

THE PENTATEUCH

AND BOOK OF

JOSHUA

IN FACE OF

THE SCIENCE AND MORAL SENSE
OF OUR AGE.

By a PHYSICIAN.

PART VI.

“Zufällige Geschichtswahrheiten können der Beweis von nothwendigen Vernunftwahrheiten nie werden”—Contingent historical truths can never be demonstration of necessary rational truths.—LESSING.



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THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

BECAUSE of the sins of the people, or because he has failed to sanctify Jehovah in some signal way at Meribah, Moses, as we have seen, is not only refused permission to enter the promised land, but is even informed that he is to die on this (the east) side of Jordan. The death of Moses follows hard on the intimation given, and Jehovah then, according to our text, addresses Joshua, saying:—"Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise; go over this Jordan, thou and all the people, unto the land which I do give them, from the wilderness unto Lebanon, the great river Euphrates, and the great sea toward the going down of the sun. Be strong and of good courage, for Jehovah thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Encouraging words as well as commands, which, we may presume, Joshua will not be slack to obey?

He forthwith orders his officers to bid the people get ready for an advance by preparing victuals;* for within three days, says he, ye are to pass the Jordan and go in to possess the land that was promised to your fathers. He then reminds the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh of their engagement to aid in the war, until their brethren were settled in the territories beyond, as they themselves had been put in possession of lands on this (the east) side of Jordan. As a preliminary to entering on the great enterprise before him, however, Joshua, not relying entirely on Jehovah's promises, as it might

* The writer forgets that manna is still the only food of the people, and that it *stank* forthwith if more was gathered than sufficed for each day's consumption.

seem, is anxious to have some information of his own as to the state of preparedness for resistance or otherwise of the people about to be invaded ?

He sends two men across the river to spy and view the land, "even Jericho," the walled town that blocks the way, and must be taken before further advance into the country can be made. Stealing into the town, but not unobserved, as it by and by appears, the spies take up their quarters with a certain Rahab, a harlot, probably surmising that from such as she they might obtain information of the kind they sought. They are soon inquired after by the King of Jericho, however, who sends to Rahab, desiring her to bring forth the men who had entered her house, they having come, as was believed, to spy out the land.

Joshua's men must have been in great peril of their lives, needlessly exposed, surely, had Jehovah's assurance to Joshua, that he and his were to have the land, been trusted home. But, engaged in the godly business of smoothing the way for the conquest, they will be duly cared for by Rahab the harlot ?

By who but she ; for what was to be expected of a harlot ? Traitress to her people, as she had already proved false to all that best becomes her sex, instead of delivering up the spies to the ruler, like a true woman, she makes terms with them for herself and her kindred in case she conceals them, and favours their escape, having given them the information they sought, as we shall see. She therefore hides the spies until nightfall, pledges her word to the King's messengers that the men had left her house, and putting the searchers on a false scent as to the way they had taken, she enables them to get back to the camp in safety.

The writer of the story before us is at the pains to find something like an apology for Rahab's treason to her townfolk in the words he puts into her mouth ?

He shows her familiar with the history of the invaders, even from the time of their Egyptian bondage, and makes her tell the spies of the "terror because of these things" that had fallen on her people, "the hearts of all melting within them, and nothing more of courage remaining in any man, for Jehovah your God," she continues, "is God in heaven above and in earth beneath." The writer, it would seem, could not resist an occasion, even through the mouth of an idolatrous harlot, to glorify Jehovah his God; of whom, nevertheless, the woman Rahab could never have heard, for the all-sufficient reason that he was not known among the Israelites themselves by the name now used until ages after the reputed days of Joshua.

Rahab, then, has made terms with the spies in return for their safety and the intelligence she has given them. Her house is to be known by a certain sign when the invaders have become masters of the town, and all belonging to her are to be safe whilst the indiscriminate slaughter in preparation for the other inhabitants is proceeding?

As the houses of the Israelites in Egypt were to be known to the destroying angel by the blood on the lintels and door-posts, so is the house of Rahab to be distinguished by a *scarlet cord* hung from a window, red being a colour with which a certain mystical and sanctifying influence was connected by many of the peoples of antiquity. The images of their gods—those of Dionysus in particular, as we know—were painted *red*; the figures of the Chaldæan deities on the wall were "portrayed in *vermilion*" (Ezek. xxiii. 14); and we have seen a *scarlet string* cast into the fire as part of the rite in preparing the water of purification from the ashes of the *red heifer*.

Breaking up from Shittim, in Moab, where they were encamped, the Israelites come to the banks of the Jordan, the priests, the Levites, as said (—but ages before the existence of a levitical priesthood—),

bearing the Ark of the Covenant, leading the way. "And now," says Jehovah to Joshua, "will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of Israel, that they may know that as I was with Moses so I will be with thee." From such a preamble we may be prepared for some miraculous interposition of the tutelary God?

Which follows forthwith, and is of the same sort as that vouchsafed to Moses, when he and his fugitives had the Red Sea before them, and were enabled to pass dry-shod through its bed. Joshua and the Israelites are now said to cross the swollen Jordan without wetting their feet! "And it came to pass," says the narrator, ignoring the statical law, pre-ordained of the true God, which makes the thing impossible, "that as soon as the feet of the priests which bare the Ark were dipped in the brim of the water—for Jordan overfloweth his banks all the time of harvest—that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap, and those that went down towards the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed and were cut off, and the people passed over right against Jericho."

