim.

But the record was of slow growth. After the completion of the original story, in the early years probably of Solomon,

"the work remained untouched, and perhaps lay deposited beside the ark in the Temple till the days of Jeremiah (the Deuteronomist), who, as a priest himself, his father Hilkiah being also, very possibly, the chief priest at the time, would in that case have had free access to this venerable manuscript, and (as we suppose) retouched and enlarged it throughout in his own prophetic style, and ultimately inserted the Law (in the fifth and following chapters of Deuteronomy, as 'the words of the covenant which Jehovah commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab'),"

the discovery of which led to Josiah's reformation. In such records there must be much matter for instruction, and not a little, it may be, for edification; but the lessons enforced by it must be absolutely antagonistic with the results of traditional interpretation. For any dogma, for any ritual or ceremonial, for any forms of religious or civil government, these writings become altogether worthless; and with the demonstration of the unhistorical character of all these writings the stories of marvellous incidents and prodigies are swept away. That they should disappear is a cause for thankfulness, not for regret. There will be no healthy thought and life in Christendom until Christians generally are convinced, in the words of Mr. Goldwin Smith, that, "if a religion is to be judged not by its contents but by its evidences, it must be

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VI. p. 615.

the lowest and vilest religion in the world.”¹ The examination of the record has shown the traditional idol to be, like the serpent thrown down by Hezekiah, Nehushtan, a thing of brass.

“There is,” the Bishop emphatically insists, “no infallible book for our guidance, as there is no infallible Church, or infallible man. The Father of Spirits has not willed it thus, who knows best what is needed for each individual soul, as well as for that of the race.”²

The consequences are momentous indeed. The foundations of ceremonial and priestly religion are laid in the Levitical legislation; with the exposition of the true nature and origin of that law the system raised on it crumbles to its base, and a vista is opened before us along which our eye is carried through a series of reforms not acceptable to traditionalists. The fact is that the snake of tradition has been scotched, not killed. The Bishop quotes some words of Bishop Harold Browne in reference to Church of England schools.

“We have not,” says Bishop Browne, “troubled their little brains, as some people seem to think, with all kinds of dogmatic theology, though, by the by, I don’t think people know what dogmatic theology means. The fact that there is a God, is dogmatic theology. The facts that there is a heaven, a hell, that our Saviour came down to save us,—that is dogmatic theology. But we have not been teaching them the meaning of Bishops and the Church; and if I went into our Sunday schools, and asked, What is the office of a Bishop? the children would lift up their eyes and hands and say, What does a Bishop mean?”³

The statement is in the highest degree doubtful; but if it be true, then it would be altogether better that the children should have some knowledge of early Church history, than

¹ See above, p. 363.

² *Pentateuch*, Part VI. p. 626.

³ *Ib.* p. 641.

that they should learn what Bishop Browne is pleased to call the dogmas of a heaven and a hell, and the descent of a Saviour to save—terms which, for all we know, may be left (as they often are left) undefined, but of which the true meaning was expressed before the Norman Conquest in the good old English which spoke of Christ as the “Healer” and of His work as “healing” or making sound and whole. In sober truth, no terms can be kept with this language of Bishop Browne. It is equivocal, misleading, and false. The office of the Bishop may be so explained as to bring in the notion of apostolical succession “with its whole fitting apparatus of the sacrificing priest and the sacramental system;” and the dogma, as Bishop Browne terms it, of a heaven and a hell is used to set forth not merely a righteous judgement “to which the conscience of a child will witness as surely as does the conscience of each one of us,” but

“the everlasting torments of hell fire, that horrible dogma, which dooms to never-ending irremediable woe the vast majority of men, women, and children, with whom they meet upon their daily pathway; that blasphemous dogma, which makes the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, into a very Moloch, reigning through endless ages in glory and blessedness, while shrieks and groans are ever resounding from the bottomless abyss,—the cries of young children, as Bishop Wilberforce teaches, and, as some Fathers of the Church have held, of little innocent babes among the rest.”

This term “dogmatic theology” is utterly absurd. It applies to nothing but the result of human debates, and these do not, and cannot, affect the realities of the eternal world in which alone is our true life now and always. To tell children, or to tell heathens, that they have a Father, a Redeemer or Healer, and a Sanctifier, who is no respecter of persons, and whose will is that sin shall be destroyed in all, is not to teach

dogma, or to impose on them the yoke of a dogmatic theology. But so soon as we begin to deal in propositions and demand assent to formulæ (it matters not of what kind), the weight of this yoke at once makes itself felt ; and sooner or later the result must be revolt, not against the Law or the Love of God, but against the system which has withheld men from seeing the righteousness and the light in which alone they can have life.

Eight years more passed away before the Bishop was able to bring his long and arduous examination of the Pentateuch to an end by the publication of his Seventh Part. The very nature of the inquiry, and the conditions under which he worked, made it most difficult, if not impossible, for him to avoid a certain amount of repetition and some appearance of prolixity. Whatever defects of this kind may be seen in his volumes, it is scarcely necessary to offer an apology for them. The superficial reader is not likely to discern them ; the genuine student will not only not be offended by them, but will at once understand why inferences or conclusions, hinted at rather than worked out in the earlier Parts, called for more systematic elaboration later on, and why in the later volumes it became necessary to give the full evidence for judgements which had been impugned as being unwarranted or arbitrary. This remark applies especially to the later historical books of the Old Testament, on which a flood of light was poured by the analysis given in the Seventh and last Part of the Bishop's work. No part of his task, probably, has been more fruitful. It has shown us that in almost every instance the additions made by the chronicler to the narratives in Samuel and Kings have been made in the interest of the later ecclesiastical system ; and we are further, in the Bishop's words, enabled,

“ to trace his hand in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and even in the Chaldee parts of Ezra, and to see that not only

the whole of the narrative in Ezra, and much of it in Nehemiah, but also decrees ascribed to Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, letters purporting to come from Tatnai and Artaxerxes, the prayer of Ezra, and the Levite's prayer in Nehemiah, are all pure inventions of the chronicler, as much so as the letters of Hiram, Elijah, Hezekiah, the speeches of David, Abijah, Jehoshaphat, Azariah, Hezekiah, the prayers of David, Asa, and Jehoshaphat, the prophecies of Shemaiah, Azariah, Hanani, Jehu, Jahaziel, Zechariah, Obed, in the Books of Chronicles, all of which exhibit plainly the chronicler's own peculiar style, just exactly as all the speeches ascribed to different persons in Homer or Virgil, Thucydides or Tacitus, exhibit one and the same style, viz. that of the Greek or Roman writer to whose imagination they are due."¹

The deliberate modification or invention of historical incidents is an act on which it is not easy to look with indulgence. But it is the fault of the traditionalists if a harder measure is dealt out to the chronicler than to other historians whose veracity is supposed by many to lie beyond reach of question. A large majority of Greek scholars would probably put the trustworthiness of the Hebrew chronicler far below the level of that of Thucydides; and yet in the pages of the latter we have in the case of Themistokles a history not less garbled than that of the priests and Levites in Chronicles, and also the insertion of documents which are, beyond doubt, sheer forgeries, and as to which the historian, even if he was not himself the forger, cannot be acquitted of all responsibility. There is no difficulty in the supposition that the chronicler may have had access to the text of a published decree of the Persian Sovereign. The only question is as to the fact of publication. It is quite otherwise when Thucydides professes to give us the exact text of a letter written by Themistokles to Artaxerxes. He tells us that Themistokles

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. xii.

wrote the letter. If he did so, the original must have gone to Artaxerxes. In this case we must (as I have had to say elsewhere)¹ suppose one of three things—either Themistokles kept a copy of it, or Artaxerxes sent back the original, or allowed a transcript to be made. The last degree of unlikelihood attaches to all these suppositions. The original could be recovered only from the archives of Sousa, and, apart from the unlikelihood that such documents would be preserved at all, there is the far greater unlikelihood that they would ever be given up to the king's enemies. If these alternatives fail us, one conclusion only is possible—namely, that the letter, as we have it, is a forgery. But this forgery is made to further a falsification of history as glaring as any of which the chronicler could be guilty; and it is only accident which has made the results of his fabrication more mischievous than those of the fictions to which Thucydides gave the sanction of his great name.

Since the publication of the Bishop's Sixth Part, the long-promised *Speaker's Commentary* has been given to the world. Of this we shall have to speak more particularly further on. For the present we need remark only some of the admissions which show the absurdity of Bishop Gray's or Bishop Wilberforce's notion of the futility or the childishness of Bishop Colenso's criticisms. These admissions are indeed fatal to the popular traditional views, and therefore, although they come from critics with an established orthodox reputation, they have been kept carefully out of sight by the so-called orthodox preachers and teachers. Thus we have the admission

“that we have no correct record of the Ten Commandments, as supposed to have been uttered by the Divine Voice on Mount Sinai, in either of the two Decalogues given in the Pentateuch, which ‘differ from each other in several weighty

¹ *Lives of Greek Statesmen*, i. p. 191.

particulars,' especially in the reason assigned for observing the Sabbath." ¹

We have, further, the suggestion that all the Ten Commandments may originally have been uttered "in the same terse and simple form, such as would be most suitable for recollection," which appears in the first, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth; although both in Exodus and Deuteronomy the Decalogue is put forth, with all its amplifications, as the actual words of Jehovah on Sinai, and although the assigning of a terse and simple form to a Divine utterance involves, on examination, a wonderful profanity. Still more significant is the assumption throughout this *Commentary* that, except in respect of the Decalogue, Moses himself was the lawgiver, and that the phrase "the Lord spake unto Moses" "does not imply that there was any oral communication," although, if there be oral communication to the extent of half a dozen or of ten sentences, it is as easy to imagine the like communication to the extent of a folio volume. Nor is this all. The *Commentary* declares that Moses simply prescribed certain laws and institutions for his people, which he had not unfrequently adopted from existing and ancient customs. One of the most prominent instances of such legislation is the loathsome and utterly futile law of jealousy, given in the fifth chapter of Numbers. This law is introduced as being not less emphatically "spoken by Jehovah to Moses" than any other, and yet the *Commentary* says, point blank, that

"this, like several other ordinances, was adopted by Moses from existing and probably very ancient and widespread *superstitions*." ²

Nothing more than this is wanted. These words should be written up in letters of gold (if such a fancy may for a moment

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. xiv.

