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MATTER—ETERNAL OR CREATED?

BY PROFESSOR J. P. LANDIS, D. D.

Union Biblical Seminary, Dayton, O.

The question is an important one in theology. The materialistic tendencies of many scientists make it a matter of renewed interest to biblical students. The reputed conflict between science and the Bible rages chiefly around the following points: The origin of matter; The origin of life; The origin of species, including man; and the origin of mind.¹ Out of these spring some other questions; but these are the vital points, the real centers of conflict. Thus, it will be seen, the battle is chiefly about the beginnings of things. Now, the Bible answers the question, which cannot be answered by natural science, What is the ultimate origin of things? or, What is the first cause of all things? Aside from Revelation, this question could never have been satisfactorily answered. Science deals with phenomena and their laws, with methods and secondary causes. When she steps beyond these, she invades the domain of philosophy and theology. Says James Martineau, in his work, *Materialism, Theology and Religion*, "Science discloses the method of the world, but not its cause; Religion, its cause, but not its method." So Professor Tyndall says, "The man of science, if he confine himself within his own limits, will give no answer to the question as to the origin of things."

It is intended, in this article, to glance only at the first of the above questions, The Origin of Matter. The Bible does not expressly say that God created *matter*, nor is there any word in biblical Hebrew for matter in the sense under consideration. The Greeks, from Aristotle onward, used the word *ὕλη* in this sense; but this word occurs but once in the New Testament, in James III., 5, and there, in its concrete sense of wood or forest, and is so rendered in the revised

¹ See Dr. J. L. Porter's *Lect. on Science and Revelation*.—Belfast.

English version, "Behold, how much *wood* is kindled by how small a fire!" Yet, the Bible does teach that God is the Creator of matter, the material or substance, as well as the order, of the *κόσμος*.¹ "Creation was the absolutely free act of God, unconditioned by any pre-existing thing. Matter, with its properties and forms, its temporal, spatial and numerical relations; spirit, with its life and feeling, its ideas and laws—these all had their origin in the creative word of God. Whatever is, and is not God, is the creature of God. This is the biblical conception of creation." This doctrine depends by no means alone on the meaning or usage of particular words, such as *bārā'*² or *κτίσειν*, but still more upon the fundamental ideas and principles of revelation, its general teachings concerning God and the relation of the world, or of all things, to God. Yet, it would seem that the careful consideration of particular words and expressions leads us to the same conclusion of a creation *ex nihilo*.

The Bible sets out with the sublime statement, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." We are told by some that we cannot lay emphasis on the word *create* (*bārā'*),² because it is interchanged with the word *make* (*'āsāh*),³ and the word *form* (*yātsār*).⁴ We are pointed to verses 26 and 27 of Genesis I. In the former occur the words, "And God said, Let us make man;"⁵ then, in verse 27, it is said, "And God created the man."⁶ So, in Gen. II., 4, it is said, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were *created*, (*b'hībbār'ām*)⁷ in the day Jehovah Elohim *made* (*b'yôm 'sôth*)⁸ the earth and the heavens." In Isa. XLIII., 7, occur the three words in conjunction; "Every one that is called by my name: for (*and*) I have *created*⁹ him for my glory, I have *formed*¹⁰ him; yea, I have *made*¹¹ him." Gen. II., 7 is likewise referred to as showing that the words *bārā'* and *yātsār* were used indifferently; "And Jehovah Elohim *formed*¹² the man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul." Other passages are also referred to, such as Isa. XLIII., 1; XLV., 12, and others. Dr. Tayler Lewis, in his introduction to Lange's *Commentary on Genesis*, holds that *bārā'*, everywhere else in this account of creation, means something different from primal origination, and that "there is no evidence, except an assumption (not exegetical, but rationalizing), of its meaning" primal origination in the first verse.

¹ Professor Cocker's *Theistic Conception of the World*, p. 97.

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם • וַיֵּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם • יִצְרָא • נַעֲשֶׂה • בְּרָא • וַיִּצְרָא • עֲשִׂיתִיו • יִצְרָתִיו • בְּרָאתִיו • בְּיֹם עֲשׂוֹת • בְּהִבְרָאתִיו

Of Jewish writers, he especially brings forward Aben Ezra as holding the same view. So also Professor Bush, Bishop Pearson (*Exposition of the Creed*), Kitto, Pusey, and others. Yet, all these writers believe in the divine origination of matter, and reject the idea of its being eternal, or an emanation from Deity. They even strenuously maintain that, to use the expression of Professor Tayler Lewis, "the Bible is a protest against the dogma of the eternity of the world, or of the eternity of matter." They simply maintain that the idea of *creation from nothing* is not in the word *bārā'* itself, and that the word is possibly, or *probably*, not at all used in the Bible with that meaning. And yet, some of them do not express themselves very emphatically against it. Dr. Wm. H. Green says, "This verb does not necessarily or invariably denote production out of nothing" (*Heb. Chrest.*). Pearson says, "By itself it seldom denotes a production out of nothing." Professor Bush remarks, "But it does not appear that the original word here employed was designed to convey precisely this idea, or that there is any word in any language which does." The first two leave room for its possible, or occasional, use in this sense. The case before us may be one of those instances.

It may be admitted that, etymologically, in its primary, radical idea, *bārā'* does not denote *creatio ex nihilo*; and it is probably also quite true that there is not "any word in any language which does" *primarily* signify this; yet in many languages there are words which are employed in this sense, this meaning having been superadded, with others, to the primary signification in usage. This is, of course, one of the most common phenomena of language. So too *bārā'* may be used interchangeably with other words, as *'āsāh* and *yātsār*, just as our word *create* may sometimes be used in the lower sense of forming or making; but this is no proof that the one or the other is never used in the higher sense.

On the other hand, it certainly appears that the author of Genesis intended a distinction to be made between *bārā'* and the two other words, when we note the juxtaposition and use of *bārā'* and *'āsāh*, in ch. II., 3, and *yātsār*, in ch. II., 7. See Lange *in loco*. In the former of these passages, we have, as literally translated, "which God created to make,"¹ which is rendered by Lange, "um es zu machen." Tayler Lewis also takes the word translated *to make*² to be an infinitive of purpose. Dr. Green translates, "created so as to make," and remarks, "created not in its elements only, but so as to give it its completed

לעשות. אשר-ברא אלהים לעשות¹

form." So the Vulgate, "Quod creavit Deus et faceret." The Targum of Onkelos likewise has, "which God created to make."¹ So Muehlau and Volck, in their late edition of Gesenius's *Handwoerterbuch*, after speaking of *bārā'* as a synonym with 'āsāh, say, "Yet, that there is a difference appears from Gen. II., 3, *bārā'* denoting to bring forth or produce anew."

Gen. II. 7 reads, "And Jehovah God *formed*² the man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," etc. In Gen. I., 27, it is said, "And God *created*³ the man in his image." These two Hebrew words do not here refer to the same thing. The latter refers to the production of man's spiritual nature, which alone can bear the image of God, while the former can refer only to the body of man; their meaning is, therefore, not the same in these passages.

If, now, we turn to lexical authorities, we shall find Castello defining *bārā'* by the word *creavit*, and remarking, "Creavit aliquid ex nihilo . . . Deus." This, in his *Lexicon Heptaglotton*. Muehlau and Volck, after the usual definitions, *to cut*, etc., give "*to create*, and, indeed, only with respect to divine production, never with the accusative of the material." I have not Gesenius's *Thesaurus Heb.*⁴ near me, and must, therefore, quote at second hand. "Some appeal to the word under consideration, as if it might be gathered from its very etymology and proper signification, that the first chapter of Genesis teaches not a creation from nothing, but a conformation of matter eternally existing. On the contrary, from the instances we have given, it will abundantly appear that the actual use of this word in *Qal*⁵ is altogether different from its primary signification, and that it is rather employed with respect to the new production of a thing, than to the conformation and elaboration of material. That the opening clause of Genesis sets forth the world as first created out of nothing, and this in a rude and undigested state . . . the connection of the whole paragraph renders entirely plain." Rabbi J. Levy, in his *Chaldaeisches Woerterbuch*, speaks of it as "used with reference to a divine creation out of nothing." Among other critics taking the same view, may be cited Ewald, Kalisch, Pagninus, Staib and Dillmann, although the latter reluctantly. There may also be added Keil, Delitzsch, Adam Clarke, Lange, Murphy, Stuart, Knapp, Oehler, and others. Oehler quotes Ewald as saying, "The Bible God does not first approach, as it were by chance, the matter already there, or lazily make one substance

¹ בָּרָא יי' לְקַיְמָתוֹ, upon which C. Schaaf remarks, "Distinguunt inter haec duo verba בָּרָא et עָבַר, ut בָּרָא sit creare seu ex nihilo vel materia inhabili aliquid producere; עָבַר (quod respondet Hebr. עָשָׂה) facere, perficere, absolvere, et ad certum usum aptare."

² וַיִּצְרָם. ³ וַיִּבְרָא. ⁴ Thesaurus Linguae Hebraeae et Chaldaeae Veteris Testamenti.

⁵ That is, in the first conjugation.

merely proceed from another. He is a purely active creator, who comprehends everything strictly, and firmly advances forward." Buxtorf, in his *Lexicon Hebraicum et Chaldaicum*, defines our word, "*creavit*, ac proprie Deo competit." Haevernick says, "By the peculiarity that the biblical cosmogony has, for its fundamental idea, a *creation from nothing*, it is placed in a category distinct from all myths. Hence, recently, there appears above all things a disposition to deny that this is contained in the history of creation, but certainly without success."

Our word *bārā'* is used in the *Qal* species only of God, and so is distinguished from the *Pi'el*,¹ where it signifies *to cut*, etc., which is noteworthy as itself suggestive of a meaning in the *Qal* as alone congruous with the idea of God, and as denoting a species of activity above that of a finite being. Moreover, the special meanings of words can only be determined from their connections. "In its most recondite application," as Dr. Fraser says, "the word can refer only *once* to creation as *originating* matter, and afterward, of course, only to what is evolved as new from existing things." The whole *connection* of the word in Gen. I., especially in the first few verses, seems to indicate a reference to the origination of matter. While, in its radical idea, it may not denote this, yet, as Dr. W. H. Green says, "That the creation here described is *ex nihilo* is apparent, from the nature of the case. The original production of the heavens and the earth is attributed to the immediate and almighty agency of God. And, as the earth, even in its rude, unformed and chaotic condition, is still called 'the earth' (verse 2), the matter of which it is composed is thereby declared to owe its existence to his creative power."

This leads us also to notice that the connection of *bārā'* with the use of the phrase "in beginning,"² points us to the same conclusion. The absolute *b'rē'shith* sets out the word *bārā'*, by fixing creation as an absolute beginning, and by separating what there began to be from the Creator, who had no beginning. It is in the absolute, and not in the construct state, because it cannot here allude to any determinate time; and this is sufficient reason for the absence of the article. The Versions give it as absolute; e. g., the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Vulgate, the Syriac, and the Targums; and it is so regarded by almost all expositors. It must, then, mean strictly in a *beginning*, or *at first*, marking rather the order of *conception* than of time. Lange says, it is a mere "tautology to say in the beginning of things, when God created them." Dr. Green says, that to make *b'rē'shith* construct is a "needless complication" of a "simple and obvi-

¹ That is, the third conjugation.

בְּרֵאשִׁית

ous construction," and remarks that the other constructions proposed "have been advocated by those who would have Moses teach the eternal and independent existence of matter, or, at least, that it existed prior to God's act of creation." Keil and Delitzsch also deny that it is a construct, and hold that the absolute use of the word is in harmony with "the simplicity of style which pervades the whole chapter," and that the other construction has been "invented for the simple purpose of getting rid of the doctrine of a *creatio ex nihilo*."

We find some remarkable passages in the New Testament bearing on this subject. In Heb. XI., 3, it is said, "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear," the latter part of which is translated by Knapp "so that what we see was made out of nothing." Most expositors understand the apostle here to teach that what we see was not made out of preexisting matter, but that God was the originator or creator of the matter of which the worlds were formed. The words in the latter part of the verse are taken as equivalent to the words in 2 Macc. VII., 28, : . "look upon the heavens and the earth, . . and know that out of that which was not God made them."¹ The rendering of the Vulgate is, "quia ex nihilo fecit illa Deus," "that out of nothing God made them." Here we may also quote Rom. IV., 17, "God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not, as though they were."² The word *to call* (καλεῖν) is here generally taken to be equivalent to κτίζειν, i. e., it means *to call forth, to command, to dispose of, call into existence*. See Robinson's *Lex. N. T.* Philo uses the word in this sense, "He called the things which were not into being."³ 1 John III., 1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be *called* the sons of God," where it is equivalent to "that we should *be* or *be made* the sons of God." Qārā⁴ has a similar signification, in such passages as Isa. XLI., 4, "calling the generations from the beginning,"⁵ i. e., calling them into existence.⁶

Absolute creation or origination seems also to be implied in those passages which represent God as speaking things into being, or creating the world by his mere word. Ps. XXXIII., 6, 9, "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, And all their host by the breath of his mouth." "For he said, and it was; He commanded, and it stood fast." On this Delitzsch says, "He need only speak the word, and

¹ Ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐποίησεν αὐτὰ ὁ θεός.

² καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα.

³ τὰ μὴ ὄντα ἐκάλεσεν εἰς τὸ εἶναι.

⁴ קרא. ⁵ קרא הדורות כראש.

Cf. Gesenius and Fuerst.

that which he wills comes into being out of nothing, as we see from the history of creation." Ps. XLVIII., 5, "For he commanded, and they were created."¹ It is also difficult to believe that such comprehensive passages as the following do not include *creatio ex nihilo*: Neh. IX., 6, "Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all;" and Col. I., 16, "For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist." On "were created" Bishop Ellicott remarks, "The forced meaning, 'were arranged, reconstituted,' though lexically admissible, is fully disproved by Meyer, who observes that *κτίω* always in the New Testament implies the bringing into existence, spiritually or otherwise, of what before was not."

Add to all these passages, the Scripture teachings on the independence of God, the dependence of all things on him, and his absolute sovereignty over them, and, in general, his almightiness,—these, with the considerations presented above on Gen. I., are sufficient to show that the Bible does teach the doctrine of the creation of matter from nothing, that it is not co-eternal with God, nor an emanation from him.

THE VALUE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FOR THE WORK OF THE PASTOR.

BY PROFESSOR S. BURNHAM,

Hamilton Theological Seminary, Hamilton, N. Y.

II.

3. The third kind of Old Testament truth to be noticed, is Presentations of the Results of the Incarnation, that are to come to Israel, and to the other nations of the world.

The central preparation for the Incarnation, the history of which is the substance of the Old Testament, was the preparation of a nation. It is, indeed, true that a national preparation, like a national reform, goes on only through forces that work in individual souls, but the results wrought by these forces, appear not only in the various single souls, but also in external national conditions. For the nation is, after

all, something more than a mere aggregation of independent units. The various relations existing among these units are no less real than the units themselves, and make a real part of the national whole. Thus it comes to pass that many of the results that are the product of the forces that immediately work in the individual life and soul, and these too among the most important of these results, are not to be found in any or many of the separate lives and souls of the national whole, so long as these are considered apart from this whole. They appear only in the life and condition of the nation viewed as a unit, or, as one may say, as an organic totality. In other words, they do not exist in the individuals as separate entities, but in the relations of these individuals, or, as it is perhaps better to say, in the individuals in their relations.

It was upon these outward and more obvious results of the forces at work in the heart and mind of the individual, these results that appear in the national life and condition, that the ancient thought, before the appearing of the personal Christ, who so emphasized his own individuality, and thus the individuality of all men, seems most to have centered. It was quite natural, therefore, and altogether in harmony with the prevailing thought of the age, that the prophets of the Old Testament, in their endeavor to secure the national preparation which was the necessary prelude to the Incarnation, should think much and speak often of the results that should come, in the Messianic age, to the nation of Israel, and by it, or because of it, to the other nations of the world.

It is not to be denied that the prophets themselves saw what the great apostle of the Gentiles more clearly saw, that not all who were of Israel, were really Israel. The true Israel within Israel is an Old Testament not less than a New Testament conception. But, in the prophetic view, this inner Israel is not a mere aggregation of individuals, still less a church distinct from the state, or a new organization founded upon the ruined state. This inner and true Israel, to the prophet, was the real nation, the beginning of the future grand, triumphant, and exalted theocracy. All beyond this real Israel was, as are the camp-followers to an army, in name and not in truth, a part of the theocratic nation.

So far, therefore, as the prophet sets before us the future Messianic age, it is the future of the nations that he brings to view. The destiny of individuals is either left out of sight altogether, or is dwelt upon merely as an element in the national future. Thus it is the wicked *nations* who are to return to the unseen world, and perish before the wrath of Jehovah (Ps. IX., 18 [17 in E. V.]). The mountain

of the house of Jehovah is to be the place of concourse for *nations*, and the *nations* are to learn the ways of Jehovah and to walk in his paths (Micah IV., 1-2). Jehovah is to reveal himself in anger against his foes by smiting the *nations* that come not to hold the feast of the tabernacles (Zech. XIV., 18-19). It is Israel as the indestructible *nation*, that is to be the favorite of Jehovah, and a blessing to all the nations of earth (Jer. XXXI., 35-37; Zech. VIII., 23; Isa. LXVI., 18-22).

This prominence given to the nation in the prophetic thinking about the future, and also the fact that the divine work in the Old Testament age had for both its center and its goal the preparation of the nation of Israel to be the center of the Messianic manifestation, furnish, it is easy to see, a natural explanation of the scantiness and incompleteness of the teachings of the Old Testament as to the eternal future of the individual soul, and, in particular, as to the matter of future rewards and punishments.

With the coming of the personal Christ, the individual, and no longer the nation, became of the greater importance. The personality of Christ, and the worth of that personality, were then and forevermore the supreme facts of this world; and the supreme question became the personal relation of each man to the personal Christ. So the present condition and future destiny of the individual soul became more prominently and more exclusively the subjects of revelation and of inspired teaching. The apostles had little to say, comparatively, of the future of the nations; but they dwelt almost exclusively on the results which would come, because of the Incarnation, to individual souls.

But we ought not to infer from this that they considered of little value the prophetic teachings in regard to the national results of the Incarnation; or that, in their own thinking, they gave them the go-by. The Book of Revelation and Romans XI. are express evidences of the contrary. But the prophets had taught well and clearly as to these results; and what need was there of repeating their teachings? Besides, the great need of the apostolic age was for teaching as to the relation of the individual soul to the personal Christ. Moreover, the great need of the church of the future was that the teaching of the prophets as to the national results of the incarnation, should be supplemented by apostolic teaching as to the results to the individual, that the divine revelation might be full and complete. No wonder, therefore, that, in the new liberty of the gospel, in the new joy of a blessed fellowship with the personal Redeemer risen from the dead, and exalted to the right hand of God, the apostles, filled with the conception of the universal brotherhood and priesthood in Christ, dwelt,

in their teachings, on the personal, rather than on the national results that were to come to men from the life and work of their Lord.

But all this does not show that the Christian preacher is not to seek to set forth these national results that are to attend the progress and triumph of the kingdom of God. This conclusion is no more warranted than that the apostles gave these results no place in their own thinking. For the results that are to be wrought among the nations by the Messiah, the King of kings, in the accomplishment of his mediatorial work, are an essential part of his purpose, and will contribute not a little to the grandeur and glory of his kingship. The extent and greatness of God's purpose in Christ, therefore, and the real might and value of the divine Savior, can only be fully seen when the national results of the Incarnation are taken into account.

From all this, it is clear that the preacher who omits or neglects to make the presentation of the national results that are to flow from the mediatorial reign of Christ, a part of his work, must fail to make known to men the full purpose of God, must fail also to show the true might and the far reaching influence of the great Christ-life, and will really rob his Lord of no small part of the honor and praise which belong to him from men, and are his right, because, as King of kings, he is controlling the destinies of nations, and is to be the source and determination of the final issues of their history.

Nor will the evil results end with this robbery of Christ. The great truths relating to the might and glory of the kingship of Christ, and to all the gracious and wondrous results that are to flow from it, must have a purifying and formative influence upon Christian life and character. This is according to the law of the Christian life set forth in 1 John III., 3. When, then, the true Christian sees clearly what the real issues of his life may be in Christ, when he realizes that life is "worth living," if lived in Christ, because each true life that is in him, is to affect the destinies of nations, and to determine, to some extent, the issues of their history, he can but strive to live worthy of his calling. When he comes to the full understanding of the fact that he is a fellow-laborer with him who is at once the goal and the determination of all national, as well as of individual life, and that, through him, as one of the living body of Christ, this goal is to be reached, and this determining power is to be made effective, if he has in him the mind that was in Christ, he will seek with utmost earnestness to be such as is his great fellow-laborer. This he will do, if he does not, amid the cares and distractions of life, forget these great truths in relation to the nature and results of the kingship of Christ, which have in them the power to inspire in the soul earnestness and strong endeavor to attain

to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." But who is to remind him of these truths, who is to call him back from his busy trifling with the things that perish to his true vocation of shaping the destinies of the nations, if not his pastor? This surely is the work of him who is set for the defense of the gospel, appointed to divide rightly the word of truth, called to feed the flock of God.

But these great truths in relation to the national results of the Incarnation, have also another important value, as has been shown in the experience of the church. This is their worth as encouragements in times when men are ready to lose heart, and as incentives to earnest and persistent work in times of disaster and gloom. When despair would otherwise have put an end to all effort, how often have the glorious visions of the prophets of God, made stirring realities by the eye of faith, roused the hope and renewed the efforts of the servants of Christ. What, for example, has so inspired the church to effort and sacrifice in its great missionary work, as the assurance that the kingdoms of this world are to become "the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ"? Doubtless simple loyalty to Christ, and the purpose to obey him in going to all nations and teaching them according to the Great Commission, would have led the church to some activity in the work of missions. But who can tell how well even loyalty and obedience would have endured the dark days of apparently hopeless labor, and the long years of weary waiting? It has been, after all, the confidence that God has a great purpose of grace concerning the nations, and that he is even now working among the nations to accomplish that purpose, which has been the source of the hope and enthusiasm that have made possible the heroic efforts and the glorious results of the missionary spirit in the church of Christ. It is possible also, as it is not far to see, that the lack of missionary spirit in what we must, with sorrow, confess is much too large an element of the church, and the want of means and men for the evangelizing of the nations, may be due, in part at least, to the absence in the church of clear and well realized knowledge of what the great and gracious purposes of God concerning the nations truly are, and to a failure to see and understand that God is, all around us, working in the nations for the accomplishment of these purposes, and constantly bringing them to pass.

It is worthy of note, in this connection, that Chiliasm has flourished most in the church in those times in which the church has seemed to be making the least progress in its opposition to the world, and has been suffering from persecution. Thwarted and oppressed by the powers of the world, it has not unnaturally turned its eyes with longing to the time when its Lord should show himself as King of

kings, and rule over the nations, giving his now afflicted church a share in his glory and a place on his throne. Saved by hope, it has had heart and courage to endure, and even to withstand the attempts to crush out its life, and has emerged from its dark days stronger and purer for its trials. It matters not for the present purpose whether Chiliasm is true or false. All that is claimed is, that its history shows the power of a faith in the future sure victory of the kingdom of God over the nations, to maintain the courage and to continue unwearied the efforts of the church of God in the days of adversity and trial. Whether the national results of the reign of Christ are thought to be such as Chiliasm claims, or not, a firm confidence in the ultimate subjugation of the nations, as nations, to the on-moving Kingdom of God, must have in it the same inspiration and power as the Chiliastic faith. The conquest is equally as grand, the believer's lot equally as noble and sublime, present trials and sufferings equally of as little moment, whatever may be the form in which Christ is to show himself to be the arbiter of national destinies, and the king of nations, and whatever may be the manner in which the nations shall acknowledge him as Lord, and render to him their homage. He who shares in any way with Christ in shaping the destiny of nations, and who is to participate in the glory of his victory over the nations, can work on steadfast and courageous amid all the trials and discouragements of this earthly life.

But every life has its trials and its discouragements. No Christian is without his dark days when it is needful to exhort him to "lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees." Then the great truths relating to the future but certain victory of his Lord over the nations, come to him with inspiration and power. Then the Old Testament teachings in regard to the results of the Incarnation, those national results of which the New Testament says comparatively so little, are the need of the soul. Nothing succeeds like success. Next to success itself is the assurance of it. The Old Testament is the book of assurances, the book for assurance.

GAINS AND LOSSES OF MODERN BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

BY REV. A. A. PFANSTIEHL,

Troy, Mo.

I state the subject in this modified form advisedly. There is a distinction to be made between biblical criticism unmodified, and modern biblical criticism. We cannot conceive of there being anything lost through biblical criticism when by it we mean a devout and prayerful seeking of God's will concerning man in the Bible, and the gracious salvation through Jesus Christ which is its grand purpose to reveal. It is true, when we take biblical criticism in this sense, that "there is everything to hope and nothing to fear from its progress."

But modern biblical criticism cannot be taken exclusively in this sense. It is not bringing a false accusation against it, in view of the destructive criticism of the Tuebingen school, and such wild, irreverent—if that word is too strong then let us say presumptuous study of the Word of God, as shown by Kuenen, Wellhausen, Robertson Smith and others, to say that there are dangers and evils connected with it which make the question whether there is gain or loss to be derived from it; a pertinent one, and one which it is well earnestly to consider.

It probably is too early in the day to hope to get a satisfactory or a just estimate of the gains and losses of modern biblical criticism. We have not yet reached final results in this. Its modern phase is only in its beginning, and there is still much to be done by it; yet it will not be out of place to stop a moment and see where we have arrived, and what ground we have covered. And this article aims not at a final summing up of gains and losses, but will call attention only to a few of these.

I. WHAT GAINS CAN BE MENTIONED?

1. First, the fact that attention is called by it to a *direct study of the Bible*. That is, the destructive attacks upon the Bible by some who claim to be "of the household of faith;" their apparently reckless treatment has directed to the Bible the attention of many who were occupied with discussions of things suggested by it, who were speculating about it, but were not engaged in its direct study.

Now, undoubtedly, greater gain is to be derived from a direct study of the Bible than from the study of speculations about it, or of inferences drawn from it. If we can turn men's attention from a discussion or study of non-essentials in religion, to a direct study of the Bible,

with its "plain fact of a personal Creator, a God in history, a revelation of divine love and duty in his Son," we have gained much; and not the least gain is the fact that when this has been done, "we need not fear the atheism of to-day." There is nothing so refreshing to the thirsty soul, as to go directly to the fountain of truth, and drink deep draughts of divine, loving, inspiring truth. If it is served at second-hand, be it brought in ever such beautiful and attractive cups, it loses its sparkle and its full power to assuage the thirst.

Whatever, therefore, tends to turn men's attention to a direct study of the Bible, is a great gain to true religion. And certainly modern biblical criticism has done this.

2. A second gain is, that through it the Bible has become *a more real book to us.*

It has not always been such to men. They looked upon its history, poetry, song and story, as something which had nothing in common with other history, poetry, song and story. The Bible, is indeed, a *sui generis* book: a book, which, in its application, construction and teaching, has for its object something distinct from any other book on earth; it has its peculiar characteristics. This is true because of its inspiration, and because of the fact that it is "our supreme and sole authority in matters of faith, and 'contains all truth necessary for salvation.'"

That it has so distinct an object, and characteristics of so unique a nature, has led men to look upon it as if it were not a real book—a book which *all* should read, ponder and study. This being the case, it was laid aside for only special use, and was not also used for the good a study of its history, its language, and its literature would do the world. A procedure which is fatal in many respects, since in accordance with it:

(1) The Bible was not man's constant companion, to help him, to cheer him, to instruct him, to encourage him, to warn him.