² *Ib.* p. xv.

be allowed) for all men to see not only that there was a full justification for the work undertaken by the Bishop of Natal, but that this work was triumphantly accomplished. If it had not been for that work, it is not a matter of doubt, it is a certainty, that these admissions in the *Commentary* would not have been made. The only difference between the Bishop and the *Commentary* is this, that the former worked and spoke candidly and straightforwardly, while the latter makes admissions, not less fatal to all the traditional notions, and allows them to appear along with phrases which seem to lend a weak colour to those notions, while really they lend none. But admissions and qualifications are often of not less value than direct acknowledgments of defeat, and these admissions of the *Commentary* must be kept in the forefront, as justifying the application of the same method to the narratives of the New Testament as well as of the Old.

It is quite impossible to lay too much stress on this matter. The writer in the *Speaker's Commentary* has treated as derived from popular practices, or from popular superstitions, precepts which are said to come straight from God Himself. If these do not come from God, are there any others for which this claim can be urged? The commentators have used a two-edged sword, and their weapon has left them helpless. There is no so-called rationalistic conclusion which is not thoroughly justified by their language. This horrible law of jealousy, which, as we read it in the Book of Numbers, excites an irrepressible loathing, was not peculiar to the Jewish or Canaanitish tribes. A similar ordeal has been, and perhaps is still, in vogue in Western Africa, and, it may be, in other parts of the world. Of this the commentator is quite aware, for he says:—

“There is no evidence to show whether this usage sprang from imitation of the Law of Moses, or whether Moses himself

in this, as in other things, engrafted his ordinances on a previously existing custom,"

that is, upon a "superstition," which, according to the record, was laid down or sanctioned by Jehovah Himself.¹

In the same story the regulations for burnt-offerings and drink-offerings are said in the Book of Numbers (xxvii. 3, 8) to proceed directly from God; but the commentator has no hesitation in assigning the customs of other nations as their origin, and in saying that

"this practice would *naturally betray* itself in the language now employed by Moses,"

or rather, according to the record, by God Himself.²

Still more, the commentators admit that others besides Moses may have had a share in the legislation which bears his name.

"It is," we are told, "by no means unlikely that there are insertions of a later date, which were written or sanctioned by the prophets and holy men, who *after the Captivity* arranged and edited the Scriptures of the Old Testament."

The likelihood here asserted is nothing less than this, that these holy men inserted in the Pentateuch passages which they themselves had written, but which they *meant* to be regarded by their countrymen in all future ages as portions of a Divine revelation made of old to Moses;³ and this is admitted in a *Commentary*, which, it is no breach of charity to say, was designed to exhibit the critical method of the Bishop of Natal as childish, and his conclusions as absurd. With irresistible force the *Speaker's Commentary* has proclaimed that his method and conclusions are not merely not childish and absurd, but are indispensable in any search

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. xv.

² *Ib.* p. xvi.

³ *Ib.*

which is to guide us to the truth of facts. Critics do not and will not agree in everything. If they did, we should be compelled to infer that they were working and writing in collusion; but the substantial harmony reached by scholars during the present century is astonishing, and the agreement between the Bishop and Dr. Kalisch is in a special degree satisfactory. Approaching the subject from a very different point of view, the latter was brought to the conclusion that the laws in Leviticus are of later origin than the corresponding enactments in Deuteronomy. On this point hinges, he insists, the true insight, not only into the composition of the Pentateuch, but into the entire history of Hebrew theology. Hence, the Book of Leviticus did not exist, or, at least, was not regarded as authoritative, in the earlier years of the Babylonish Captivity; and the final revision of Leviticus and of the Pentateuch must be placed probably at 400 B.C.¹ It is also highly instructive, and to the Bishop it was most satisfactory, to find Kalisch asserting that the author of the "book of Balaam" was not the Jehovist, or Elohist, or final compiler of the Book of Numbers, but one of the greatest seers of Israel in the fresh and vigorous time of David, who wrote after the conquest of Moab, "inspired by those glorious triumphs which the last prophecy introduces with such peculiar power and pride." But the episode about the ass Dr. Kalisch regards as a later interpolation, and "the more so" as that passage interrupts the thread of the narrative, destroys the unity and symmetry of the conception, and is, in spirit and form, as a whole and in its details, strikingly different from the main portion.² The Bishop could now speak of

"the very late post-exilic origin of the Levitical legislation of the Pentateuch and Joshua, including both the laws and the historical narrative connected with them, . . . as an

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. xxvi.

² *Ib.* p. xxvii.

established fact. . . . In short, not only are the composite character of Genesis and its non-Mosaic origin ascertained as fully by the researches of modern critical science, as the main facts of modern geological or astronomical science, . . . but the composition of Deuteronomy in the age of Josiah, and of the Levitical legislation during and after the Captivity, as also the fictitious character of the chronicler's variations and modifications of the older history in Samuel and Kings, are points upon which there may be said to be among Biblical scholars almost unanimous agreement, whatever differences may still exist as to minor details."¹

Among these questions, of secondary importance would be the age to be assigned to the Jehovist. The age of the Elohist is a more serious consideration. The reasons which led the Bishop to fix it in the life-time of Samuel have been already laid with all practicable fulness before the reader. The arguments which induced Kuenen to bring it down to the Babylonish Captivity, or even to a later period, the Bishop gave with impartial exactness in the Appendix (125) to his Sixth Part. In the Seventh he returns (Appendix, 152) to the same inquiry, and with the same results. Even this scrutiny, whatever be the issue, cannot affect the one question of the non-Mosaic and non-historical character of the Pentateuch which, at starting, the Bishop set himself to answer. But on the whole he might well say that the theory rested on insufficient evidence, while the indications of the earlier composition of the Elohist narrative seem very strong indeed.² For English students they can scarcely fail to be conclusive.

We have seen the havoc wrought by writers in the *Speaker's Commentary* on the traditional beliefs. But some effort is made to uphold these beliefs in the modified shape, that Moses originally published the Decalogue in an abridged form (that is, that he on his own responsibility abridged the utterances

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. xxix.

² *Ib.* p. xxxi.

of God Himself), and therefore that he communicated to them the name Jehovah as that of the God of Israel, and must be supposed to have exhibited great energy and ability in ruling and instructing his people.¹ To this (the traditional ground being professedly abandoned on both sides) the reply is, that the original story did not contain the Ten Precepts, that there is positively no room for them, as the story goes on continuously in such a way as to show that the Decalogue could not have been inserted in the original narrative, and that it is really the work of the Deuteronomist. But there remains a further inference of no small moment.

“If Moses did not publish the Decalogue in *any* form (and no prophet makes the least allusion to it), and if he was not the author of either the Deuteronomistic or the Levitical legislation, it is obvious that his action as a legislator, as exhibited in the original story, will be reduced within very narrow limits, and will be confined, in fact, to the series of primitive laws, the ‘words and judgements,’ in Exodus xxii. 22, which must have been written, originally, in the land of Canaan.”²

In other words, even in the framing of these, he could have had only a small part; and therefore the Bishop found himself constrained to add

“that it will advance greatly the criticism of the Pentateuch, and assist materially towards forming a true conception as to the civil and religious history of the Hebrew people, if the notion of the activity of Moses is altogether abandoned, and the name regarded as merely that of the imaginary leader of the people out of Egypt—a personage quite as shadowy and unhistorical as Æneas in the history of Rome or our own King Arthur.”³

Such was his mature conclusion after the lapse of seven years from the publication of Part VI. During this interval

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. xxxi.

² *Ib.* p. xxxii.

³ *Ib.*; see also above, p. 649.

he had "gone over the ground again and again," with respect to every part of his criticisms. On some of the questions brought up by the inquiry critics were still divided. On the great points they were at one. But he felt assured that

"no amount of thought and labour will be grudged, or will be reckoned as wasted, by those who have been closely engaged in this part of the work, which shall help in any degree to clear the way for the more thorough knowledge of the composition of the Pentateuch, and the age and authorship of its different portions—upon which depends so much the progress of true Christianity in the world, the work of missions among Mohammedans, Parsees, Buddhists, and heathens, and (in one word) the future religion of the human race."¹

For the purposes of scholarship and criticism, the controversy had thus been brought to an end: and that this should in so short a time have been the result shows that his work was indeed an astonishing achievement. But the *Speaker's Commentary*, which made concessions decisive of the real matters in debate, made use at the same time of language under cover of which it was hoped that the old beliefs might yet be kept up amongst the multitudes, although in the eyes of the learned they had been utterly discredited. It may be said that such a method is highly disingenuous. If it be so, they who have practised it have themselves only to thank for the imputation. Assuredly their utterances do not redound altogether to their honour; but they will work immense good for generations yet to come. The orthodox students of the next century will start with the declarations made by such a writer as Bishop Lord Arthur Harvey, and will in greater or less degree carry them out to their logical consequences. From him they will learn that there is little difficulty as to the authorship of the two Books of Kings, inasmuch as

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. xxxiv.