(2) Much valuable knowledge which the Bible alone contains, besides a knowledge of God and salvation, was kept hid from men's view. Sir Walter Scott said, "There is only one book—the Bible. The other books are mere leaves, fragments." And our own Whittier has well written,

"We search the world for truth; we call
The good, the pure, the beautiful
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old-flower-fields of the soul;
And, weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the sages said,
Is in the Book our mothers read."

(3) People dared not approach the Bible with that holy boldness which makes it an arbitrator in all disputes with conscience in the various departments of life, outside of the salvation of the soul.

Now, biblical criticism, and especially biblical criticism of our day, has assisted in making the Bible a real book. And this, Robertson Smith rightly calls its "great value." It is, however, true, that the Higher Criticism goes too far in this direction. It looks upon the Bible too much as it does upon a book of merely human origin, and hence has a tendency to destroy the reverence and holiness with which it should be approached, no matter how real it becomes to them or may be to them. The true course lies between the two extremes, and if the Higher Criticism will have ultimately as its end a following of this middle course, great gain will come from it. This seems to be the hope and promise of it. And, therefore, Professor Green rightly says, "Every encouragement should be given to the freest possible discussion. The attempt to stifle discussion in the present posture of affairs, would be in every way damaging to the truth."

3. A third gain, in brief, is found in the fact that the more the Bible is directly studied the more the divine truth is learned and discovered. Daniel Webster said, "There is more of valuable truth yet to be gleaned from the sacred writings that has thus far escaped the attention of commentators than from all other sources of human knowledge combined."

Biblical criticism which has for its object a direct study of the Bible, helps in discovering, either intentionally, or accidentally, new truths which would never be discovered but for it.

4. Again, in so far as the modern biblical criticism has led to a rejection of the two extreme phases of biblical interpretation—the allegorical and the dogmatic—so as to rest the defence of revelation upon a ground which commends itself to reason and common sense, and upon facts, there is a great gain. The arbitrary fancies and the mystical principles of the allegorists, cannot satisfy this age of critical knowledge of history and language. "The truth of Christ and his spiritual Gospel, which only could give the key to the Old Testament, was indeed a profound one. But instead of studying it in the clear method of history, the Bible was made a sacred anagram; the most natural facts of Jewish worship or chronicle became arbitrary figures of the new dispensation. Type and allegory were the master-key that unlocked all the dark chambers, from the early chapters of the Genesis to the poetry of David or the grand utterances of Isaiah. Wherever we turn to the fathers, to the Epistle of Clement, or the sober Irenæus, to Tertullian, who finds the type of baptism in the Spirit

brooding on the waters and in the passage through the sea; or to Augustine, who explains the six creative days as symbols of the ages of divine history, we have the numberless cases of this style of exposition. We prize the early Christian writers for their intellectual and spiritual power in the great conflict of the faith with a Pagan wisdom; nay, we can often admire, with Coleridge, the rich, devout fancy glowing through the homilies of Augustine; but as biblical scholars all were simply of a time when true criticism was hardly known.*

Nor will the dogmatic principle of the Latin Church satisfy men of to-day; a principle which, found in the Bible, by proof-texts, wrested from their real meaning often, support for any metaphysical or religious dogma which they might hold. Luther called such a procedure "a rover and a chamois-hunter." It was rightly done by Luther when he rejected the *analogia fidei*, and claimed the *analogia Scripturæ sacræ* (Washburn). And in so far as modern biblical criticism has corrected such arbitrary rules, and has taught men "the study of Scriptures in their own meaning" it has led to great gain.

II. WHAT LOSSES CAN BE MENTIONED ?

We turn now to a few of the losses of biblical criticism.

I. And there may be named the danger of its causing men to read the Bible with a too critical eye. When they do this, they lose the spirituality of heart and the inspiration to personal piety, which come from reading it in loving trust, and with a devotional heart. There is a great difference in reading the Bible with an eye to find in it literary beauty, or merely history, or reading it in a devotional frame of mind, for growth in spirituality of heart, and personal piety. The purpose for which the Bible was written was not its literary and historical value; on the contrary, it was given to us for our growth in Christian spirit, and as a revelation of God's will to and concerning man, and a revelation of salvation full and complete in Christ. Dr. Washburn has well said, "This word may speak to the mind and heart of a Christian reader, although he knows nothing of the methods of exact learning; and if the keenest criticism do not approach it with special reverence for a book, which has fed the spiritual life of men, as no other has done, it will be barren indeed even for the scholar."

Anything, therefore, which tends to cause men to look upon the Bible in any other than a devout, spiritual frame of mind is baneful. And who doubts that this has been the case, to some extent at least, with the Higher Criticism of our day? Having raised its many doubts—many uncalled for and unfounded doubts, we may add—it has led

* Dr. Washburn in *Princeton Rev.*, July, 1879.

men to take up their Bible with an eye too exclusively critical, and to study the Bible with a mind too full of doubts.

2. This leads us to mention a second evil resulting from our Higher Criticism, viz.: That it has a tendency to cause men to lose their confidence in certain portions of the Bible. This tendency may not be seen or felt so much among specialists in biblical study, or among ministers, who have time and inclination and whose business it is, to study the Bible critically, as among the people in general, who have no time to follow out the discussions, and only know that doubts exist in the minds of men who make biblical study a specialty. Learning that these are unsettled on many points, the natural consequence is that doubts are awakened in their minds and they lose their trust in the Bible. Could the work of biblical criticism go on quietly among specialists, and the rest not know of it, until results definite and satisfactory have been reached, the evil would not be so great. But as the discussions are now carried on, in every religious paper, and even in secular papers, there is no doubt that the result is to unsettle many in the faith of the Bible as the word of God.

Let us devoutly hope and pray that this all-important department of sacred learning, may be directed by the Spirit of God, to the end that the Word of God may not be made void, but may be glorified as a power of good and righteousness in the world.

STUDIES IN ARCHÆOLOGY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

BY JUSTIN A. SMITH, D. D.,

Editor of *The Standard*, Chicago.

VII.

The Idea of God in Historical Religions.

Much upon which it might be desirable to dwell by way of preliminary, in treating this subject, must be omitted for lack of space. Without introduction, we may come at once to what we may term, as found to such an extent in historical religions, and in human nature itself,

THE POLYTHEISTIC TENDENCY.

It is an interesting inquiry why polytheism should be so prevalent and so inveterate in the religious history of mankind. The reasons to be given, probably, would be many; some of them common to all men, everywhere, save as instructed and kept by forces higher than any human ones; some peculiar to the several races of men, and found in the surroundings and conditions of their life. I will mention three, which, perhaps, are the principal ones, apart from what is due to the depraved condition of human nature; those "vain imaginations" and that "foolish heart," of which Paul speaks.

1. The first is the necessary conception of a providence in association with the idea itself of God, and the difficulty which the unaided human mind must find in conceiving this providence as exercised in a single divine personality, omnipresent and omnipotent. The idea of God involves, essentially, that of human dependence and of divine interposition in the human behalf. Everywhere, in a more or less distinct way, unless it should be in the case of pantheism—and even there we may sometimes trace it—we find the conception of God as that of a Being to be prayed to; a Being whose favor is to be propitiated or whose help is to be sought. Now, we can readily see how difficult it must be for primitive and especially for barbarous races to conceive such a thing as a single infinite personality, everywhere active in providence, and everywhere the same one God. Even by those to whom it has been revealed, and whose minds are trained, taught and developed, this truth can be received only as a matter of faith; it cannot be so grasped as to be comprehended. The human mind in its best state, when it confronts the thought of a Being infinite in all attributes, everywhere and everywhere acting in the same single divine personality, is simply overwhelmed by it. That the average pagan mind should fail to grasp, or even conceive it is no ways surprising: nor that when we meet it in paganism it is chiefly as an esoteric principle, known only to the initiated, or as implied in some of the higher strains of poetry, or dimly apprehended in philosophy.

We can readily see, then, how the idea of a Providence, as associated with the idea of God, would in the minds of men incapable of conceiving that of one omnipresent and omniscient divine personality, and who had lost, if they ever had it, any revelation of this truth, become degraded to an apprehension of the deity as many, rather than one; how each nation would come to have its own gods; how cities, and towns, and colonies would have their special deities whom they would conceive of as caring for them peculiarly and only; how the family would have its own household gods, and each trade and occupation, each art and faculty, its

divine patron; how the operations of nature would be regarded as similarly caused or cared for, and groves and streams and mountains be made populous with nymphs and dryads, with deities of the wood and deities of the fountain, the river and the hill. That feeling, natural to the human soul, that a divine presence is in some way everywhere and everywhere active, yet incapable of realizing itself in any conception of a single divine personality thus pervasive and efficient, takes refuge in the inventions of polytheism.

2. Another and much more objectionable manifestation of the polytheistic tendency, implying also a reason for the existence of polytheism itself, is seen in anthropomorphic conceptions of deity, these assuming, in process of time, those forms which even among cultivated ancient nations were so mischievous. It does not seem surprising that barbarous or primitive races should find in the idea of God as a purely *spiritual* being a difficulty much like that just noticed in apprehending him as a single infinite being. Philosophy might at least approach this conception, but the popular mind even in peoples comparatively cultivated would be, left to itself, in a great measure incapable of it. Of course, the idea of the unseen, the supernatural, may be said to be in some sense innate with all men; but when such a mind as we are supposing attempts to body forth this idea, and assign to the supernatural being attributes and activities, the man almost inevitably makes himself the model of his deity. Just in the same way as he sees men individualized and multiplied, he individualizes and multiplies his gods, assigning to them, naturally, passions and propensities after the pattern of his own.

3. The third cause which I will mention is the tendency among certain races, especially in a primitive or barbarous condition, to deify force, and all manifestations of phenomena which they cannot understand. We are familiar, I dare say, with instances in which savages, when visited by civilized men, and shown some object to them surprising and incomprehensible, imagine something supernatural in it, and fall upon their knees to worship it. With races yet in their childhood, and who perhaps remain in their childhood for centuries, emotions of wonder, the sensations produced by novelty, by the presence of what is vast, or mighty, or delightful, do not become dulled by familiarity, or robbed of every element of surprise, or awe, or pleasure by knowing too much of what they are, and how they are caused. The fact may help explain for us that tendency, seen especially among certain races, amidst surroundings that appeal powerfully to the imaginations and to every sense of the beautiful or the sublime, to deify, or rather associate with the idea of deity all striking manifestations of force, all remarkable phenomena, especially if they be of that kind which recur regularly, and so suggest some operation of intelligent power. Such are the heavenly bodies; such the sky itself, and the cloud and storm, interposing their dark masses, and so made to seem a power hostile to men, since they hide from human view that divine heaven which in its serenity, with the bright sun or moon irradiating it, seems like a propitious and protecting divinity. So with earthquake, and thunder; so with the milder processes of nature; so with the seasons in their coming and going; so with the earth itself, the divine mother, and with her beautiful children, the greens and blooms that delight the eye and the heart. It is only a misapplied science that sees *nothing* divine in all this; but it is the ignorant fancy of the utterly untaught which assigns to each phenomenon its divinity, and deifies wonder, and beauty, and power.

CONTESTED BY A MONOTHEISTIC PRINCIPLE.

But now, let us go on from this to notice one fact which has great significance and importance in this connection. This is the manner in which this universal polytheism in pagan religion is contested by, and more or less influenced by, a monotheistic principle.

The phenomena brought to light, in this connection, in the study of comparative religion, are eminently deserving of attention, yet should be examined with discrimination and judgment. We must be careful, while recognizing them as really important, not to infer too much from them. The distinction which Prof. Max Müller makes here seems well founded. He invents a word, "henotheism,"—from the two Greek words meaning "one" and "God"—in order to express it. Monotheism will be, by this method of discrimination, the recognition of one *only* God, one and the same, ever and everywhere. Henotheism is the recognition of one God at a time; that is to say, the mention in ancient literatures and inscriptions, and the adoration in worship, sometimes of one deity, sometimes of another, as the one, or at least the supreme, God. For instance, when Ebers quotes from a papyrus roll preserved at Bulaq, in Egypt, such words as these, addressed to the God Amon,

"One only art thou, thou Creator of beings:
And thou only makest all that is created;"

and again,

"He is one only. Alone, without equal;
Dwelling alone in the holiest of holies,"

it seems like monotheism of the most unmistakable sort. We almost hear the inspired man himself speaking of the true God as "dwelling in light, which no man can approach unto." And in a certain way it is a kind of monotheism, as I shall notice presently. But in the mean time it should be mentioned that upon a statue of a goddess, the goddess Neith, corresponding to the Greek Athene, is to be read the following inscription, "I am the All, the Past, the Present, and the Future, my veil has no mortal yet lifted;"—which seems to be almost or quite a claim, on the part of this goddess, to the attributes of a sole deity. The god Ra, also, is sometimes spoken of as "the good god," "the chief of all the gods," "the ancient of heaven," "the lord of all existences," "the support of all things." Rawlinson explains these peculiarities, in a measure, when he says, "In the solemn hymns and chants, which were composed by the priests to be used in the various festivals, the god who is for the time addressed receives all the titles of honor, and even has the names of other gods freely assigned to him, as being in some sort identical with them."

Like things might be said of the deities acknowledged by the Assyrians and Babylonians. Now it is Ann, now it is Hea, and now it is Bel, now the Sun and now the Moon, that is made to bear titles expressive of the highest attributes of divinity. Of the Veda Max Müller observes how in it "one god after another is invoked. For the time being all that can be said of a divine being is ascribed to him. The poet, while addressing him, seems hardly to know of any other gods." Yet he adds how "in the same collection of hymns, sometimes even in the the same hymn, other gods are mentioned, and they also are truly divine, truly independent, or it may be supreme. The vision of the worshipper seems to change suddenly, and the same poet who at one moment saw nothing but the sun, as the ruler of heaven and earth, now sees heaven and earth as the father and mother of the sun, and of all the gods."