“the Jewish tradition which ascribes them to Jeremiah is borne out by the strongest internal evidence, in addition to that of the language.”¹

These books, he urges, have a general character of trustworthiness ; but their chronological details “are inexplicable and frequently contradictory.” The very first date, that of the foundation of Solomon’s Temple, is “manifestly erroneous,” and the evidence of its being an interpolation is wonderfully strong. But if so, Bishop Harvey adds,

“it must have been inserted by a professed chronologist, whose object was to reduce the Scripture history to an exact system of chronology,”

and these insertions, he holds,

“are the work of a much later hand, or hands, than the books themselves.”

These expressions, the Bishop of Natal tells us, are rather strong to come with the sanction of theologians, some of whom had declared that

“all our hopes for eternity, the very foundation of our faith, our nearest and dearest consolations, are taken from us, if one line of that sacred book be declared to be unfaithful and untrustworthy.”

And here the Bishop of Bath and Wells has rejected scores of sentences as interpolations, and as interpolations of matter which is wrong, erroneous, and misleading.² This chronologist in Graf’s judgement lived in Josiah’s time. Bishop Harvey identifies him with the Deuteronomist. The two views are easily reconciled, if, as Bishop Colenso has shown, “the Deuteronomist was Jeremiah himself.”³ The fact of this Deuteronomistic revision removes many difficulties which press on readers who regard the whole narrative as the composition of

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 5.

² *Ib.* p. 11.

³ *Ib.* p. 12.

a single historian. It explains the shocking contrast between the devout advice to Solomon put into David's mouth by the Deuteronomist, and the bloody suggestions of kingcraft with reference to Joab and Shimei in the older narrative.¹ The insertions and additions thus made to the original story in the Books of Kings are traced by the Bishop with wonderful patience and skill, to the immense benefit of all who do not care for edification derived from unintelligible or impossible narratives. The difficulties thus removed have been caused by efforts to whitewash or exalt the character of personages in the history. According to the Deuteronomist, Solomon fell into idolatry, and multiplied his wives, in his old age. In the older record there is no sign of the early piety from which he is supposed to have declined.

"It fact, it is clear," the Bishop says, "that he must have married Naamah the Ammonitess, the mother of Rehoboam, in David's life-time, if Solomon reigned forty years, and Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign. He doubtless married this heathen wife . . . with David's consent; and probably, while still young, added many more such heathen wives to this one,—in all which there is nothing surprising, since the Deuteronomistic laws which forbid such marriages were not yet written. . . . In short, here we have another striking instance of the manner in which the history of Israel is rendered perplexed and contradictory by later additions which have been supposed to be portions of the original narrative."²

The authorship of these books (the work which has brought them into their present shape) may be ascribed, in the Bishop's belief, in the full sense of the word, to Jeremiah,

"whose hand may be traced, not merely, 'selecting, collecting, modernising,' but *writing* history throughout;"³

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 13.

² *Ib.* p. 41.

³ *Ib.* p. 45.

and in truth, when we see brought together the whole work of this earnest and devoted servant of God, we stand amazed at his energy and perseverance. His hand is seen almost everywhere, and (whatever judgement our notions of literary honesty may lead us to form of him) always with the same purpose of weakening and crushing superstition, and raising his countrymen to higher and purer thoughts of God. But everywhere, also, he had something to work upon, and he often refers to older records, some of which are undoubtedly embodied in the present Book of Judges. In this genuine old matter, some of the most striking portions of the book are not to be included. The vigour and the beauty of the song of Deborah have led even critics so sagacious as Kuenen to speak of it as certainly genuine ; but, as the Bishop remarks, this argument would establish the genuineness of Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, or, at least, of some ancient source from which they were translated.¹ This song certainly points to the golden age of Hebrew literature, in David's time, and the fact that its opening verses are almost verbally identical with those of the 68th Psalm cannot be disputed. It is certain that one of these passages has been copied from the other, and it was the Bishop's belief that the Psalm must be the older composition.²

But this song of Deborah, although brought down to a time later than that of the 68th Psalm, still describes a condition of society entirely different from that which the chronicler would have us suppose was then already ancient. It names all the other tribes except Judah and Simeon, but makes not even an allusion to the tribe of Levi or the Aaronic priesthood, to the ark or to the tabernacle. Nor throughout the book is there any sign of the priests or Levites acting as judges (in accordance with Deuteronomy xvii. 8-13). Phinehas is indeed once mentioned, but this is an interpolated passage

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 79.

² *Ib.* p. 81 ; see also above, p. 539.

belonging most probably to the later legislation ; and, as the Bishop remarks, if so eminent a person was really then living, it is strange that there is no sign of his activity in Deborah's song, or in any other part of the book.¹ Of Levites, the only two mentioned are homeless vagabonds. The story of Jephthah points indubitably to a time during which human sacrifices were neither rare nor reprobated.² This of itself would not go for much, for prophet after prophet down to the time of the Captivity mourns over the slaughter of first-borns offered to Moloch ; but although sacrifices of adults were sometimes made, the holocausts were no doubt generally of infants, and the burning of Jephthah's daughter would point therefore to a somewhat earlier age. The absurd notion that she was left to live, but condemned to perpetual virginity, really deserves no notice.³ The idea that women were so devoted in Israel is a mere assumption. Whenever women are mentioned in connexion with the service of the sanctuary, their functions are strictly those of the Hierodouloi of Corinth.

For the due understanding of the Hebrew history it is a most unfortunate thing that the words Elohim and Jehovah should not have been retained, wherever they occur, without translation in the English version. The words "God" and "Lord" convey to us no contrast, and no very definite distinction ; and by the substitution of these words the story of the Book of Ruth becomes strangely indistinct. That book, as showing no acquaintance with the Deuteronomistic legislation, must be older than the age of Josiah, and it belongs to a time when religion was still strictly local. Thus, Naomi takes it for granted that Orpah in going back to her people will return to her Elohim, while Ruth declares that Naomi's people shall be her people, and therefore Naomi's Elohim her Elohim.⁴ The Elohim of Israel is a national deity, in no other way distin-

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 86.

² See above, p. 607.

³ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 93.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 106.

guished from the Elohim of the nations round about. A few, a very few, rose above this belief to the conception of a Divine Ruler ordering and sustaining all things by the word of His power ; but the idea that the Semitic nations were marked by any special monotheistic tendencies, while the tendency of the Aryan races was to polytheism, is the merest superstition. It is an assumption which goes in the teeth of facts, and simply reverses the truth.

The book which bears the name of Samuel points to a state of society in every way unlike that which is depicted by the chronicler as existing in his day. Eli and his two sons appear to have been the only priests at Shiloh. Here there was a house of Jehovah, which is called the tent of meeting ; but as it had door-posts and doors it cannot have been the tent described in Exodus xxvi.-xxxvi. In this building Samuel slept, contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the ordinance in Numbers,¹ and, contrary also to the Law, the lamp was allowed to go out. The song put into the mouth of Hannah belongs to a later time. The idea of a kingdom, according to the story, was not conceived till Samuel was an old man ; but in this song Jehovah is spoken of as exalting the horn of his anointed.² The comparison is forced upon us with the songs of Zacharias and of Simeon, and the Magnificat of the Virgin Mary. It is easy to see that of these three songs the first is a magnificent ordination hymn, in which the child is a young man admitted to the holy and blessed work of the prophetic office ; the second an expression of thankfulness from one who has been permitted to see the accomplishment of some special Divine work ; the third an utterance expanding the thought that God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. The whole narrative of the catastrophe in Eli's family was, in the Bishop's belief, written in Solomon's time, with the view of accounting for the violent expulsion of

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 116.

² *Ib.* p. 117.

Abiathar to make way for Zadok.¹ The doom pronounced on Eli's house was certainly not fulfilled. As Eli died when his two sons were cut off, those of his house who survived that event cannot have "consumed his eyes, and grieved his heart;" nor did Abiathar, one of his descendants, and part therefore of the "increase of his house," die in his prime, since he was David's high priest during all his reign.

The Second Book of Samuel knows as little, seemingly, as the First, of that exaltation of the priests and Levites which in the later legislation and the books of Chronicles is represented as having been already achieved in the Mosaic age. The contradictions and impossibilities thus introduced into the narrative are disentangled by the Bishop in the eighth chapter of his concluding Part. In the following chapter he carries on the scrutiny through the First Book of Kings, and with like results. Solomon dismisses Abiathar to the city of Anathoth, and to his field there; and by Jeremiah Anathoth is mentioned as a priestly city. But this is no proof that the system of Levitical cities existed in this or any other age; for Nob (1 Samuel xxii. 19) was also a city of priests, yet was no Levitical city.² Nor must we fail to note that Solomon expels the aged high priest and puts Zadok in his place "as coolly as he puts Benaiah in the place of Joab."

From the matter contributed by the Deuteronomist the general story of Elijah and Elisha must be separated, as containing

"so many miraculous stories, many of them of singular extravagance."

No trace of such a style, the Bishop remarks,

"appears even in the exaggerated accounts by the Deuteronomist's hand of Solomon's wisdom and magnificence, much less in the more sober historical accounts of either

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 119.

² *Ib.* p. 156.

the earlier, or the later kings, where the only miracle recorded is that of the shadow going backward on the sun-dial—and this is merely a copy of Isaiah xxxviii. 7, 8.”¹

When we reach the time of Hezekiah, we still find a state of things wholly unlike the pictures of the chronicler. When that king wishes for the help of Isaiah, he sends to him

“Shebna who was over the house, and Eliakim the scribe, and the elders of the priests ;”

but nothing is said about the high priest, though he must have been included amongst these elders, and they are all placed here below the civil officers, and are not named at all as present at the conference with Rabshakeh.²

The Second Book of Kings brings us to events in which Jeremiah was personally and closely concerned. Bishop Lord A. Harvey notices it as remarkable that this prophet is never once named in the history of the later kings of Judah, though he filled so prominent a place in their reigns.

“This is indeed,” Bishop Colenso adds, “a very strong additional proof of the fact that we owe the Books of Kings to his authorship, since no other writer could possibly have passed over in utter silence so important a personage, more especially when other prophets, Abijah, Jehu, Micaiah, Jonah, besides Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah, are mentioned by name in the history.”

But it was just at this time that the Book of the Law was found in the Temple ; and he must have felt that a hundred questions would, either sooner, or in the dim future of the ages, be raised about this wonderful incident. On the traditional view, as Bishop Colenso remarks, the event is amazing. How came Hilkiyah not to have found it sooner? The book was not brought to light by reason of any

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 180.

² *Ib.* p. 201.

disturbance caused by repairs in the Temple, for these were not yet begun. Why, again, should Huldah be consulted instead of Jeremiah? And why should not the latter be one of the deputation sent to inquire of Jehovah about the matter?

“The whole, of course, is intelligible enough, if Jeremiah himself was the writer of the book, and kept himself out of the way—at Anathoth, perhaps—while the first news of the discovery transpired; though we may believe that he includes himself among the ‘priests and prophets’ in whose ears Josiah read the contents of the book.”¹

But what was this book? The question has been answered already.² But Bishop Harvey, who had given up the chronology in the text of the Books of Kings as erroneous and misleading, and had made other admissions wholly opposed to all the traditional notions, suddenly turns round and asks us to believe that it was the autograph copy not merely of Deuteronomy, but of the whole Pentateuch written by Moses. The fact, he adds, cannot be proved; but

“it seems probable that it was, from the place where it was found, viz. in the Temple, and from its not having been discovered before, but being only brought to light on the occasion of the repairs; and from the discoverer being the high priest himself it seems natural to conclude that the particular part of the Temple where it was found was one not usually frequented, or ever, by any but the high priest. Such a place exactly was the one where we know the original copy of the Law was deposited by command of Moses, viz. by the side of the Ark of the Covenant, within the vail, as we learn from Deuteronomy xxxi. 9, 26.”

This is pitiable indeed. The history of the Kings in the reign of Josiah brings before us the discovery of a book under very astonishing circumstances; and, for the fact that the

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 205.

² See pp. 547, 628, *et seq.*

book ought to be in a certain place, we are referred, not to any collateral corroborative evidence, but solely to an injunction given in the book itself. But what is involved in Bishop Harvey's supposition? He holds it likely—in other words, he believes, or he professes to believe (for otherwise it would not be worth while to take the likelihood into account)—that it was the autograph copy of Moses, not only of Deuteronomy, but of the whole Pentateuch. The book is spoken of as one whole; and of this book, when it is read to him, the King, with grief and dismay, confesses his entire ignorance. He had neither seen it before, nor heard of it; he is simply amazed at the fact of its existence, and the more so as it spoke of impending judgements for the breach of laws and rules of the issuing of which he was altogether unaware. There is not a word to show that he was acquainted with one part of it, and not with the rest. We are to suppose then that the whole of the Pentateuch had been written by Moses, and that he had left an autograph copy of it. We are to suppose, further, that the whole of the Pentateuch had been lost. In truth, there is no escaping from this conclusion. For let us admit Bishop Harvey's belief to be right, and what must have followed? If the early history of the human race, if the lives of the Patriarchs, if the sojourn in Egypt, if the religious, ecclesiastical, and civil law styled Mosaic, were known to the Israelites down to the time of Josiah, then unquestionably the first four books of the Pentateuch were known to them. What, under these circumstances, must have been the language of Hilkiyah and of Shaphan? If they had a spark of common honesty, if they were not knaves or fools, must they not have said—

“We have found in the Temple a manuscript which contains all the books of Moses already in our hands, but which has also another book of which we know nothing, have seen nothing, and have heard nothing”?

Had they taken to Josiah an autograph of *the whole Pentateuch*, what must he have said, as Shaphan began with the first chapter and read on with wearying persistency to the end of Numbers—a task not of hours but of days? As the familiar words fell upon his ear, must he not have said—

“Why do you read me all this? We know it all, and should have acted upon it all already.”

If Bishop Harvey puts any faith at all in the story (and the worst of it is that language such as his leaves us in doubt upon the point), he must allow that, whatever the book was, it was read through by Shaphan at a sitting, and its words came to the King with the force of an electrical shock. Shaphan read “the book,” the whole book, and the King rent his clothes. But, on the supposition of Bishop Harvey’s notion being true, this is by no means all. Let us allow that “the book” (only one book is spoken of) was “the Pentateuch.” Then how long had the whole Pentateuch been lost? For a space of time nearly equivalent to that which has passed over England since the days of the Norman Conquest. During all these centuries, if the written law and history had been lost, as Bishop Harvey holds that they were, the Hebrews had had nothing but oral tradition to trust to—the tradition of jealous and disunited tribes, the tradition of severed and hostile kingdoms. If, on the other hand, the Tetrateuch had not been lost, and only the Book of Deuteronomy was found by Hilkiyah in the Temple, then how with any sense of truthfulness could Josiah have spoken as he is said to have spoken? The earlier books may present to us no language so magnificent, so heart-stirring, and so touching, as that of the Book of Deuteronomy; but, so long as he had these books, how could he, on hearing the new book, have expressed such surprise, anxiety, and dismay? Is there one single injunction,

one single duty, on which stress is laid in Deuteronomy, which is not set forth also in the other books? There is not one. If we dare to say that they possessed the Pentateuch, and that they paid no heed to it, we plunge, not into the mire of folly, but into the Serbonian bog of falsehood. It would follow then that all the upright judges, all the good kings, all the God-fearing prophets, had, with one consent, treated the words and the writings of their great and venerated lawgiver with contempt, and had done so systematically for six, seven, or eight centuries.

In the other books there were charges enough to think on the Divine commandments to do them; promises enough of blessings which should follow obedience; and warnings enough of punishments which would be the consequence of violating them. Is it possible, is it conceivable, that upright judges, godly kings, conscientious prophets and teachers, would thus neglect books which it was their duty, and could not fail to be their delight, to read and to know thoroughly? The inference is irresistible. They seem to us to have neglected these laws and to have contemned these books because *in their day* these books had not been written, and these laws had not been framed. In other words, this fact alone establishes triumphantly the whole work of the Bishop of Natal. The other theory is absurd, is monstrous. Bishop Harvey cannot believe, no man can really believe, that the whole religious, moral, social, ecclesiastical, political legislation contained in the Tetrateuch was put together, under the most solemn of sanctions, only to be forthwith lost and never seen or heard of again for some eight hundred years. The high priest alone, it is said, could discover it in the days of Josiah, because he alone had the right of entering the place where it was found; but, in the days of Moses, the Levites, it would seem, if we are to believe the Deuteronomist, were competent to handle it, and were bidden to place it "in the

side of the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah Elohim"; and we are to suppose that these Levites did so—Levites belonging, according to the chronicler, to a powerful tribe invested with the most sacred privileges, charged with the most solemn functions—Levites who, instead of speaking of this injunction of the lawgiver to these tribesmen, and keeping up the memory of it among the laymen of the other tribes, forgot all about it themselves, and left the whole Pentateuch to lie for century after century forgotten and dead, as though it had never been. Nay, according to the Book of Deuteronomy, the Levites had been charged to place the book in the ark "that it may be there for a witness against thee," and this purpose of the lawgiver, it follows, was frustrated as soon as he had made an end of writing the words of the law in his book. But we will suppose that the whole Pentateuch was preserved through the life-time of Joshua. The dense ignorance of the days of the Judges, and all the phenomena of that time, are proof enough that neither rulers nor people were then acquainted with it. Even thus, can we go on to suppose that during all those ages no memory remained whatever of the book or books which had been written; that not the faintest tradition survived of the righteous law under which they should have been living; that neither judges, nor kings, nor prophets had ever had the least wish to recover it, the smallest thought of searching for it; that during all the changes and wanderings which the ark had undergone, and in spite of all the ransackings to which the various tabernacles had been subjected, no one had ever noticed, no one had ever seen, this bulky and once precious manuscript, as it lay like lumber in the case to which the Levites had committed it hundreds of years before? The whole story speaks for itself. Joshua, at least, inherited the full spirit of Moses. He, at least, surely obeyed the precepts of his master: he knew therefore that the change spoken of by the Deuteronomist would come,

that kings would reign in Israel, and that, by the special charge of Moses, each king was with his own hand to make a copy of the book discovered afterwards by Hilkiah in the Temple. Surely he at least would make due provision for insuring that the books could be so handed down as to enable them to act on that command. Of such provision there is not the faintest trace. Of the disingenuousness which may be supposed to mark the dealings of Jeremiah or Hilkiah enough has been said already ; but if, in order to acquit them of that which in their eyes was probably no offence at all, and on which, perhaps, they never bestowed a thought, we multiply absurdities, contradictions, and impossibilities, this is not to exercise the office of the critic or the judge. It is simply to lie.