These instances may sufficiently illustrate the feature of ancient religions to which I am referring. The explanation probably is to be found, partly in the fact that, especially in Egypt, certain deities were recognized in certain districts as the supreme object of worship, and others in other districts. By the people of each of these districts or provinces the deity thus worshipped would be addressed in language implying the attributes of exclusive divinity. Such expressions, found alone, might seem like the language of monotheism, and so might be misleading, till the fact to which I refer began to receive attention.

Another explanation of the peculiarity which has suggested the term "henotheism" is, as Prof. Max Müller himself points out, that the language in question is often the language of poetry, and hyperbole. We need to be cautious, therefore, when we meet with language of the kind in question, that we do not give to it meanings, or draw from it inferences, not strictly warranted. The monotheistic principle in these religions reveals itself in other ways, which I will now notice.

ITS MANIFESTATIONS.

1. First, I may say that henotheism itself, while as I have shown not to be confounded with monotheism, nevertheless in a certain vague and dim way does after all *imply* the monotheistic principle. When at one time one deity, at another time another, is addressed in terms which imply a sole divinity, such an ascription seems to be prompted by some suggestion, however derived, that the worship of God, or the worship of a god, ought to be worship of him alone. The mind does not hold fast to this conviction, if I may term it so, in its application to worship of any one deity, but in changed circumstances transfers it to another. It is perhaps not conscious to itself of anything monotheistic in its conception, and still, a monotheistic principle seems to be back of all, and to assert itself, though most imperfectly, in this way.

2. In the next place, there seems to be in most of the cultivated old religions the recognition, somewhat obscure yet real, of an original, self-existent divinity, which is the source of all divinity. The idea is expressed in the phrase "father of the gods." We are familiar with this phrase, in the mythology of the Greeks and the Latins, as applied to the Zeus of the one and the Jove of the other. Mr. Gladstone mentions of the Zeus of Homer, how his "will is worked out by other divine agents, themselves exercising their personal freedom, but bringing about the purposes of a counsel higher and larger than their own," and then adds, "This counsel has its back-ground and its ultimate root in pure deity, and for pure deity Zeus is often a synonym in Homer." Of the mythological system of Homer he says, that a portion of it "reveals a primitive basis of monotheism, and ideas in connection with it which seem to defy explanation, except when we compare them with the most ancient Hebrew traditions." In the Latin conception of Jupiter, or Jove, Mr. Rawlinson believes there must have been "a latent monotheism," though less distinct than in that of Zeus among the Greeks, the Latin Jupiter being a later conception than that of the Greek Zeus, and so being farther removed from the original mythological source.

Among the Babylonians a like place was filled by the god Il, or Ra, who, as the same writer says, appears as "a somewhat shadowy being. There is a vagueness," he adds "about the name itself, which means simply 'god,' and can scarcely be said to connote any particular attribute. The Babylonians never represent his form, and they frequently omit him from lists which seem to contain

all the other principal gods. Yet he was," says this writer, "certainly regarded as the head of the pantheon." The resemblance of this name, *El*, to the Hebrew *El* is evident. It seems to be, therefore, a conception of divinity, as such, and might with some good reason be regarded as the relic of an original idea of God purely monotheistic.

The deity among the Egyptians who filled a like place, we find sometimes spoken of as Amon, sometimes as Ra. From Sir Gardner Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians," in his notice of this subject, I quote these sentences, "The fundamental doctrine [among the Egyptians] was the unity of the deity; but the unity was not represented, and he was known by a sentence, or an idea, being, as Iamblichus says, 'worshipped in silence.' But the attributes of that Being were represented under positive forms; and hence arose a multiplicity of gods, that engendered idolatry, and caused a total misconception of the real nature of the deity in the minds of all who were not admitted to a knowledge of the truth through the mysteries."

A like feature appears in other ancient religions, in one at least of which it would seem that originally, and for a considerable time, those names which at last came to denote distinct gods, were really names of one and the same God; just as in Scripture, we find the names God, Jehovah, or Lord, the Almighty, the Most High, and others, used to indicate one and the same divine being. The instance of what seems like this just alluded to is that of the Phœnicians. The number of deities in the Phœnician pantheon was remarkably small. "If we make a collection," says Rawlinson, "of the divine names in use either in Phœnicia proper or in the Phœnician colonies, we shall find that altogether they do not amount to twenty." This is in singular contrast with the hundreds of deities acknowledged by the Egyptians, the throng of them adored by the Sanskrit Aryans, and the thousands acknowledged by the Greeks and Romans. Then when we come to note the names themselves, and their meanings, of the chief Phœnician deities, we cannot but be struck with the suggestion that they must have been, many of them, perhaps nearly all, names originally of one and the same being. Take these, for example: Baal, Melkarth, Moloch, Adonis, El, Eliun, Shamas, Sadyk. Now, two of these names, El and Eliun, we find united in that one divine name, translated "Most High God," which is used in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, where we are told how Melchizedek, "priest of the Most High God," met Abram, as he returned victorious from his battle with the Kings of the East. The Hebrew name is *El-Eliun*. This one name becomes two in Phœnician use. Is it too much to infer that however it may have been later, the two names were with them also originally one? Notice, again, Melkarth and Moloch, both of them, it should seem, originally identical with the Hebrew *Melek*, or king. In a like way we may compare Adonis with *Adonai*, and Sadyk with *Zedek*, the just, the righteous one; an element, also, in the name Melchizedek. A study of these names seems to give us a glimpse backward into the times when Abram dwelt in tents on the plains of Mamre, when Melchizedek reigned as king of Salem, serving at the same time as "priest of the Most High God," and when the Phœnicians were founding cities along the Mediterranean coast, and building ships in whose voyages—distant and adventurous for those times—they seem to have succeeded the Chaldæans as leaders of the world's commerce. With these, at any rate with Abram and Melchizedek, that knowledge of the one God which had become so much obscured elsewhere still remained. It

seems almost certain that the religion of the Phœnicians was originally in a like way monotheistic; names of the one God becoming at last interpreted as names of distinct deities, whose worship, in that process of depravation which polytheism always discloses, becomes at last cruel and brutal, as in the case of Moloch, or licentious, as in that of Ashtoreth. And while such appears to be true of this one instance, is it not strongly suggestive of what may also have been true in others?

3. But perhaps the most decided evidence of a monotheistic principle contesting that of polytheism, or at least surviving in spite of it, is the fact that in nearly all these religions an esoteric monotheistic doctrine seems to have been taught to those initiated in the mysteries, while it gets expression also in the higher forms of literature, and in philosophy. Our failing space will not allow much illustration of the point. That, however, polytheism was the religion of the *people*, and much less so of the cultivated and the learned; that monotheism was an esoteric principle with the priesthood of such nations as the Egyptians, and the original idea of God, never entirely lost, in the case of such as the Chinese; that alike in the philosophy and in the poetry of the Greeks monotheistic ideas often appear, as if protesting against the absurd doctrine of "gods many and lords many"—these are facts well known. They testify, distinctly, to a survival of the monotheistic principle, in however vague a way, and reveal a tendency even in cultivated paganism to rest back ultimately upon that idea of God which alone commends itself to the human intelligence.

The passage in Aratus, to which Paul especially refers in his sermon on Mars Hill, may be quoted here—Aratus being by no means the only instance among Greek poets, as Paul's language itself implies—as illustrating the point we make, although very likely familiar to many readers.

"With Zeus begin we—let no mortal voice
 Leave Zeus unpraised. Zeus fills the hearts of men,
 The streets, the marts,—Zeus fills the sea, the shores,
 The harbors—everywhere we live in Zeus.
 We are his offspring too: friendly to man,
 He gives prognostics; sets men to their toil
 By need of daily bread; tells when the land
 Must be upturned by plowshare or by spade—
 What time to plant the olive or the vine—
 What time to fling on earth the golden grain.
 For he it was who scattered o'er the sky
 The shining stars, and fixed them where they are—
 Provided constellations through the year,
 To mark the seasons in their changeless course.
 Therefore men worship him—the First the Last—
 Their Father—Wonderful—their Help and Shield."

One can hardly believe that these lines are not the production of a Christian poet in some moment of devout inspiration. One writer in quoting them, notes the correspondence of some parts of the language used with familiar phraseology of the Scriptures in dealing with the same high theme;—the words "everywhere we live in Zeus," with Paul's—"in him we live, and move, and have our being;" what is said of the constellations and the seasons, with what is said in the first of Genesis of the heavenly bodies as ruling the year; the epithet "Wonderful" with the well known passage in Isaiah; "First and Last" with the sublime ascription of eternity used of God in the Apocalypse; and the words "Help and Shield" with various places in the Psalms. It is entirely a mistake to assume that the ancient polytheisms were hopelessly dark upon this subject. God has

never, in any of these religions, as Paul says, left himself wholly without a witness.

DUALISM.

The modern representatives of the ancient Iranian, or Zoroastrian faith are the Parsees of India. They are as thoroughly monotheistic in their religion as are the Mohammedans themselves. There have been periods in the history of their religion when polytheistic elements seem to have been in a measure revealed. Late discoveries in inscriptions on monuments have led some writers to hold that Cyrus himself was a polytheist, in spite of those utterances of his in Old Testament history which read so much like utterances of a believer in the very God of Israel himself. It is still an open question whether the testimony of the inscriptions may not be susceptible of another interpretation than that recently given to it. However this may be, there are other inscriptions, alike of Cyrus and of Darius, which recognize but the one God, Ormazd, and pay to him homage and gratitude in forms such as the Christian or the Jew might use in speaking of, or in addressing, Jehovah himself. If we turn to that ancient Iranian scripture, the Zend-Avesta, great as is the power attributed to the mighty evil spirit, Angra-Mainyu, the author of all evil, and the enemy of Ahura-Mazda, the author and promoter of all good, one is ever in doubt, after all, whether the idea of God there found, though called dualistic, is so really. What seems to be true is that the Zoroastrian faith was originally, as it is now, monotheistic; that in dealing with the awful problem of evil in the universe those who held this faith could imagine no other origin for it than that of a malign power hostile to the good deity and making war upon him, and all good beings; that in the conception of this evil power, as a personality, with the consciousness how mighty the agent of such mischief must be, the idea of him approached, if it did not sometimes reach that of a deity equal in power with the beneficent Ahura-Mazda himself; but that, in reality, the monotheistic idea, holding the good deity as alone really divine, not only survived, but ultimately gained the mastery, as now we see in the case of the Parsees.

PANTHEISM.

Only a word is allowable on this part of the subject. The pantheistic religions are Brahmanism and Buddhism—so far as Buddhism can be said to involve any idea of God at all. In the view of some the esoteric teaching of the Egyptian priests was also pantheistic. Wherever found, the root of it cannot be said to be polytheism, but rather monotheism,—the one divine being coming to be viewed as a universal essence, rather than as a personality. Out of it polytheism may grow, as in fact it has done in the case of the Hindu idolatries. If God is the All, as Brahmanism teaches, he is *in* each; that is to say, you may select what you please of the things seen as representing the Unseen, and persuade yourself that in worshipping the one you worship the other. Or you may make images, idols of wood or stone, as representing some conception of that divinity which you view as in itself so incomprehensible; these also you may worship. Upon this idea of God the whole system of Brahmanism with its oppressive caste, its idols and idol temples for the ignorant masses and its mystic philosophy for the instructed few, seems to be built. Buddhism, as nearly as can be true of anything called a religion, is "without God," and in a degree true of it almost in a literal sense, "has no hope."

A FEW POINTS OF BRIEF SUMMARY.

1. The first is, how ineradicable, so far as the mind of man is concerned, the idea of God seems to be. Even in the religion last named some trace of it appears to survive. As for the rest, not only is the idea of God the *root-idea*, but it is the controlling one, serving, in each religion, more than any other element to give it character and determine its effect.

2. It is very remarkable how persistent, and how impossible of entire eradication is the *monotheistic* idea of God.

3. But then, thirdly, the view so far taken makes it clear that this idea of God in its *purity*, could have been preserved in the world no otherwise than by the method which divine wisdom chose. It certainly never has been. We may say of even Mohammedanism that it could never have existed had there been no Judaism and no Christianity. Of this no one familiar with the life of Mohammed, or with the Koran itself, needs to be assured. As to Zoroastrianism, nearly as that religion approaches to a true idea of God, and based as it seems to have been upon original monotheism—its adherents could not deal with the vast mystery of good and evil in the universe without a resort to expedients which corrupted the original monotheism into a dualism; while in a later period, the Magians with their fire worship and their oppressive hierarchy, transformed it still more for the worse. Then, as to the other religions, monotheism, as an esoteric faith, is seen not to hinder even those who held it from *practicing* and *teaching* the worst idolatries. Men left to themselves do not "retain God in their knowledge." Paul's statement on this subject is confirmed by the history of all religions.

4. Lastly, if we inquire for *the reason* why the monotheistic principle, nevertheless, struggles as we have seen against the polytheistic tendency in all pagan religions, even, I suppose that these two answers may be made: (1) That God has given to the very nature of man a principle which scarcely the most degrading idolatry can quite destroy, which is in man a witness to himself, and to which the truth of religion when it comes always makes appeal. This witness in man is not to the existence of a god, but of *God*. It involves the true idea of God, coming into action as the mind is made more intelligent, and protesting, in every cultivated mind, especially, against such manifest absurdities as are found in all idolatry and in all mythology. (2) Then, secondly, I think the answer ought to be that the absolutely primitive religion, that from which all others have, nearly, or remotely, sprung, was a *true* religion, with a *true idea of God*. Man, in his original state having had this true faith, with that in his nature which recognizes and approves it, has, save in his lowest conditions of savagery retained some traces of it; or at least found it impossible to rid himself of it wholly. The two causes have wrought together. The original revelation authenticated this principle in man's nature and inwove the doctrine with the early history of the race. The inborn principle, ineradicable and efficient, preserved the doctrine, at least, in traces and fragments, in spite of a thousand hostile tendencies, even after the revelation was lost.

SEMITIC AND INDO-EUROPEAN CULTURE.

[Translated by Prof. G. H. Schodde from Benfey's *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft*, p. 701 s. q.]