It is time that this play-acting should come to an end. We must look at facts as they are. Whether it were the Tetrateuch, or whether it was only the one Book of Deuteronomy, the discovery of this book, on the supposition of its being the autograph of Moses himself, was a circumstance which would permanently and profoundly impress the imagination of such a man as Jeremiah. If this discovery was confined to the Book of Deuteronomy only, the impression made on him would, if possible, be even deeper, for this would be just that setting forth of the Divine Law, in its life-giving and healing aspects, which he most longed for. In the Tetrateuch the ceremonial enactments might be held to weigh down, or to put out of sight, the higher matters of justice, judgement, and mercy ; but this could not be said of the Book of Deuteronomy. Yet, if we are to judge him from his own words, the event made on him no impression at all. In his prophecies he *never* appeals to this Book of the Law, and, except in the one Passover held after its discovery, Josiah himself seems to have made no effort to carry out its directions. It is the same with the prophet Ezekiel. He, therefore,

as well as Josiah, learnt after a while the real history of the book, which was, indeed, the result of the effort made to bring about the reformation of a most horrible state of things. Nor can we presume to say that it was unsuccessful. Many efforts are not fruitless, of which no results may be manifest for a long series of generations. It is our own fault, if of the condition of the Temple in the time of the Kings we choose to frame pictures which do not answer to the real facts. The list of abominations there practised, as given by Jeremiah himself, should be enough to remove all such illusions, and to disabuse the minds of all of any notion that the Temple was a pure sanctuary,

“thronged with holy priests and faithful Levites and multitudes of pious worshippers, resounding continually with sacred melodies, with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.”¹

The ritual there practised was purely pagan. There, at the north gate of the House of Jehovah, the women wept for Tammuz—that is,

“for the dead Adonis (Yahve) whom they will hail on the third day as having come to life again.”²

There the twenty-five men between the porch and the altar worshipped the sun towards the east; there the moon-goddess Ashera was adored under the symbol of a stock, or pole, or trunk, which could become a serpent, and from a serpent revert again to the form of a tree; and there was kept up all the apparatus of obscene rites which mark the ancient mythical religious systems of all countries.

It is hard to imagine that any popular delusions could be more thoroughly exposed than those which, before the Bishop undertook his work, flourished in this country as to the

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 216.

² *Ib.* p. 219.

history of the Pentateuch. These delusions, it will be remembered, were asserted by Mr. Maurice to be truths; and, if these were removed, we could not, he contended, speak of God as a smiter of tyrants, as a deliverer of the oppressed, as a God of freedom, order, and justice. The Bishop's work was indeed done effectually. More corroborative evidence might be adduced for his conclusions; but the conclusions could not in their main lines be overthrown, and the strengthening evidence was not lacking. They are borne out by an examination of all the prophetic books. The prophecies of Amos, of the first Zechariah, and of Hosea make no reference whatever to the Ten Commandments, the Book of Deuteronomy, or the Levitical legislation of the Pentateuch. In Hosea, an Ephraimitish prophet,

“there is no allusion whatever to the ark as the centre of the religious feelings of all Israel, or to the existence of the Aaronic priesthood, or to the duty having been laid by express Divine command upon all male Israelites to go up to Jerusalem for the three great feasts,”¹

or for other purposes. The same remark applies to the earlier Isaiah,² to Micah,³ Nahum,⁴ and Zephaniah.⁵ Of Jeremiah enough may, perhaps, have been said already; but, as throwing light on the morality, the very thought of which so shocked Mr. Maurice, we must not forget the prophet's own narrative as given in the thirty-eighth chapter (24–27). Here Zedekiah, the king, orders him to prevaricate, or rather to tell a downright falsehood; and the prophet follows his directions. There is nothing in this to disturb our judgement. We can surely gauge the measure of veracity reached by Asiatics, and, we may also say, by Europeans, to say nothing of Englishmen. But

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 241.

³ *Ib.* p. 255.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 256.

² *Ib.* p. 250.

⁵ *Ib.* p. 258.

“it is very plain that Jeremiah knew nothing of the Levitical legislation of the Pentateuch, with its multitude of commands ‘concerning burnt-offering and sacrifice.’”¹

To the Ten Commandments he never refers, probably because the framing of them in both forms was his own work. In the same way Habakkuk betrays no acquaintance with the Ten Commandments or the Levitical legislation; but he might refer to the Book of the Law which in his time had been found in the Temple.

“There are, in fact,” says the Bishop, “some remarkable points of resemblance between Habakkuk (iii.) and Deuteronomy (xxxiii.), which suggest the possibility that the Deuteronomist (Jeremiah) may have received and adopted this blessing of Moses from the hand of his contemporary.”²

Joel, however, knows nothing of either Deuteronomy, the Levitical legislation, or the Decalogue. With Ezekiel we notice a change.

“He insists very strenuously on the observance of the Sabbath, which for the exiles was a point of great importance, since it helped to keep alive in them a sense of religion, when at a distance from the Holy Land, and deprived of the Temple services. Ezekiel was a priest, and in spite of his strong and healthy moral sense, or along with it, he shows a marked tendency towards the practice of a minute ritualism; but even his directions for ritual seem to show that he was not acquainted with those in Exodus xxv., &c. If he had these chapters before him, with their alleged Divine directions for the construction and arrangement of the sanctuary and its vessels, not only would they have answered his purpose effectually, but he would hardly have departed from them so freely as he does.”

Further, his very denunciations of his countrymen for their idolatry show that they had not been trained in the so-called

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 266.

² *Ib.* p. 270.

Mosaic monotheism. According to him the progeny of Abraham and Jacob, the chosen people of Jehovah, had always been idolatrous.¹

“There never was a time . . . when they were not a rebellious house, an idolatrous people. It need hardly be said that this thoroughly agrees with the conclusions to which we have been led by the closer study of the Pentateuch and the historical books of the Bible.”²

In the prophecies of the second Zechariah and of Obadiah, and in the Book of Lamentations, there is neither reference nor allusion to the Levitical legislation, to Deuteronomy, or to the Decalogue. The prophecies of the second Isaiah belong to a time not long before the end of the Babylonish captivity,

“when the triumphant career of Cyrus distinctly marked him out, in the writer’s view, and in that of his fellow-exiles, as the conqueror of Babylon. This prophet was, therefore, subject to the same influences as those under which Ezekiel prophesied; but he was clearly less imbued with the priestly and ceremonial spirit. With him there is no special regard for the Levitical order. All Israelites are to be called ‘priests of Jehovah,’ ‘ministers of our Elohim.’ The true servants of Jehovah must be ready to suffer with, and for, and through their brethren; and he declares the blessed fruits which follow from such a ‘taking up of the cross.’ But even in the chapters of the third Zechariah, written after the Captivity, but before the Temple was finished in the sixth year of Darius, there is no reference to the Decalogue or the Levitical legislation. To the Law of Deuteronomy there may be, *perhaps*, an allusion in the sentence which speaks of the Israelites as making their hearts adamant so as not to hear the law and the words which Jahveh Zebaoth sent through his Spirit by the former prophets.”³

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 279.

² *Ib.* p. 280.

³ *Ib.* p. 293.

It is much the same with the Books of Jonah and Malachi, a younger contemporary, probably, of Nehemiah. In the utterances of the latter it is not surprising to

“find great stress laid upon the punctual performance of priestly duties.”

Nor would there be anything surprising if he had

“referred distinctly to the Levitical legislation, much of which was already in existence in his time, though probably not yet published. Nowhere, however, does he make any allusion to that legislation, except (possibly) in ii. 7, or to the Ten Commandments; though in iv., 4 he refers to the Book of Deuteronomy, which was now nearly two centuries old, reckoning from its discovery in the Temple in Josiah’s time, B.C. 624.”¹

To the Daniel of the book which bears his name it might be supposed that Ezekiel was referring when he spoke of Noah, Daniel, and Job, as three men who should save their souls by their righteousness. But the very order in which the name occurs, and the fact that he is put forth with the other two as a model of righteousness,

“is enough to show that the Daniel here meant must be some traditionary character of a former age, and not a mere stripling carried to Babylon in the third year of Jehoiakim, and only permitted to stand before Nebuchadnezzar three years afterwards—that is, just before the time when Ezekiel himself, then probably a priest in mature life, was carried away to Babylon.”²

In this book there is no express reference to the Pentateuch, and not even an allusion to the Decalogue.