In the present century, especially in its second quarter, the earnest attempt has been made for the first time to study the Hebrew language with the same objective and unprejudiced spirit that characterizes other philological research, and to judge the sacred Scriptures according to those laws of criticism and hermeneutics which have been found valid in connection with profane writings; in one word, to measure the Jewish people and their development with the same measure by which we are accustomed to measure the development of other nationalities.

And in the hands of conscientious German philologers it immediately became an evident fact that this method in no way conflicted with the reverence which the Scriptures in so eminent a sense deserve; but that, on the contrary, through the application of this purely human measure their importance grew not a little, although in another sense than the religious. We find in the most unprejudiced scholars in this department the deepest recognition of the wisdom of life contained in these books, a recognition, namely, of the conviction that true happiness in life depends on moral qualities and religious life alone, and also an acknowledgment of all the greatness, grandeur and goodness which mark the contents and history of these books; a recognition of the wonderful treasure which through these writings have been made accessible to mankind; a recognition of this source of salvation for the past as well as for the future generations, that enter into the circle of culture whose demarcation lines, for their most important features, depend upon the teachings of these books. They feel and acknowledge that a security for a never failing, ever-growing culture lies in this union (marriage) of the Jewish soul, as this has been so entirely a living reality in the biblical books of the Old and the New Testaments. Alone neither of the two would be able to prove itself effectual (*sich gewähren*). The Semitic, or rather Jewish tendency, which subordinates the great diversities of spiritual life to a single one, but that in truth a most deep and potent motive power, namely the religious, leads to a disregard of the diversities, if it would attain sole supremacy, then the arts and sciences would develop only within a very limited circle, the whole fulness and variety of life would not be influenced by it at all or but very little; the whole life blood, so to say, would remain in the heart, so that the members could not grow into full life, and the whole existence would be like a desert with but a single oasis in the middle. The Indo-European mind, however, with its marked tendency toward the co-ordinate development of all the spiritual forms to the greatest activity and variety, would drive all life blood into the members, but would, so to say, empty the heart; the arts and sciences would develop an extraordinary richness, but would be governed by no single and uniform principle, so that they, as proved to be in the case of the Greeks, would soon, after a brief prosperity, have fallen into decay. The Jewish reduction of the diversities to the unity and the Indo-European expansion of the unity into the diversity supplement each other in a manner which sets the boundaries for each and prevents their overstepping these and thus resulting in an abnormal totality of life (*gesammtleben*). By the introduction of the Semitic, or more particularly, the Jewish spirit, into the Indo-Germanic, or more particularly the Germanic, a

damper, so to say, was put on the latter, which, without forcing on it the Semitic aridity (*dürre*) prevented the evil results of its superabundance of vitality. It is a question which admits of no doubt whatever that it was the deeply thoughtful spirit of the Germanic people which, in the sixteenth century, saved, in the first instance, the Christian, and then the whole world from a destruction and stupor (*versumpfung*) such as classical antiquity had not experienced even in its darkest days; but it is equally a matter which admits of no doubt that the principle weapon with which this victory and deliverance was won, was the translation of the Bible, by means of which Luther overcame the immorality among the people and created a firm foundation for the unfolding of a moral and religious life.

The Jews did not, like the majority of historical nations, step down from the stage of life after the destruction of their national life. Notwithstanding the loss of the three chief elements of a national existence, a peculiar language, an individual state and one's own inherited fatherland, they have, solely through the preservation of their common religion, maintained themselves to the present day in a union and connection which, according to the political circumstances under which they live scattered over the whole world, varies from the character of a purely religious association through that of a family to that of almost a real nationality.

If this circumstance of their history alone already distinguishes them in a peculiar manner from all other nations that have lost their individuality, then this difference is made still more marked by the manner in which they, after their dispersion, deported themselves as well in reference to particular surroundings as to the developments of history. They have, on the one hand, continued a life, which was indeed within a circumscribed scope, but nevertheless worthy of consideration, a spiritual life resting upon their own traditions. On the other hand, partly on the basis of an individual, and partly on the basis of their common traditional standpoint, they took part in a greater or less degree, in the historical development of the nations among whom they had made their abode. Although they only seldom, and then from an individual standpoint, take active part in the life of these nations, they all the more remain a large audience who not only in a passive manner—which is indeed most frequently the case—are drawn into co-operation, but who sometimes also assume the role of the chorus in a Greek tragedy, who pronounce open judgment on the acts and actors from their standpoint.

THE EXPLANATION OF NUMERICAL DIFFICULTIES.

BY PROFESSOR T. J. DODD, D.D.

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.

It is greatly to be regretted that the arguments made in support of cherished opinions are sometimes so weak and fallacious; and what is no less to be regretted is the fact that many of these arguments have been allowed so long to pass unchallenged. An instance of the arguments referred to is found in the means frequently employed to remove objections to some of the biblical statements as to numbers;—*First*, of numbers so large as to appear incredible, as in 1 Sam. vi., 19, where the writer tells us that, for looking into the ark, fifty thousand and

three score of the men of Bethshemesh were smitten of God; whereas, from all that is known upon the subject, Bethshemesh must have been a very small town, not containing an entire population of one tenth of this number. Some would remove the difficulty by putting 5070, as found in the Syriac and Arabic Versions, which is a considerable reduction of the number of men destroyed, but is really, in view of the size of the town, no reduction whatever of the difficulty. Others (and it is in reference to these that our paper is designed) would read seventy, instead of the large number given in the text. They would support their emendation by supposing that, while the sacred writer, or some of his transcribers, had used the letter y for seventy, others of his copyists had committed the error of writing j , which was used to designate fifty thousand, which error was, by another transcriber, taken into the text and combined with the y , thus giving us yj , or 50070. Such is the explanation of Reinke, as represented by Davidson. A more recent writer supposes that "the number originally designated was 570 only, as the absence of any intermediate denomination between the first two digits would seem to indicate" (McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia, *Bethshemesh*). This effort at removing the difficulty appears to have been founded upon the idea advanced by Horne, that, "as the Jews anciently appear to have expressed numbers by marks analogous to our common figures, the corruption (and, consequently, the seeming contradiction) may be accounted for from the transcribers having carelessly added or omitted a single cipher!

Secondly, of the discrepancies between the numerical statements of different writers of the sacred Word; as in 2 Kings VIII., 26, where we are informed that Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, while, in 2 Chron. XXII., 2, he is represented as being forty-two years old. On this variation Horne remarks that "the proper reading is a D , whose numerical power is twenty, being put for a B , whose numerical power is forty." So recent a writer as Dr. Pope, of Didsbury College, Manchester, a leading author among the British Wesleyans, tells us that "a large number of the contradictory historical statements detected by comparing the Chronicles with the Kings, and Ezra and Nehemiah, and the genealogical tables one with another, may fairly be thus explained. For instance, we read, in one account, that the molten sea contained two thousand baths; in another, it received and held three thousand baths. Now, here we have an instance that may stand for many. Either D (2000) has been confounded with j (3000),—the more probable solution,—or the words *received and held* suggest that it was capable of containing the larger number." Again, the same writer says, "In multitudes of texts, we must accept such errors, steadfastly believing, however, that they are thus to be accounted for."

We would now offer a few remarks upon the above and all like attempts to clear up the difficulties in question. *First*; In many cases it requires no little power of imagination to see how some of the letters, thus said to have been used, could possibly have been mistaken for those in whose places they were substituted. Between D and j there is really less resemblance than between 2000 and 3000, and it was a queer eye that mistook y for j . If such substitutions were ever made, they must have been designed.

Secondly; It is very remarkable that no MS. copies of the Bible are referred to as actually having these substitutions. Surely, among the large number collated by Kennicott, De Rossi, Bruns, Pinner, and others, and with all the study

subsequently bestowed upon the sacred text, some one MS. might be named as having this kind of variance from the *textus receptus*. Kennicott is quoted by Pope as saying, "that the Jewish transcribers did frequently express the Bible numbers by single letters is well known to the learned." Davidson tells us that Kennicott conjectures, in the matter of Ahaziah's age, "that the mistake was owing to one of the Hebrew numeral letters being mistaken for another." But why should Kennicott conjecture? and if such use of the letters was "well known to the learned," why did he not adduce veritable instances of such use? Who was better qualified for this than Kennicott?

Thirdly; so far as any *knowledge* of the subject is concerned, no MS. ever did contain letters of the alphabet in the place of numbers fully written. And yet, so far as we are aware, no author who has touched upon the matter has made such an assertion. Lee has approached the true idea, when he tells us that "whether this mode of expressing numbers formerly prevailed in the Hebrew MSS. has been a subject of some dispute, and one which it is now impossible to determine. That the numbers have been expressed in words written at length, for some centuries, there seems to be no doubt; but whether this was the case in very ancient times, it is difficult to say." *Formerly prevailed in MSS.* being confessed to be doubtful would imply that there can be no doubt as to the use of them in the MSS. of a later date. But of such fact not one example can be found, or at least has never been published to the world, except as regards the numbering of the chapters and verses of the Bible.

Of like import is the statement of Dr. Green: "This use of the letters is found in the accessories of the Hebrew text, e. g., in the numeration of the chapters and verses, and in the Masoretic notes, but not in the text itself. Whether these, or any other signs of number, were ever employed by the original writers of Scripture, or by the scribes in copying it, may be a doubtful matter. It has been ingeniously conjectured, and with a show of plausibility, that some of the discrepancies of numbers in the Old Testament may be accounted for by assuming the existence of such a system of symbols, in which errors might more easily arise than in the written words" (*Grammar*, p. 12). Smith, in his Bible Dictionary, has a very singular way of putting the matter. He proves the "highly probable" use of the letters for numerals, from the internal evidence, that is, from the fact that "inconsistencies in numerical statement" are found, and he then makes use of these letters in order to reconcile the inconsistencies! At the same time he confesses that "no positive satisfaction" of such use of the letters "can be at present established, more especially as there is so little variation in the numbers quoted from the Old Testament both in the *New* and the *Apocrypha*." The greater part of the writers, however, whose works we have consulted, write as if there were not the least possible doubt upon the subject. They speak so confidently, that, for centuries, their statements have been accepted as settling the matter. But the fact is, we have no reason whatever, apart from our desire to reconcile contradictions, to believe that numbers were ever expressed by the alphabet, or in any other way than the written words, during the biblical period of Jewish history. As to the notation by figures analogous to those which are now known as the Arabic numerals, as is taught by Horne and others, there is not the shadow of a foundation for belief. Even to the present day, the Jewish mode is by letters; but these are of post-biblical origin, and are never employed

in the biblical text. Among all the changes that have occurred in the sacred text, among all the variations of MSS. and Versions, no collator or editor has ever mentioned this substitution of letters for the written numbers.

Fourthly; If the representing of numbers by letters is of an origin subsequent to the Captivity, and, so far as we *know*, this is really the case, it should require the most overwhelming evidence to convince us, in the absence of MS. authority upon the subject, that the Jews ever introduced numeral letters into their Bibles. The rigid laws controlling the transcription of the synagogue rolls made this an absolute impossibility, so far as these were concerned; and, as for private MSS. of the Scriptures, the superstitious regard entertained for them would have prevented the substitution, in these, of the letters for numbers. MSS. which were so carefully and superstitiously copied as to hand down through the ages all the minutest peculiarities, such as the *num inversum* and the *literae majusculae* and *minusculae*, could never have admitted so violent an innovation.

Fifthly; After all, granting everything that is claimed upon the subject, we have only a very round-about way of admitting that, in this one regard at least, our text is not in the form in which it was originally penned.

We hope that criticism, as it advances, may yet remove all such difficulties of the Word of God; but let us be honest, as well as zealous, in our efforts. All such methods as that above given can only weaken our cause in the estimation of those who understand the subject. A few such arguments in support of the inspiration of the Bible would be a powerful argument in favor of its mere human origin.

→GENERAL NOTES←

The time of Abraham's birth.—It is generally believed that he was born about 2000 B. C. It is not so easy, however, to determine the interval between his birth and the deluge. The Hebrew and Septuagint versions of the Scriptures differ with reference to it by many centuries. The discrepancy may perhaps have arisen from the custom among ancient Jewish writers of "distributing genealogies broadly into divisions, and of compressing them with a view to such division. Sometimes we find generations omitted. For example, Laban (Gen. xxix., 5) is called the son of Nahor; he was the grandson. Also St. Matthew calls King Uzziah the son of Joram, whereas he was the great grandson, the intermediate generations having possibly been omitted by reason of their wickedness and relations to Jezebel. Ezra omits five generations. St. Luke, on the other hand, inserts a generation between Salah and Arphaxad, ancestors of Abraham."

If the shorter interval be taken, Abraham will have received many of the traditions of the old world direct from Shem, or his contemporaries. If the longer interval be regarded as the most probable, a later generation will have communicated them to him. The writer has assumed the latter to have been the fact. As the lives of the patriarchs were long, and the power of tradition strong, as exemplified in a later age by the poems of Homer, there can be little doubt that such leading incidents as the Creation, the Fall, the Deluge and the Promise of a Deliverer would be preserved in the world. We believe that God has never yet left

Himself without witness among men, and that at the time of Abraham's call He had other true worshippers besides Melchizedek. It is not improbable, therefore, that God revealed the ancient truths and traditions to Abraham by the lips of men.—*From Allen's Abraham. His Life, Time, and Travels.*

Noble Thoughts in the Edenic Story.—Let us now point out some of the noble thoughts which underlie the Edenic story. 1. Here, then, first of all we find the sublimest possible conception of man's original. Man is Deiform, the image of the Infinite Being on earth, the direct creation of the Eternal Mind and Will. He is formed of the dust of the ground, *Adamah*, from which he takes his name of Adam, or *Earth*, dust and ashes, in the language of Abraham. He is formed as the last link in a series of animal lives, and on one side of his nature strongly resembles those beasts which perish. He belongs to the *Vertebrata*. His form has been typified and foretold in a long succession of old-world prophecies, in the structure of previous animals. But he does not spring from the earth, or from previous forms, as they did. He is specially fashioned by the Almighty Hand; God is represented as molding him, working out in living art the eternal idea; and then as breathing into him, by direct afflatus of Divinity, the breath of life. In this luminous ancient page man does not appear as a developed animal, an evolution from anthropoids, the lineal descendant of brutal races—but, while akin to these in inward structure of the body and mind, as possessed also of a higher nature, a nature resembling that of Deity—rational, moral, and royal; a nature which gives him the power of tracing up all effects to the Eternal Cause; of knowing his Maker, of communing with his God, of obeying and enjoying Him; a being inhabiting both worlds, of matter and spirit, holding intimate relations with both time and eternity, with both earth and heaven. The seal of the living God, of the Infinite Life, is on his forehead; and though capable of dying, he is not made to die. There is no idea in the modern books on the *Descent of Man* so grand as this.

2. An equal splendor and originality characterizes the relation of the creation of woman. As if foreseeing the debasing gorilla-philosophy of the last days, here, in the very dawn of history, the strongest possible contradiction is given, while humanity was still in its beginning, to the notion of human derivation from the animals. "And the Lord God said, It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a help-meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them. And Adam gave names to the cattle, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam *there was not found an help-meet for him.*" Man was not a "beast of the field," no "beast's heart was given to him," therefore no modified anthropoid or simian could serve as his wife. For a modified gorilla, a modified simian would have served well enough. But Adam was of a Divine original, "made in God's image," and therefore Eve, in her glory and beauty, is the direct work of the Supreme Sculptor, Painter, Poet, and Life-giver; fashioning out of Adam himself the woman who should be one with him in life and love for ever and ever. Here is the strongest possible denial of the bestial original of humanity. He could not pair with the lower races, for his origin was directly from the sacred font of Deity. He was "the Son of God."

The building up of the frame of Eve out of materials of bone and flesh taken from the entranced form of Adam, is only a specific difference under the general

principle that living beings descend from each other, under the plastic agency of God; and in this case the form of the action was specially fitted to lay the foundation of spiritual marriage, the only true human marriage, in the consciousness of their deep unity in Him. It is God who "joins together" man and woman in a unity which is no mere partnership or trading company with limited liability, but a unity consecrated by the bond of God's Spirit, and which, therefore, "no man may put asunder." The influence of this account of the creation of Eve was to throw a glorious light on womanhood through all the ages of the Patriarchal and Mosaic religions. It was a solemn protest, as Christ himself declares, at once against the gross bovine polygamy of the East, and the looser unions of harlotry. It consecrated woman as the daughter of the Lord God Almighty, it wrote "Holiness to the Lord" upon her forehead, and taught her for ever her true vocation as the Mother of the sons of God, and man's helper in the service of heaven. Compare these ideas, as civilizing and ennobling agencies, first with the incredible theories of recent years, that the mutual adaptation of the sexes in all their intricate relations was the work of blind nature; and then that woman was a female development out of the hairy and tailed monsters of anthropoid type, meeting, in the darkness of a world without God, her unpredestined partner in brutality and death.

3. Next observe that the man and woman thus formed are designed for Immortal Life. Those who speak so confidently of the absence of the idea of immortality in the Old Testament, must have failed to note its earliest pages. So long as Adam abstained from the forbidden tree he is free to take of the tree of life, the effect of which is to cause him to "live for ever." To take of one tree was death, but to take of the other was life eternal. What can convey more clearly the sublime idea that man was originally designed for a dependent but endless life in God. Its enjoyment depended on union with God by faith, but the original purpose of God was that man should never die—that his existence should run parallel with that of the Divine Being throughout eternity. Here surely is a conception beyond the shafts of ridicule even from extreme Evolutionists.

4. But if man is not a "beast of the field," and if a "beast's heart is not given him," neither is he here represented as an automaton. He is free, and is placed at once under the necessity of choosing between good and evil, truth and falsehood, right and wrong, God and self-will—in an immediate trial. This trial is ultimately to determine whether the higher or the lower nature shall rule, the spiritual nature which unites man only with the creation by the attractions of sense and passion. This trial is represented as coming to the first man, as it comes to every one of us, in the earliest stage of our intelligence. The chief and determining trial of character is in childhood and youth. The trial of Adam was at the commencement of his history. He must, by a deliberate choice under temptation, against all lower seduction, declare his allegiance to the Eternal, as the condition of the endless life. It was a trial of faith, that is of intelligent voluntary choice of the Infinite Life and Perfection as Ruler and Lord, precisely in the same sense in which we are tried in the contest between faith and unbelief.

How could this faith be tested? The law of the ten commandments was, as Mr. Henry Rogers has pointed out in one of his memorable letters, inapplicable. The law of the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments was unsuited to a creature who had but one single earthly relationship. There must,

therefore, be appointed some positive external trial, by which the question of allegiance might be determined at once and for ever. The test selected was the taking of the fruit of a tree which was called the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, which was good for food, desirable to the eyes, and in some mysterious sense described as a "tree desirable to make one wise." This tree appealed, by its complex qualities, to the whole nature of man on its un-moral side, to the lower senses of taste and smell, to the sense of beauty, above all to his intellectual curiosity and ambition, as carrying with it some awful mystery of "knowledge of good and evil," which should liberate him from dependence on the Creator's word—in fact from a life of faith in God. It was a test which brought out the whole strength of the two counter attractions by which their being was drawn in two opposite directions, towards God the Infinite, or away from Him. Between these two the choice must be made for eternity of loyal obedience, or of empirical rebellion.

And the lower attraction was supplemented by the permitted assistance of a living Tempter, enforcing the seduction of the inanimate object, since the rejection of animated evil was as much due to God as the rejection of the inanimate. In Adam's case, the still further fidelity was required of deafness to the voice of his wife, when she became an auxiliary to the seduction.

What is there of the ridiculous in such a trial? It precisely resembles in its essence the trial to which every man in the world is still exposed—the trial of faith and fidelity to God, to right, to duty as against created forces of seduction. How shamefully is this lofty trial now misrepresented! Here is not the word of "an actual apple"—the fruit is not named; the material attractiveness is scarcely noticed, in the emphasis given to the intellectual attractions of the "tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil"—the temptation to know good and evil experimentally, apart from the will and word of the Creator. These perverse attempts to replace serious thought by ridicule are, I think, unworthy even of intelligent sceptics, much less of Christians. The tree by which they were tempted was no mere bait for the palate; it presented a mysterious appeal to all that was deepest within them—just as the modern love of knowledge, when animated by a spirit of conceit and rebellion, offers the deepest temptation to the abandonment of God and religion by those who love truth and duty less than what they wrongly call science and freedom. It was a test of the root-principle of obedience to the Eternal Mind and Will, the prime condition of co-existence in eternity with God; since such obedience of faith is, and must be in all worlds but the fulfilment of the primary law of created free agency. For pride is the sin through which "fell the Angels."—*White's Genesis the Third: History not Fable.*

Samuel's Schools of the Prophets.—What was the exact nature of Samuel's institutions it is impossible to ascertain; but the allusions to companies of prophets in connection with his name have led to the inference that he established a kind of prophetic college at Ramah. It would seem probable that this college was in fact a kind of university, of a rude form, where the elementary knowledge which was possible at that time was imparted to men who would be fitted both to teach and to rule. "The people were, no doubt, very ignorant, and reading and writing were mysteries confined to the descendants of those great scribes, Eleazar and Phinehas. Samuel determined, therefore, to raise the nation intellectually, as he had already raised it morally; and for this purpose he gathered round him

at Naioth, that is the meadows or open pastures at Ramah, where his own house was situated, a number of young men, whom he trained in reading, writing, and music. As their education was in course of time entrusted to Nabhis, prophets, they were called the sons, *i. e.*, the disciples of the prophets; and from this modest beginning arose 'the schools of the prophets,' of which we read so much afterwards, especially in the history of the northern kingdoms. And thus prophecy became a regularly organized national institution."

We must not, however, suppose that Samuel laid down any religious law which could be put at all on a level with the law of Moses. It was not required of a prophet that he should pass through the institution at Ramah, nor afterwards, when similar institutions spread through the ten tribes, was it made a formal regulation that one who desired to be received as a Divine messenger had been so trained; as we see in the case of Amos. It might be that a priest or a Levite felt himself prompted by the Spirit to go forth as a messenger of Jehovah. There was no clerical education, no formal ordination, no recognized succession. A prince of the blood royal might be called to be a prophet; an agricultural laborer might be burdened with a word of the Lord, which he began immediately to proclaim. His authority was not from without, but from within. His acknowledgment was dependent upon the influence of the Spirit of God in the people who listened to him. In some instances the inspired man was persecuted and rejected because those to whom he spoke resisted the Spirit which uttered Himself in him. The mission of the prophet was divinely appointed and divinely limited. It continued for a short while, or through the whole life, as the case might be. By the exercise of a free judgment in relation to the messengers were the people tried. The false prophets came in numbers, and the Spirit of God gave to the true Israel, the power to try every spirit which came to them, whether it was from God or whether the messenger spoke from himself—whether it was truth or falsehood.

Now the work which Samuel did must have prepared the way for a larger outpouring of the Holy Spirit, by regular instruction in the written word of God, and by the maintenance of religious services. There are two passages which have already been referred to bearing on this subject. In the former, the company of prophets are described with musical instruments praising the Lord; in the latter, David is said to be at Naioth in Ramah with Samuel, receiving instruction from him, as a son of the prophets. Saul's messengers saw the "company of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them," and "the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied." In other words, Samuel was conducting a religious service with his trained disciples, and it was so impressive and powerful that the strangers from Saul were drawn into it, and filled themselves with the same spirit of praise. We read also when Saul was enquiring after the seer, that the maidens answered, "Make haste now, for he came to-day to the city; for there is a sacrifice of the people to-day in the high place" (a religious festival). "As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that be bidden." Plainly the religious festivals of that time were regarded as incomplete without the presence of the prophet and his band of disciples. We may therefore conclude that their training was with a view to the conduct of such services.—*From Redford's Prophecy.*

The Four Greater Prophets.—Isaiah may be compared to a majestic oak, shadowing with its leafy boughs the palace of the kings of Judah in the time of its prosperity. Jeremiah is like a weeping willow, whose branches hang down to the ground, in the midst of the ruins of this deserted palace. Ezekiel reminds us of one of those aromatic Eastern plants whose vivifying odors perfume the country, and revive the heart of the fainting traveller. Daniel is like a tree rising out of the midst of a vast plain, which may be seen from all sides—a signal to guide the caravan in its march.

So has God in all ages drawn near his people, and answered with the fidelity of a father to their needs. At every critical moment, and, so to say, at every bifurcation of the road, he has been found, *rising up early*, (according to the beautiful expression of Jeremiah xxxix., 19) and pouring forth his saving counsels through his prophets. And all these different voices combine in one to proclaim together the master-law, the supreme principle of all history: *He that exalteth himself shall be abased*. It was to this law that all the powers of the ancient world—the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Greek, and the Roman monarchies—had to bow their proud heads. The littleness of Israel was no protection against the application of this great principle. As soon as it took upon itself to make its Divine election the ground of a monopoly, as soon as it dared to make itself an end in itself, instead of simply an instrument, as it was in God's purpose, the thunder-bolt which falls from heaven upon everything that exalts itself, struck it in its littleness. For, let us ever bear in mind that the pride of the little is no more tolerable in the eyes of the Most High than that of the great.

This law, indeed, which judged the ancient world, rules the modern world also. It is for this reason that the words of the prophets concern us still. They fell from too great a height to be of merely local or temporary application. Till the end of the world they will recall to men, dazzled with the sense of their own greatness, what they are, and what God is. Individuals, families, nations, all remain for ever subject to this law.

Has a nation attained to the summit of prosperity,—does she flatter herself that she is by her enlightenment, by her political or military organization, or by her moral development, at the head of the world's civilization? The Holy Spirit says to her through the mouth of Isaiah, "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled; the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. . . . Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself, and let Him be our fear, and let Him be our dread."

Or does a nation, after having shut her ears to the Divine warnings, fall to the earth under the unforeseen judgments which overtake her, and does she lie like a wounded man bleeding upon the ground? Jeremiah comes forth and thus addresses her, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord . . . Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?"

Does a nation, shattered by the chastisements of the Almighty, do homage to her heavenly Judge, and instead of madly cursing the rod which smites her, give glory to the Hand which chastens her? Then is the moment when Ezekiel cries to her, "Ye shall live, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. . . . when I shall hide my face no more from you; when I have poured out my spirit upon you."

Finally, does any nation, after having experienced the bright dawn of restoration, give herself up once more to ambitious hopes and earthly aspirations? Daniel comes forward and reminds her that the realization of the golden age of the latter

days is not the work of man, but of the Christ; that the abolition of social miseries can only be the result of the suppression of sin; that the era of good for mankind can only date from the day on which the *Sun of Righteousness* shall arise;—in short, that glory is, in the Divine order, only the crown of holiness.

There are no longer apostles—and why? Because Peter, Matthew, Paul, John, are still our apostles. God no longer raises up prophets—why? Because Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, are still to be our prophets. Let us then study their words, not in order to try to tear asunder, in idle curiosity, the veil which hides the future; but to learn how to make constant use of the present time in view of the end; so that whenever we prepare ourselves to meditate upon their words, it may be in the spirit of an Isaiah, at the time when he bent his ear to receive the Divine message:—

“Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”—*Godet's Studies on the Old Testament.*

Rabbinical Sayings concerning Marriage.—The sublime ethical doctrines of the Bible concerning the matrimonial relation are re-echoed in the Rabbinical sayings contained in the Talmud and Midrash. The following is a selection from these sayings:

“He who liveth without a wife is no perfect man.” (Yebamoth 63.)

“To be unmarried is to live without joy, without blessing, without kindness, without religion, without protection, without peace.” (Yebamoth 62.)

“As soon as a man marries, his sins decrease.” (Yebamoth 63.)

“First build a house and plant a vineyard (i. e., provide for the means of the household) and then take a wife.” (Sota 24.)

“No man without a wife, neither a woman without a husband, nor both of them without God.” (Bereshith Rabba, chap. 8.)