The result of the whole examination of the prophetic books is to show that from the oldest prophet, Amos, downwards,

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 297.

² *Ib.* p. 298.

“there are traces of an acquaintance with incidents in the lives of the Patriarchs or the story of the Exodus, derived apparently from the original story, though sometimes varying from it, and then probably depending on mere legendary tradition. But in no single passage is there the slightest reference to the existence of the Ten Commandments, supposed in the traditionary view to have been graven originally by the ‘finger of Elohim’ upon stones, as the basis of Jehovah’s covenant with Israel at Sinai. Nor in any of the earlier prophets is there the least sign of an acquaintance with the Deuteronomistic or Levitical legislation. In Jeremiah we find plain evidence of a familiarity, and, indeed, of a peculiar and intimate relation, in respect of views generally, and language, with the Book of Deuteronomy, which probably he himself had written,—but still no trace of the Levitical legislation. In Ezekiel we first find indications of acquaintance with some portions, at all events, of the latter, to which he appears to have himself contributed. And in the post-Captivity prophets we observe signs of acquaintance with both these legislations; but only in Malachi, iv. 4, and in Daniel ix. 11–13, is any mention made of the Law of Moses.”

Thus again it is made plain that the Book of Deuteronomy was not known before Jeremiah’s time, but was well known to that prophet; and from the fact that, although he quotes it,

“he never appeals to it, nor even names it, while the style of his prophecies resembles remarkably that of Deuteronomy, it can only be inferred that he was himself the writer of that book. . . . In other words, Jeremiah was the Deuteronomist, and therefore also the editor or compiler of the Pentateuch and Joshua, before the insertion of the Levitical legislation.”

From the examination of the prophetic books the Bishop went on to scrutinise those which are styled historical. Of

the Chronicles, and of the spirit in which they were put together, something has been said already. The age of the chronicler himself cannot be carried further back than about B.C. 332, *i. e.* about two centuries and a half after the Captivity. Nothing is gained by attempts to determine all the sources from which he may have derived information. For some of his statements, and especially for some of his genealogies, he may have had the help of other records besides those of Samuel and Kings; but there is no question that he had these latter before him all along, and has frequently copied their language almost word for word. These, however, are matters of very minor importance. It is more to the purpose to note the mistakes and blunders which point out his incompetency as an historian, and the deliberate misrepresentation of facts which proves that without corroborative testimony he cannot be trusted anywhere. Thus he makes Hiram of Tyre send ships for Solomon to ports on the Red Sea, in which case they must either have been dragged across the isthmus of Suez, or gone round by the Cape of Good Hope. A blunder not less glaring is seen in the statement that Solomon's ships went to Tarshish for the gathering of gold, silver, tusks, apes, and peacocks, once in three years. Tarshish was not a town, but a region in Southern Spain, and the voyage to and from Spain would have taken only a few months; but, in fact, the Book of Kings (1, x. 22) merely says that Solomon had at sea ships of Tarshish, in other words, large merchant vessels, just as we speak of Indiamen. The chronicler, knowing nothing, and caring nothing, for the geography, has fallen into a blunder.¹ In fact, he does all that he can to discredit himself. He seems to work on more materials than those which were at the command of the writer of the Books of Kings; but his ostentatious references to 'the words of Nathan the prophet, the prophecy of Ahijah

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 315.

the Shilonite, the visions of Iddo the seer,' as though these were all independent works, mean probably nothing more than certain sections in the First Book of Kings. Having no historical conscience to restrain him, he amplifies at will the barest statements of the earlier annalists. The simple announcement that 'there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam,' is thus expanded into the circumstantial tale that Abijah fought with 400,000 warriors against Jeroboam, who headed no less a force than 800,000 mighty men of valour. To this huge host he makes Abijah from the top of Mount Zemaraim address a long speech, though how, for such an address, full of invective against the apostasy of the Israelitish kingdom, he would get any hearing, it is hard indeed to imagine. They were not his own soldiers, and there is no room here for the usual resource of supposing him to speak to a mere deputation of elders or other representatives.¹

What little generalship there was, was on the side of Jeroboam, who places an ambuscade in the rear of his enemies. On Abijah's side shouts to Jehovah with blowing of trumpets by the priests soon settled the day, the result being that of Jeroboam's army there fell down *slain*, not merely wounded, 500,000 chosen men. This is "ecclesiastical history" indeed, if a history may be so termed because it is spun out of the brains of ecclesiastics.²

Except when he thus weaves fictitious additions to the older narrative, the chronicler is an almost servile copyist; and the mere fact that the language of these additions differs widely from that of the Kings would not of itself prove that these also were not derived from other sources.

"But these additions . . . betray throughout the chronicler's own peculiar style."

If he has taken them from another source he must have

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 318.

² *Ib.* p. 319.

re-written them, and this would prove at least that he did not regard these sources as equal in value to the history of the Kings. More probably, the Bishop concludes, he had no such source at all.¹ So his work goes on with the same wearisome monotony of invention. Thus, Jehoshaphat's standing army is made to consist of 1,160,000 warriors,

"implying a minimum population of 1,480 to the square mile, which is more than three times greater than that of any other country in the known world."

At the same time he makes this king, with an army about twelve times as large as that of Great Britain, tremble through fear of a motley horde of invaders who come from beyond the sea, from Edom. "As for us," he is said to cry out in his dismay, "we know not what to do." As to charges, the chronicler sticks at none which will serve his own purpose. Thus he represents Joram as compelling his people to idolatry, whereas from the story of the Book of Kings,

"it is plain that they were of their own accord idolaters. He further describes Joram as dying by an incurable disease, and as being buried dishonourably, not in the sepulchres of the kings; whereas the older narrative says nothing of the illness, and declares that he was buried with his fathers."²

It is impossible to reproduce here the contradictions involved in the chronicler's method of dealing with the story of Athaliah, which the Bishop draws out in full detail; nor is it necessary to bring together further instances of his monstrous and laughable exaggerations. It seems impossible for him to be accurate anywhere. In the Book of Kings, Ahaz is said to have offered his son as a burnt sacrifice. The chronicler speaks of him as burning his children generally. He deals in the same way with Manasseh,³ of whom he further

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 325. ² *Ib.* p. 332. ³ *Ib.* p. 337.

speaks as being taken captive by the Assyrians, and carried in chains to Babylon, where he repents, and is restored to his sovereignty. After his return, Manasseh is said to have strongly fortified Jerusalem, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. Of all this the historian of the Books of Kings knows nothing. The incidents rest on the sole authority of a man in whom the sense of historical truth was dead. It is the same with the later and with the earlier kings. On all that tends to reflect discredit on David's character he is absolutely silent; and the whole account of his preparations for the building of the Temple rests, in the words of Graf, "on an imaginary foundation."¹ As to a genealogy, it must be either an exact statement of fact, or it must be worthless. The chronicler's genealogies may be drawn from other sources besides the earlier records; but, as they come to us, they rest on the sole authority of the chronicler; and "some portion of these notices are," in Graf's judgment,

"so manifestly stamped with the character of being unhistorical, that the value of most of them can only be judged by their agreeing or not with otherwise credible history; and in many cases, in the absence of such a test, they must remain doubtful."²

His numbers are always vast and the numeration always artificial. As the choristers consisted of $24 \times 12 = 288$, so the king's body-guard consisted of twelve courses of 24,000 men each. On this statement Graf emphatically says that,

"if anywhere, then certainly in this passage it is plain that we have only to do with pure fiction. Not only are the numbers in themselves fantastic, but Second Samuel and First Kings know nothing whatever of any such body-guard. How modest in contrast appears the small troop of Cherethites and Pelethites and the 600 Gittites whom

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 377.

² *Ib.* p. 379.

David in his flight from Absalom sent forward in advance, 2 Samuel xv. 18. Moreover, what a peculiar light does it throw on the mode of preparing such imaginary and yet apparently documental narratives, when we find that the names are merely taken from the beginning of the list of David's heroes, and follow nearly in the same order as these."¹

But the chronicler is convicted not of blundering, but of downright lying, when among the chiefs who took each his monthly turn with his 24,000 men at the court in Jerusalem, appears Asahel, Joab's brother, who was killed by Abner in the very beginning of David's reign, while he still lived at Hebron.²

Having thus examined the books which bear the chronicler's name, the Bishop turns to the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which in their present form are due also to him. The Bishop's scrutiny is directed to the ascertainment of the share which the chronicler had in the actual composition of these books; and it is scarcely necessary to say that the search brings to light the same phenomena. Thus in Ezra thirty golden chargers, thirty golden basins, making up with the silver vessels a total of 5,400 gold and silver vessels, belong to a temple which in King Zedekiah's time had only one chief priest, two second priests, and three keepers of the threshold.³ The genuine passages are distinguished with but little difficulty, among these being Ezra iv. 9-22. Here we have no trace whatever of the chronicler's style, and the letters quoted refer not to the building of the Temple of which v. 1-5 is speaking, but distinctly to the building of the city walls, without any reference or allusion to the Temple. The contradiction to the chronicler's own narrative is complete.⁴ The true history comes out in spite of his efforts to hide it.

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 385.

³ *Ib.* p. 389.

² *Ib.* p. 386.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 391.