“If virtuous, they are helpmates to each other; if not they stand against each other.” (Yebamoth 63.)

“God dwells with the faithful husband and wife. Without him they are consumed by the fire of strife.” (Sota 17.)

“Descend a step in choosing a wife.” (Yebamoth 63.)

“Let youth and old age not be joined in marriage, lest the purity and peace of domestic life be disturbed.” (Sanhedr. 76; Yebamoth 101.)

“He who marries for money, his children shall be a curse to him.” (Kidd. 70.)

“A man's home means his wife.” (Yoma 2.)

“Let a man be careful to honor his wife, for he owes to her alone all the blessing of his house.” (B. Metzia 59.)

“If in anger the one hand removed thy wife, let the other hand again bring her to thy heart.” (Sanhedrin 107b.)

“A man should be careful lest he afflict his wife, for God counts her tears.” (B. Metzia 59.)

“Honor thy wife and thou wilt be happy.” (B. Metzia 59.)

“Who is rich? He who has a noble wife.” (Sota 17.)

"Love your wife like yourself, honor her more than yourself; you will then see the fulfillment of the promise: 'And thou shalt know that there is peace in thy tent.'" (Yebamoth 63.)

"If thy wife is small, bend down to her, to take counsel from her." (B. Metzia 59.)

"Tears are shed on God's altar for the one who forsakes the love of his youth." (Gittin 90.)

"He who divorces his wife is hated before God." (Gittin 90.)

"He who sees his wife die, has, as it were, been present at the destruction of the temple." (Sanhedrin 22.)

"The whole world is darkened for him whose wife died in his lifetime." (Sanhedrin 29.)

"A husband's death is felt by none as by his wife. A wife's death is felt by none as by her husband." (Sanhedrin 22.)—*From Mielziner's Jewish Law of Marriage and Divorce.*

↳ CONTRIBUTED NOTES. ◀

Gustav Friedrich Oehler.—This distinguished student of the Old Testament was born, in the same district with Beck, in 1812. His father, a poor school teacher, urged on his little son in his studies so rapidly that at nine years of age he was a student of four languages, and besides had special lessons in Persian and Arabic. At this time his mother was taken from him, but her holy influence ever remained. Though burdened with a sickly body, he successively held the first place in the lyceum and theological institute. His eyes were weak and his hearing difficult, and he sacrificed society to his study. He was very fortunate in receiving a strong intellectual impulse from Dr. Baur, while his theological tendency was shaped by the evangelical authors C. F. Schmidt and Steudel and the practical piety prevalent at Basel. Schmidt's New Testament Theology taught him to revere the word of God and led him to prepare in the same spirit the Old Testament Theology. But the brilliant youth was to pass through many obstacles before he gained his lofty place in the world. His trouble was that he was too devout for the Tübingen school, where his friends again and again sought a professorship for him. He thought that "theologians should be men of God." Rarely have high culture and brotherly love been so perfectly united as in him. He could not make up his mind to devote himself exclusively to the oriental languages, therefore he sought and found a place to teach theology in a humble sphere. In this comparative retirement he published his prolegomena to Old Testament Theology, after which calls came to him to various universities, of which he selected Breslau. Further discipline awaited him there, for such was the opposition raised by rationalists that students were deterred from attending his lectures, his courses were broken up, and those he attempted to hold were sometimes greeted with an empty auditorium. At the end of two years the tide turned and he became an honored professor and one of the most influential personages in Silesia. He resisted all calls

until one came from home, from Tübingen, which had passed from under the control of the rationalists, who had twice rejected him, into the hands of evangelical men. F. C. Baur still drew many hearers, but so did Beck and Oehler who were believers in inspiration. So strong was the new sentiment that Oehler could lay aside his polemical weapons that had been in constant use at Breslau. Oehler had the highest conception of the duties of a theological professor. With a narrow conscience he possessed a broad heart. Without the aid of speculation and conjecture and doubt, likewise free from parenthetical homilies, he held the attention by his exact learning, his eager enthusiasm and his devout spirit, as he sought to restore the Old Testament to the place of honor from which Schleiermacher sought to remove it, the place of the indispensable historical and doctrinal foundation of the New Testament. The highest compliment a professor of theology can receive, he used to say, is to hear his pupils exclaim, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

From 1852 for nearly twenty years he toiled in the field of Old Testament literature at Tübingen. He published little but review articles. His great works on Old Testament Theology and Symbolics are posthumous. He lectured up to the day before his fatal sickness. From his dying bed he sent word to his pupils in Job that he had "now experienced the contents of that book, and by faith could solve the riddle of suffering that remained a mystery to the patriarch." He said he understood the psalms better than he did, and he called the 130th his own. He often sighed, "I want to go home," and on his grave stone at his request was inscribed: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Thus ended the life of one whom Delitzsch has called, "a theologian after God's heart."

W. W. EVERTS, JR.,

Philadelphia.

Throwing the Slipper.—Not long since, in a railroad train with a friend, having the January number of the *Century* I was interested in reading some sketches from the letters of the lamented President Garfield, from London. On the voyage out a question arose between him and a certain Dr. H., a fellow-passenger, on the meaning of the custom of throwing the slipper after a newly married couple. Dr. H. thought the custom was "taken from the Bible, wherein a shoe is considered the symbol of a good wife." (We would have been interested in seeing the proof passage for this.) Garfield quoted Ps. LX., 8., "Over Edom will I cast my shoe," which," he said, "he had always regarded as a malediction." The statesman was much nearer the truth than the theologian; but still, I think *renunciation* is the word which, more nearly than *malediction*, expresses the meaning of the act, as we have it in the Scriptures, and as I have often witnessed it in the East. A father, for instance, who would renounce his son, after he has been convicted of being a wicked son, will, before witnesses, take off his shoe, and, if near enough, strike him with it, or, if more distant, throw it at him. Recently we have had three cases of Moslem converts to Christianity whose relatives and co-religionists have, in this manner, signified their renunciation and cutting off of all relations with the perverts from their faith. The oriental shoe, being usually a soft slipper, is not thrown as a missile, or weapon with which to strike a person, for the purpose of causing bodily pain. Losing sight of this distinction, one of our missionary brethren had his veracity, or at least trustworthiness, called in

question in one of the above cases. He sent us a telegram, stating that a young Moslem, who had professed Christianity, had been beaten and imprisoned by the authorities. Passing the telegram over to Sir Evelyn Baring, the British Consul General here, he had the young man sent for, who, on examination, denied having been beaten. This led Sir Evelyn to request us to read our young brother in the distant station a lecture on the importance of being sure of his facts before telegraphing. When the convert came to us, on being cross-questioned, he again denied having been *beaten*; but, on being told to relate fully all that took place, he said that, among the other indignities to which he was subjected, his father struck him with his shoe before the sub-governor. The Arabic has only one word for *beat* or *strike*; and our brother, to spare words in his telegram, had left out the phrase "with his shoe."

This explains the throwing of the slipper after the bride, as she leaves her father's house. It is saying to her, in a playful way, "Be off with you. We renounce you, and will have nothing more to do with you." It also explains the transaction in Ruth iv., and the law in Deuteronomy xxv., 7-9, upon which it is founded, concerning which I see much in the commentaries that is quite wide of the mark. Their mistakes are chiefly founded upon the misapprehension that the loosing of the shoe is simply a form of legal process for the transfer of property. This is merely a secondary idea. Beneath the law in Deuteronomy there is a substratum of social prescription, private prejudice and, probably, personal antipathy (which it is much more easy for us in the East to understand, than to explain to you in the West), which, in the majority of cases, would make the brother-in-law not "like" at all to take his brother's wife, while he would be quite prepared to take his full share of his brother's inheritance. Just here the divine law steps in, as it always does, in the interest of the *weaker party*, and gives the widow the right to go up to the gate (the place of justice), unto the elders of the city, and say, "My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel. He will not perform the duty of my husband's brother." This accusation made it obligatory upon the elders of the city to summon him and "speak unto him" (that is, expostulate with him, and take his formal, final word in the matter), and if he stood to it and said, "I like not to take her," then it was her privilege to come up to him, in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and, moreover, it was her privilege not only to hand him the shoe, demanding that he should throw it after her, in token of formal legal renunciation, but it was her right also to express her contempt of him by spitting in his face and saying, "So shall it be done unto that man who will not build up his brother's house;" and he and his family were forced thereafter to bear the reproach in Israel, "The house of him that had his shoe loosed."

The difference of circumstances in the case of Ruth explains why it was the kinsman himself who "drew off his shoe." He did not venture to throw it at Ruth, nor strike with it that chaste widow. She was, probably, not present, though iii., 18 does not conclusively show this. Boaz was her competent deputy. Some of the commentators, as, e. g., Lange and the Speaker's, supplement the record of the act by saying that he handed the shoe to Boaz. The text does not say he did so, and I do not think he did. The general statement of the Levirate law in the preceding verse led them to conclude that he did; but all parties were so well agreed in this case, that there was no desire to inflict an act of contempt, and the mere drawing off of the shoe, or even feigning to do so, was sufficient.

It was tantamount to a testator putting his finger upon the seal appended to a will, and declaring, in the presence of witnesses, that this is his last will and testament. So the other act, implying not only renunciation, but contempt, viz., that of spitting, is often only performed in pantomime, the person performing only saying to the other "pthew upon thee," without actually spitting upon him. As above intimated, there was no desire in this case to express contempt. Had there been, Ruth should have been present to act the part. But in Ps. l.x., 8, the contemptuous shade of meaning is evident from the connection, and so the Arabs now often say, "My shoe at you."

G. LANSING,

Alexandria, Egypt.

Use of Wine by the Jews.—The author of the *Bibliographical Notes* in the preceding number of the OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT, the Rev. J. W. Haley closes his article, p. 122, with a thought which is deserving of being taken to heart. He says, "Every Christian minister should carefully study modern Judaism, as represented by those writers who are thoroughly versed in the subject." It is now unfortunate in him to have directed the attention of the students of Judaism to writers who are *not* versed at all in the subject. The books which he describes in his *Notes* are, probably without any exception, the merest trash. A glance at the *tohu wabohu* of their contents, as the same is indicated in the Notes of the Rev. Mr. Haley, is alone sufficient to show that their writers were of illogical and perfectly confused minds. To one who is more or less familiar with the life and literature of the Jews, it is also clear upon one glance from the headings of the chapters and from the little we see quoted by Mr. Haley, that the authors are not entitled to consideration by scholarly minds seeking after truth. *Such* books must be totally ignored. For instead of giving information and enlightenment upon modern Judaism, they mislead and misinform.

From several of the books described by him, the Rev. J. W. Haley quotes passages according to which Jews are abstainers from wine; at least on the Passover festival. Here is cumulative evidence, some may think, showing this to be so. But it is not so. The truth lies almost in the opposite direction. Very old laws, going back to Ante-Christian times, command it as a religious duty to the pious Jew, to drink four cups of fermented grape wine on Passover eve, even when during the balance of the year he would not drink a drop of wine, be it on account of a natural dislike of wine, be it on account of poverty (in such a case the poor Israelite had to be sufficiently supported from the charity funds of the congregation in order to enable him to buy his wine, see Mishnah P'sahim, x., 1.), be it for any reason whatsoever. In later ages, the Casuists granted it as an indulgence to use raisin mixtures and other similar beverages *in case Kasher fermented grape wine could not be procured*.

While in fact grape wine *is* used at the Passover festival by the strict and law-abiding Jews, some other drinks, as beer, ale, rye whiskey, are avoided by them during the festive week. And why? Because they are made by a process of fermentation from one or the other of the five kinds of grain (rye, wheat, spelt, barley, oats) out of which fermented bread, or leavened bread, is produced. And on the Hag hammatzoth (the feast of unleavened bread) no leavened or fermented bread, nor any other production from the said kinds of grain, except Matzoth, should be used by Israelites.

We can add still more. In the apostolic age, those who took a pledge, or a vow, not to taste wine, etc., were considered to be *sinner*s. Among the ancient Israelites were now and then such single individuals to be found, the so-called Nazarites, who had taken a pledge not to drink wine for a certain time, etc. But they were *not* looked upon as exemplars for imitation. Rabbi El'azar Haqqappar, an authority of the second Christian century, remarked that according to the Mosaic law (Num. chap. vi.) the Nazarite or total abstainer must bring a sin-offering. Why is this? What sin has he committed? And he answers, he has caused to himself suffering by his abstinence from wine; he is a sinner (Nazir 19^a; *ibid.* 22^a; Sifré ad Num. sec. 30: Bammidbar rabbah sec. 10, and elsewhere.) In N'dharim 10^a it is recorded that a long time anterior to El'azar Haqqappar the same idea was maintained and expressed by Rabbi Simon (probably the son of the Gamaliel mentioned in Acts chap. iv.) and by Simon the Just (who lived about the year 200 before Christ).

Whether the ancient Rabbis in Midrash-times were correct, or not, in their explanation of the sin-offering which the Nazarite had to bring, is here quite irrelevant. But their sayings show in what light the Jewish cotemporaries of the apostles regarded the total abstainers.

On the difference between a *Shathuy* (one who feels somewhat the effect of wine) and a *Sakur* (one who is drunk), see interesting definitions, discussions, and conclusions in Talmud Erubhin 64^a.

Let it be mentioned also that every Israelite, whenever he took a cup of wine into his hands, had to say, and did say, before drinking of it, the following benediction: "Praised be Thou, Eternal, our God, King of the world, who hast created the fruit of the vine" (B'rakhoth vi., 1).

B. FELSENTHAL,
Chicago.

↳ EDITORIAL NOTES. ◀

The Study of Prophecy.—Three things are probably true in reference to the study of Prophecy:

1) Of the many departments of Bible study, the department of Prophecy is most generally neglected. How many students enter the ministry with clear and defined notions on the subject? How many ministers in the pastorate know, really, anything about it? And yet how extensive is the prophetic element in Scripture. How frequently and how emphatically is this element referred to in both Old and New Testaments. Will any one dare to say that these *prophecies* were not intended for us, that they have served their purpose, and are a thing of the past? Then let us regard the whole Bible as a thing of the past. If Isaiah's words are out of date, so are Paul's.