The building of the Temple flagged or was for a time given up; but that this delay (of more than twenty-one years) should have been caused by the laziness of the Jews themselves, while Zerubbabel and Joshua were still living, was

“very abhorrent to the chronicler's mind. And he has tried to account for it by inventing a series of hindrances from the enemies of Judah, suggested, very probably, by the opposition which was really made seventy years afterwards to the building of the *walls*, and in doing this he has involved himself in the gravest inconsistencies.”¹

But these things gave the chronicler no trouble. He can forge letters from the Persian king, and also letters to him.² Thus,

“of the whole Book of Ezra (except chapter ii.) only the letters in iv. 9–22 appear to be genuine and of real historical value. The rest is the composition of the chronicler, of which some portions are manifestly fictitious, and the rest, unsupported by any other evidence, and partly in close connexion with these fictitious portions, can lay no claim to be regarded as history.”³

The examination of the Book of Nehemiah brings the Bishop to the conclusion that a considerable portion of it is the genuine work of Nehemiah himself, in which we may throughout discern strong marks of his character as an individual, the rest being due to the chronicler,

“who also appears to have borrowed from the acts of Nehemiah ideas for his own more detailed accounts of fictitious doings which he ascribes to Ezra.”⁴

The analysis of the Book of Esther is not less instructive. It is written to account for the origin of the Jewish festival

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 394.

³ *Ib.* p. 410.

² *Ib.* pp. 398–401.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 439.

of Purim, which was not one of the three great feasts of the Mosaic Law. The writer

“has simply set before himself the antiquarian purpose of explaining why this feast was called the feast of Lots, and to this end he has composed a romance full of exaggerations, contradictions, and impossibilities, and breathing a spirit of narrow national pride and bitter hatred against other peoples.”

The story is one of wholesale massacre designed for the extirpation of the Jews, and carried out through the permission of the king by the Jews upon their opponents, of whom they slay more than 75,000, though all fear of their enemies was over. The whole thing is a ludicrous absurdity.

“The edict, showing the King's pleasure, the Queen's influence, and Mordecai's power, had been issued nine months. There is no sign that the people generally wished any harm to the Jews, or made any attack upon them, the decree for their extirpation being ascribed solely to Haman's wrath against Mordecai, and Haman had been executed nine months before the decree was carried out. But even this, it seems, was not enough to satisfy the vengeance of Esther and Mordecai, or rather of Esther alone, for without any prompting she makes a second request to the King, that the Jews might be allowed another day of butchery; and the request is granted, and on the second day 300 more are killed in Shushan. . . . In short, the whole account is manifestly fabulous. . . . Indeed, it is incredible that the King should have issued the first decree at the request of Haman, supported by a bribe of 10,000 talents of silver (£3,420,000), ordering the massacre of a whole nation of his subjects, ‘to destroy, kill, and cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little ones and women,’ because their laws were diverse from all people, . . . though they are not charged with any acts of rebellion, and that this decree should have been published nearly a year beforehand to all the people,

including the Jews themselves (as we may gather from iv. 1-3). And it is still more incredible that when the second decree was issued, 75,000 of his other subjects, men, women, and children, should have been killed by the Jews, without, it would seem, the loss of a single Jew—no such loss, at least, is indicated or implied in ix. 17-19; and without the whole population rising *en masse* to overwhelm these blood-thirsty murderers who were butchering their families, though they did not pillage their homes—especially as they would have been supported by the King's first decree."¹

This is by no means all; but it becomes wearisome to wade through the absurdities contained in a book which, according to Bishop Lord A. Harvey, "does not in the least savour of romance." His remark applies with equal force to the story of Robinson Crusoe and to De Foe's "Relation of the apparition of one Mrs. Veal the next day after her death to one Mrs. Bargreave at Canterbury."² Both are almost inimitable specimens of plausible fiction; and the practice of the art of plausible fiction stretches back to many a century before the Christian era. Traditionalists of every school seem to be always falling into this miserable trap, even though the bait may be of a sort to undeceive any but the most credulous of mankind. But, as in the case of the Passover, the origin assigned for the celebration of the Purim festival is not the real origin.

"It is here stated that the name arose from Haman's 'casting lots,'—for what precise object is not mentioned, but apparently with that of fixing by lot a day and month for the massacre. But this explanation of its origin is incredible, not only because this incident of Haman's casting lots would hardly have been chosen to give a name to a feast

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 445.

² See Sir Walter Scott, *Miscellaneous Prose Works: Biographies*. "De Foe," Appendix 2.

commemorating an escape of the Jews from a general massacre, but because the whole story of that threatened massacre is manifestly fictitious."

The real origin of the feast may be found perhaps in the missing portion of the memoir of Nehemiah, which the chronicler, in the Bishop's judgement, has suppressed after Nehemiah vii. 5, and

"which seems to have unfolded Nehemiah's plan for re-peopling Jerusalem, B.C. 445, about a century after the return from exile, or two centuries before the Book of Esther was written, viz. by casting lots, as we may gather from the summary of the proceeding in question in Nehemiah xi. 1, 'and the rest of the people *cast lots*, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts in other cities,' and then it is added, 'and the people blessed all the men that volunteered to dwell at Jerusalem.' This must obviously have been a time of great excitement and commotion; and it would be very natural that a festival should be established, partly to commemorate the self-devotion of those who were willing to leave their country homes and lands for the public good, and partly to afford an opportunity for annual reunion with their brethren. This would carry the institution of the feast as far back as the reign of Artaxerxes, a few years only after the time assigned to it by this writer in the reign of his predecessor. If it be thought strange that a Persian name, 'the feast of Purim,' should have been given to a feast which originated at Jerusalem, we may observe that the Persian word *Pekha* = pacha or satrap, is used familiarly for a Jewish governor in the Books of Nehemiah, Haggai, and Malachi."

Few portions of the Old Testament writings have thus escaped the scrutiny into which the problem of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch forced the Bishop to enter. To what age or ages are these few remaining books to be

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 452.

assigned? By general admission the Book of Job betrays no acquaintance with the Pentateuch. From this fact Canon Cook inferred that the book was pre-Mosaic; and in strictness this would mean that it was written before the Israelites came up out of Egypt. Is this a sufficient reason for refusing to consider the post-exilic origin of the work? The Book of Esther was undoubtedly written after the Captivity, and it contains no reference whatever to the Mosaic institutions; and the same remark applies to the Book of Ecclesiastes,¹ which Dean Westcott regards as post-exilic. Canon Cook's conclusion was dismissed by Professor Kuenen as deserving no consideration. The notion that the Book of Job was written in pre-Mosaic times, or by Moses himself, is, he says, so utterly at variance with all the results of critical inquiry, that it cannot be worth while to judge and contradict it.² It matters not to what later date it may be assigned, since it proves that at the time of its composition, whenever this may have been, the Levitical legislation was either unknown or regarded as unauthoritative, and Mr. Cook himself admitted that, whenever the writer may have lived, he lived under circumstances which either kept him in ignorance of the institutions peculiar to Mosaism, or made him to a most remarkable extent independent of their influence.³ But in this book we have many words which are characteristic of the Levitical legislation; and also, by Mr. Cook's admission,

“many words and idiomatic expressions which occur in the latest Hebrew writings.”

In the Book of Proverbs, in which certainly we should have expected to find them, there are no signs of any acquaintance with the Levitical legislation, nor is there any reference to the Decalogue. The style of Ecclesiastes points to a time long after the Captivity, when the Hebrew tongue was greatly

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 454.

² *Ib.*

³ *Ib.* p. 456.

corrupted by Aramaisms. It may, therefore, have been put together about 200 B.C., not very long before the time when Antiochos Epiphanes mounted the throne of Syria and began his attempt to Hellenize the Jews.

“The writer shows no sign of Jewish exclusiveness, no special attachment to the Jewish worship and religion. . . . This agrees with the fact that many Jews in the time of Antiochos were indifferent to their own religion, and readily adopted Greek customs; in fact, the revolt of the Maccabees was a protest against such injunctions as those in viii. 2-5, x. 4, 20.”¹

For the Book of Canticles it is certain that Solomon at least was not the author. An Eastern despot cannot have written a poem which exhibited himself as an unsuccessful lover. Here also, as in so many other books, there is no reference to the Deuteronomistic or Levitical legislation or to the Decalogue.

The Bishop's Seventh Part concludes with a more extended examination of the Book of Psalms. It is full of interest and most valuable; but for the Bishop's main purpose it was in no way necessary for him to enter into the inquiry. Bishop Harold Browne wholly mistook the nature and aim of his work when he thanked him for resting his case so largely on the testimony of the Psalmists. The Bishop replied with an emphatic protest against this “unfair and unwarranted statement.”

“I have not rested my case at all upon the Psalmists. I have only adduced the very remarkable phenomena in the Psalms, with reference to the use of the Divine Name, as a collateral evidence, confirming, as far as it goes, the view as to the later adoption of Jahveh as the name of the God of Israel, to which I had been led by entirely different processes of reasoning.”²

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 469.

² *Ib.* p. 483.

The general conclusions reached by the Bishop have been already given,¹ and in the concluding volume they are not materially modified. The whole inquiry is brought to a close in a chapter on the formation of the Hebrew canon of Scripture. The forming of this canon brings us down to times later than the Christian era. The notion that it was completed and closed by Ezra

“is at once set aside by the fact that the Talmud . . . is not only silent about this remarkable fact, although laying so great stress on the services of Ezra, but especially mentions the uncertainty which still existed respecting some of the canonical books,”

and this cannot be reconciled with the idea of these having been placed in the canon by the authority of Ezra.² The wild notion that the canon must have been closed by Malachi because he was the last of the prophets, is set aside not only by the recognition of John the Baptist as a prophet, but by the fact that in the Gospel of St. Luke, Zacharias, Simeon, Anna, are

“introduced as prophesying exactly after the manner of the ancient prophets of Israel.”³ “To all appearance no clear view was entertained as to what this collection should include, and no definite plan was followed in enlarging it. So far as the authority of the writers of the Epistles bearing the names of Jude and Peter may carry us, the book of Enoch was virtually a canonical book which had a legitimate claim for admission into the circle of the Hebrew and also of the Christian Scriptures.”

The historical and prophetical literature of the Old Testament has thus been shown to be of immense importance in

¹ See above, pp. 534, *et seq.*

² *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 507.

³ *Ib.* p. 508.

proving the very late date of the Levitical legislation and the so-called histories of the chronicler.

“If these thoroughly dishonest products of the priestly or Levitical mind in a very late age were removed from the Bible, the amazing contrast between the provisions of that legislation in the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua and the actual facts of the history under the best kings, in the earliest or latest times, would arrest the attention of most intelligent readers, and they would be soon led of themselves to the conclusion (without the evidence adduced for it in Part VI.), that no such laws could ever have been laid down in the wilderness, since no trace of them appears in the practice of the age of David and Solomon.”¹

The Bishop's work was thus completed ; and succeeding generations will see more and more clearly how wonderful that work was. From beginning to end it has strengthened the belief of those who will not suffer the letter to crush the spirit ; but while strengthening their faith, it has dealt the death-blow to all traditional theories and superstitions which first cramp and finally destroy the proper action of the human mind. Of few in the history of the world can it be so emphatically said as of him, that he sought for the truth with single-hearted resolution, and that the truth made him free. He had, what, after all, few have, the courage of his opinions ; and he was ready, therefore, to put before what are called the masses the main substance of his examination of the Pentateuch. But he would not do this until he had challenged first the attention of the learned to the questions for which he insisted on having a valid answer, if such answer could be given.

“I should feel, indeed,” he said, “that, unless I had first stated at length, for the consideration and examination of

¹ *Pentateuch*, Part VII. p. 513.

the learned, the grounds on which my conclusions are based I should not be justified in bringing the discussion of these questions in this form within the reach of the people at large. But a long interval has now elapsed since my First Part was published ; and I have sufficiently tested the validity of my arguments by the character of the answers which are given to some of them."

He felt, therefore, not the smallest scruple in preparing a People's Edition which should, within the limits of a single volume, show them the real state of the case. The preparation of such a volume was a duty which he owed to the people of England, and in a yet higher degree to the people of Natal. The latter had heard him violently condemned by the Metropolitan Bishop of Capetown, and it was right that they who could not be expected to make acquaintance with his books in the larger form, should be enabled to judge for themselves as to the contents and as to the whole tone and spirit of his work. In his advertisement to this popular edition he had to refer again to the absurd Bibliolatry of men who, like Bishop Bickersteth of Ripon, may have believed what they said, and of others whose good faith in the matter was, to say the least, uncertain. For the former there might be some excuse when he asserted that the whole Bible, like its Author, must be pure unchangeable truth, truth without admixture of error ; for the latter there could be absolutely none when they contended that to deny the infallible authority of the Bible was to depart from the faith. But so long as Bishop Bickersteth and others who agreed with him could put forth their ludicrous propositions, and the Bishop of Capetown could enunciate the nonsense that

"the whole Bible is the unerring word of the living God,"

—a formula applied with equal earnestness to the Rig Veda and the Koran,—the Bishop of Natal was bound to say :

“ I hold it to be my duty, as a servant of God and a lover of the souls of men, to do my utmost to counteract a system of teaching which I believe to be erroneous and mischievous, and one of the greatest hindrances to the progress of true religion in the land.”¹

¹ Advertisement to People's Edition of the *Pentateuch*, 1864.

APPENDIX A.

See pages 279, 312.

“BISHOPSTOWE, *August 7, 1861.*

“MY DEAR BROTHER,

“I thank you sincerely for your letter on the subject of my *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. I cannot be surprised at your writing so earnestly and seriously, holding the views which you do on some of the points which I have discussed. But as you will have learnt from my last letter, it is too late now to stop the publication of the book, even if I desired to do so. Whatever you may think it right to say or do in the matter, I am quite sure that you will only act from a sense of duty to what you believe to be the truth, which compels you to set aside all personal feelings, in obedience to a higher law. In writing what I have written, and publishing it, I, too, have done the same, though conscious that I should thereby cause pain to yourself and others whom I entirely esteem and love. It is true that you have mistaken some of my expressions: others (forgive me for saying it) you seem to have misjudged. But in respect of others I am well aware that my views differ strongly from yours, though I believe that I have said nothing in my book which is not in accordance with the teaching of the Bible, or which transcends the limits so liberally allowed by the Church of England for freedom of thought on these subjects. I will now touch, one by one, on the several points to which you have drawn my attention.

“(1) I have no doubt whatever that the canonical books of Scripture *do* contain errors, and some very grave ones, in *matters of fact*, and that the historical narratives are *not* to be depended on as true in all their details. I have never stated this publicly; but surely

in this age of critical inquiry, every intelligent student of the Scriptures must be aware of the truth of what I say. It is vain to deny what is patent to any careful and conscientious reader, who will set himself to compare one passage of Scripture history with another. And, I must say, I had supposed that there were very few in the present day, except in a very narrow school of theology, who would contest this point."

[Here follows a summary of difficulties involved in the history of Hezron and Hamul. See above, p. 497.]

"Of course, the above are only a few instances, such as occur to me on the moment, of a multitude of others, which may be found in the Scriptures. And they are not mere *discrepancies* (such as that *one* blind man is named in *one* place, and *two* in another) which may admit of explanation, but absolute contradictions in matters of fact, to deny the existence of which would, for me at all events, be dishonest and immoral, and most unworthy, as it seems to me, of any one who really values the *general* historical truth of the Scriptures.

"But I have nowhere said what you have assumed for me in *addition* to the above, namely that 'inspiration apparently is exhibited not in the declaration of *the very truth*, which God has revealed to our faith respecting Himself and the way of salvation by Christ, *but* in the spirit and the life which breathes throughout the Holy Book,' &c. I say that 'the very truth' *is* 'the spirit and the life,' and not the mere words in which that truth may be conveyed to us.

"With respect to the latter portion of your remarks on this subject, I prefer using the language of the Consecration Service—namely, that I am persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation, which is identical with that of the Sixth Article; so that both together express sufficiently the mind of our Church. In this sense, of course, I *do* receive the Holy Scriptures as the 'rule of faith.' But I object to bind myself to such expressions as yours, which are neither in the Bible nor the Prayer Book, and may easily have a meaning given to them very different from what either you or I intend by them. It would be easy, for instance, for me to say that I believe the Bible to 'contain the unerring word of God's revealed truth.' The question then would be, What is meant by God's revealed truth? Is it the 'spirit and the life,' or the mere words of the Bible? And if the latter, as I understand you to say, then are *all* the words of the Bible part of

God's revealed truth ; for instance, the story of the birth of Pharez and Hezron, above referred to? You once told me, I think, that you held the genealogies in Chronicles to be the Word of God, and therefore, I suppose, as inspired, 'unerring words of God's revealed truth.' Now I cannot believe this. I imagine those tables to be mere transcripts of family registers—perhaps not even that ; and I *know* them to be full of errors and contradictions, which are not in any way to be accounted for by mistakes in the transcription of manuscripts.

"So, too, when you say that the dogmatic teaching of the Bible must be received by all Christians, of course I can assent to this. But then I believe that the dogmatic teaching of St. Paul in the Romans is just what I have set forth in my book ; and you judge differently.

"I certainly do say, and will maintain, that to the man himself there is but one lawgiver—the law within the heart—to which, in some form or other, he must bring every question of morals or of faith for judgement. One man has fully persuaded himself that the letter of the Bible is the revealed Word of God. When his reason is satisfied of this, his conscience tells him that at all cost of bodily or mental pain he must hold to the letter of the Bible. Another's conscience keeps him, in like manner, subject implicitly to the dicta of his Church, when his reason is once satisfied that the Church has a right to command him. And each of these will test his conduct continually, by bringing it into comparison with the words of the Bible or the Church, before the tribunal of his conscience. If his heart does not condemn him in this review, he will be satisfied and 'have confidence before God,' though all the while his conscience may really be injured by slavery to a defective judgement of his reasoning powers. Another takes a different view of inspiration, as I do myself, and believes that God's Spirit is indeed speaking in the Bible to all who will humbly seek and listen to His teaching, but that even when we read the different portions of it, we are to 'try the spirits whether they are of God, to prove all things, and hold fast that which is good,' to 'compare things spiritual with spiritual,'—that it is a part of our glorious, yet solemn, responsibility to do this,—that, having the Spirit ourselves, 'an unction from the Holy One, that we may have all things,'—having the promise that we shall be 'guided into all truth,' if we seek daily to have our minds enlightened and our consciences quickened, by walking in the light already