2) A prevailing idea in reference to Prophecy, so far as any idea prevails, is that its essential element is prediction. This is a mistake. While prediction occupies a large place, and may be regarded as a characterizing element, it is not the essential element of Prophecy. The words of the prophet had always to do, first, with the people and circumstances of his own time. "If the prophet unfolded the future, it was never done for the mere purpose of foretelling; but always

to give added force to a warning, an exhortation, or a message of comfort." Prophecy, studied from this point of view, is quite a different thing from prophecy as commonly understood. Prophecy was preaching, and teaching. The prophet warned and consoled. In nearly every particular, Old Testament prophecy finds its parallel in New Testament preaching, or, speaking more accurately, ought so to find it.

3) Those who take up the study of Prophecy, too frequently make of it a hobby. The study, once begun, proves a most fascinating one. Other parts of revelation are made wholly subordinate to it. The student goes off into vagaries, and, losing all self-restraint, becomes, practically, a wreck, so far as concerns the value of any Bible study which he may do. We say, this is too frequently the case. It need not be so. If men of well-balanced judgment and well-trained mind were to engage in the study, it would not be so. The fact is, that in our day, this subject has been made over almost exclusively to men utterly incapable of grasping it in its fullest extent. Prophecy is a most interesting, important and profitable study, when studied in the right manner, and from the correct point of view. Shall we not look into it?

Translation and Interpretation.—It is a question in the minds of some how far translation and interpretation are the same. May it be said that the accurate rendering of a given passage is likewise the correct interpretation of it? Does a mere translation convey the full and precise meaning of the words translated? This certainly cannot be true. Whatever may be the correct translation of a sentence, the meaning of that sentence is dependent largely upon many attendant circumstances. One may speak words, each of which is familiar, without necessarily indicating to the hearer or reader the thought which he desires to express. What one thinks does not always appear from what he says. The same words, spoken by men living at different periods may, and indeed, must convey different ideas. The same words, spoken by men of the same century, but of different nationalities, may differ widely in meaning. The same words, spoken by men of the same nationality, but of different education, or of different social position, may differ essentially in the idea conveyed. The same words, spoken by the same man, but under different circumstances, or at different periods in his life, may have an entirely different significance.

What is the real fact in the case? No man can convey to another man his exact thought. He may do it approximately, but that is all that he can do. The degree of approximation depends partly, of course, upon the skill of the speaker, or writer, in his selection of language, but largely, also, upon the ability of the hearer or reader to place himself in close connection with him whose thoughts he would interpret. A knowledge of the writer must be gained so far as this is possible,—of his personal history, his character, his ability, his surroundings. And in just so far as this knowledge is lacking, there will be lacking, also, a true conception of the language under consideration. A knowledge of the immediate circumstances which occasioned the writing must be obtained. The interpretation assigned to a given passage, in view of one set of circumstances, may be greatly modified if another set of circumstances are thought worthy of acceptance. Words addressed to this person have one meaning, but their meaning may be quite different if addressed to another. In the discussion of one subject, a word or phrase may be used in an entirely differ-

ent sense from that which is conveyed by the same word or phrase in the discussion of another subject.

It would seem, therefore, that a translation or rendering is far from being an interpretation. The work of the interpreter is but begun when he has determined the grammatical and lexical force of the words under study. Thus far he has discovered what the writer *said*. There remains the still more difficult task of determining what the writer *thought*.

The Jewish Attitude.—We have frequently been asked, How do the Jews interpret the Old Testament? The question is a very general one. As among Christians, there are different ways of handling the Old Testament, e. g., the spiritualistic, the rationalistic, so among Jews there are those who accept its miracles, and believe in its divine origin, some of whom also associate even with the forms of words and letters a supernatural influence; but there are others who accept the most radical views concerning its origin and character. In the November STUDENT was published an article by Rabbi B. Felsenthal, of Chicago. Dr. Felsenthal may be taken as a representative of the conservative party. His views may be gathered from a perusal of the article. One or two items are worthy of note:

He would reject the Messianic character of the greater number of those passages, which we, most unhesitatingly, declare to be Messianic. Is this a matter of prejudice on his part, or is it because he has been unduly influenced by those so-called Christian, but really agnostic, critics, who take pride in rejecting everything of a prophetic or supernatural character?

He would place our New Testament upon the same plane with the Jewish Midrash. From his standpoint this may answer. But he would surely not expect us to agree with him. Can a Christian be a Christian and deny the words of Christ? It is here, of course, that our paths diverge. Our conceptions of the Old Testament must, of necessity, be largely molded by what we find in the New. The Old Testament has a meaning of its own, but this meaning is that which is found in it as a *part*, the earlier part, of a divine revelation, of which the later and more complete part is the New Testament.

And yet Dr. Felsenthal's *principle* is the correct one, viz., that, whether Jew or Christian, we are to seek the *truth*. Here we shall all agree.

In the present number we publish a contributed note by the same writer touching the kind of wine used by the Jews. Whatever may be our views upon the temperance question, and here again, we would probably differ from our Jewish brother, he shows conclusively the falsity of the statements made by the writers quoted by Mr. Haley. The question of Bible wines is, without doubt, to some an interesting one, but it will not be given further space, at present, in the STUDENT.

→BOOK NOTICES←

MOAB'S PATRIARCHAL STONE.*

The inscriptions engraven on the rocks, stamped on clay tablets and written on ancient monuments, have corroborated many passages of the Scriptures, cleared up many doubtful expressions, and in many ways have advanced the better understanding of the Bible. No single inscription has done more to these ends than that found recorded upon the Moabite Stone, giving account of Mesha, King of Moab, and his relations with Israel.

This monograph of Mr. King's is a full account of the discovery of this stone, and the unfortunate complications which resulted in its destruction by the Arabs. Full credit is given to Dr. Klein for the discovery, and while entirely impartial in statement, it is clearly shown how M. Ganneau's misdirected zeal resulted in the shattering of this monument into fragments.

An exposition taking up each word of the inscription is given, the historical points where it is in agreement with the Bible being indicated. The stone shows us that 900 years before Christ there were in use 22 alphabetic characters, thus refuting an objection, based on the idea that only 16 characters were known before 776 B. C., brought against the antiquity of certain parts of the Bible. These statements, the geographical references, and all the teachings of this relic of the past, confirm the Sacred History. One wishing to study the Moabite Stone will find this book helpful.

EGYPT, PALESTINE AND PHŒNICIA.†

It would seem as if the ground indicated by the above title had been so thoroughly visited and so much had been written upon it, that the field was well nigh exhausted. However, we have here not a new book but a translation of the eighth edition of a French work first published in 1859. The fact that the book has so long held the attention of the public, and its translation into German, Swedish, Dutch, and Italian, shows that there is much of interest and value in it; and upon perusal so we find.

The author, M. Bovet, is Professor of Hebrew in the University at Neuchatel, and he gives an account of a journey undertaken in the year 1858. The narrative is vivacious and sprightly, and interest is kept up from first to last. M. Bovet had the great advantage of being thoroughly at home in the Old Testament Scriptures, and he was awake to everything which might explain or render vivid the sacred narratives; there never appears any studied attempt to find these illustrations, but all available material is used in a most natural and effective manner. There is a freshness about the book that is charming, for the larger part consists of letters written from day to day during his journey, and the very aroma of the country is preserved, and its life acted out before the reader as on a stage. Disputed points.

* MOAB'S PATRIARCHAL STONE: Being an account of the Moabite Stone, its story and teaching. By Rev. Jas. King. London: *Bickers & Son*, 1878.

† EGYPT, PALESTINE AND PHŒNICIA. A visit to sacred Lands. By Felix Bovet. Translated by W. H. Lyttleton. New York: *E. P. Dutton & Co.*, 1888. 5¼x8, pp. 416. Price \$2.00.

of archæological and geographical interest are noticed, and upon these the author has well defined opinions.

The work of the translator is excellent, and the vivacity of the French language has been well preserved in our more prosaic English.

THE HITTITE EMPIRE.*

It is scarcely more than ten years since attention became directed in an especial manner to the people so often named in Old Testament history as Hittites. Students of the Bible have, of course, been familiar with the name; while the decipherment of the inscriptions on Egyptian monuments and the reading of the papyri revealed the existence of a people in very ancient times, bearing the name of Kheta, against whom the most powerful and warlike of the Egyptian Pharaohs waged wars that were sometimes of doubtful issue. Very few remains of this people, however, had yet been discovered, and their history drew attention chiefly in its connection with that of other ancient races. The Hittites and the great empire founded by them have now come to the front as a people most interesting in themselves, and in their annals as a distinct nationality. In the opinion of Marriette Bey, the eminent Egyptologist, one dynasty, at least, of the Hyksos kings in Egypt was Hittite, while it may be that the Pharaoh of the story of Joseph was himself, also, of that people. Important discoveries resembling those in Egypt, touching the same interesting people, have been made in the decipherment of Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions: all going to show that during many centuries, in very ancient times, a nation named Kheta by the Egyptians, Khattai by the Assyrians, and Hittites by the Hebrews, had occupied Western Asia, powerful enough to contest the supremacy of those mighty empires which bore sway along the Euphrates and the Nile.

Meanwhile biblical critics claimed to find difficulties in Old Testament allusions to the Hittites. As long ago as 1857, Prof. F. W. Newman, of Oxford, had pronounced the Scripture references to this people as "unhistorical;" as "not exhibiting the writer's acquaintance with the times in a very favorable light." Much more recently another writer, Rev. T. K. Cheyne, also of Oxford, has expressed similar views.

The book here under review is, so far as we know, the first attempt to meet fully these and like critical objections, or to bring together in one view all that up to this time is known of the people under consideration. The author of the book, who has resided in the East during many years, and has travelled extensively over the region once embraced in the Hittite empire, was instrumental in securing some of the most important of the Hittite inscriptions—those found upon blocks of stone in Hamah, or Hamath, in Syria—and has, in the study of these and other like records, reached important results. In this labor, as also in the preparation of this present work, he has had the cooperation of the eminent scholars named in his title-page, together with access to works upon Egyptian and Assyrian archæology most helpful to his purpose. The work so produced, bringing together as it does, from many sources, all that has been ascertained on the subject of the

* THE EMPIRE OF THE HITTITES. By William Wright, B. A., D. D. With Decipherments of Hittite Inscriptions by Prof. A. H. Sayce, LL. D.; a Hittite Map by Col. Sir Charles Wilson, F. R. S., and Capt. Conder, R. E.; and a complete set of Hittite Inscriptions, revised by Mr. W. H. Rylands, F. S. A. New York: Scribner & Welford. Price \$6.00.

ancient Hittite empire, while it shows how rash were the deliverances of those critics who with the imperfect information at their command pronounced the Hittite references in the Old Testament "unhistorical," also makes it clear that henceforth in all histories of the ancient world account is to be made of an empire equal in extent, in power and in resources, to that of Egypt in its best days.

The name "Hittite" is derived from that of "Heth," mentioned in Gen. x., 15, where we read, "And Canaan begat Sidon, his first-born, and Heth." One result of the discoveries made in regard to the Hittites, is to illustrate anew the accuracy of that remarkable genealogical chapter, where this verse appears. It has been insisted by some that the people just named were Semitic in race and origin. Their Hamite character has now been made clear by testimonies furnished in inscriptions, by the form of Hittite names there found, and by so much of their language as so far has been traced. It becomes evident, too, that they were in many respects a remarkable people. Dr. Wright mentions the transaction of Ephron the Hittite with Abraham as the first "commercial" transaction on record. The city in Southern Palestine, Kirjath-Sepher, "City of the Book," is now ascertained to have been of Hittite origin, and its name is supposed to indicate the existence of a Hittite literature as among the earliest yet known. Hebron, like "Zoan in Egypt," was founded by them. The earliest diplomatic writing upon record, the treaty between the Hittite king, Kheta-sira, and Rameses II. of Egypt, following the great battle of Kadesh, celebrated in the famous poem of Pentaur, was in the Hittite tongue. The same people are regarded as having been among the first to have a written language, and the characters now found in the Hittite inscriptions recently brought to light, are said by those expert in such matters to be older than the Greek, the Phœnician, or the Cypriote. In the book now under review, Dr. Isaac Taylor, a competent authority, is quoted as saying of the Hittites: "They were one of the most powerful peoples of the primeval world, their empire extending from the frontier of Egypt to the shores of the Ægean, and like the Babylonians and the Egyptians, they possessed a culture, an art, and a script peculiar to themselves, and plainly of indigenous origin."

There is reason to believe that the new page in ancient history turned in the study of what may be learned of this remarkable people will be found to be one of exceeding interest. Thus far the inscriptions found in the language used by them are few in number, and the characters difficult of decipherment. But the key to them has been discovered and the work of reading them is progressing. The interest so awakened will doubtless lead to the discovery of other inscriptions, while the reading of these ancient records will be a fresh element of interest in that archæological research whose fruits are already so abundant and so rich. Students of history will be glad to know more of this empire, which seems to have grown into power before either Babylon or Assyria, and whose annals run from the nineteenth century before Christ to the eighth, a period more than a thousand years; whose chief cities, Carchemish on the Euphrates and Kadesh on the Orontes, once might be named along with Memphis and Thebes, and Babylon and Nineveh; whose history was interlaced in so many ways with that of Israel, its warriors becoming famous in the army of David and its women in the harem of Solomon;—and whose final fall occurred almost at the very time that the ten tribes of Israel were "carried away captive beyond Babylon;" its chief city Carchemish, being overthrown by the successor, Sargon, of the Shalmaneser, by whom Sama-

ria was destroyed, and its inhabitants carried into a captivity identical with that of the tribes themselves.

The work here noticed has been received with much favor in England. Its republication in this country is a most important contribution to historical and archæological study, while also of value in its connection with Old Testament criticism. We give it a most cordial welcome, and earnestly commend it to those interested in that line of research, of which it is one of the most valuable of recent fruits.

J. A. S.

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