Joshua would have this remarkable incident recorded by a memorial monument?

He orders a man of each of the twelve tribes to shoulder a stone from the midst of Jordan, to be "a memorial to the children of Israel for ever." As to the way in which these stones are to be disposed of, however, there is, unhappily, discrepancy in the record. By one text (iv. 3), they are ordered to be carried to Gilgal, the place where the people pitched for the night, after passing the river; by another (iv. 9), they are to be set up in the midst of Jordan where the feet of the priests stood that bare the Ark; "and they are there," says the record, "unto this day." The stones, however, would have proved no very conspicuous monument plunged in the waters of the Jordan. Set up in Gilgal, they would certainly have better served the end proposed. Anyhow, the stones

are presumed to be visible, for the text goes on to say: "When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying: What mean these stones? Then ye shall say: Israel came over this Jordan on dry land; for Jehovah your God dried up the waters of Jordan, as he did the waters of the Red Sea, until we were gone over; that all the people of the earth might know the hand of Jehovah that it is mighty."

Miracles—in other words, contraventions of the order or laws of Nature—were to the Jews of old, as they have still been to the ignorant among other peoples, the great vouchers for the Being and Power of God. To the man of science and liberal culture, on the contrary, a miracle, defined as above, would now prove an insurmountable obstacle instead of a help to belief in the existence of God. God, to him, is Order and Law—not discord and disarray. The tales of miracles met with in all the writings held sacred or inspired, whether of Jew or Gentile, are certain demonstrations of their source in the mind of man in his state of ignorance and non-age: AS PUTTING GOD IN CONTRADICTION WITH HIMSELF, MIRACLES ARE AT ONCE IMPOSSIBLE AND ABSURD.

The stones, set up in Gilgal, were "to serve for a memorial to the children of Israel for ever"?

Alas for the eternity implied in the words! There is now no trace of the stones, any more than there is of the people who set them up, save as scattered remnants in far-away countries—the people to whom the promise of possession in perpetuity of a land that flowed with milk and honey was so emphatically and so repeatedly made.

Facts from which we conclude?

That the statements are neither from God nor from any of the far-seeing among men, *his only oracles*, but from presumptuous, short-sighted, and mistaken priests, who lived in relatively recent times compared with those about which they write.

More than this?

That the repetitions, contradictions, and confusion so conspicuous in the Book of Joshua make it plain that its compiler had a variety of documents before him, from which, and doubtless also from floating myth and oral tradition, with small amount of critical or editorial tact, he put together the disjointed narrative that engages us.

Yet more ?

That the constant recurrence of the phrase, *unto this day*, assures us that the writer is discoursing of events reputed to have happened in ages long gone by. To refer to one, and perchance to dispose of the first of the miracles brought in to magnify Joshua and show the might of Jehovah's hand, we by and by come upon a few words which show us that the Israelites might have crossed the Jordan without any arrest or drying up of its waters, though not without wetting their feet ; for we learn that when the spies escape from Jericho they take their way "to Jordan unto the *fords* ;" and we have notices besides, in other parts of the Hebrew history, of the river having been repeatedly crossed in after-times in the ordinary way by fording.

Safely over Jordan, the Israelites will, of course, leave the enemy no time to prepare for resistance ?

So might we have imagined ; but instead of advancing at once, and laying siege to Jericho, we are told that "at this time" Joshua receives orders from Jehovah to make him sharp knives, or knives of flint, and circumcise the children of Israel—"the second time," says the text—a needless and not very feasible procedure, if the words be taken as they stand. But they cannot be so understood. The rite of initiation which is said to have been practised during the Egyptian bondage—a more than questionable statement—it is now said has been utterly neglected since the epoch of the Exodus. All the men born during the forty years' wandering in the wilderness are therefore without the distinguishing sign of

their election, and must by all means be furnished with it before the business of despoiling, driving out, and slaying the enemies of Jehovah, now in possession of the promised land, can be begun. The time chosen for the ceremony, however, seems as little opportune as the speed with which it is accomplished is extraordinary.

How may this be ?

The invaders are but just entered into the enemy's country, and have a walled town before and a deep and swollen river behind them—a dangerous strategical position, which Joshua, we must presume, was too good a soldier not to understand. He will, therefore, we may expect, like Moses on various occasions, remonstrate with Jehovah; show the danger to which he is exposed by the order, and beg him to recall it. But Joshua seems never to have felt himself on the same familiar footing with his God as Moses, and offers no remonstrance. Having crossed the Jordan on the 10th of Nisan, he proceeds immediately, according to the record, to circumcise the males among the children of Israel who had been born within the last forty years.

The number of able-bodied men having been found nearly the same as when the census took place at Sinai, the time required to do so must have been considerable ?

The operation in question is one of some nicety, not to be done off-hand in a hurry; and were the amputation the affair of a moment the subsequent dressing would take time. A simple arithmetical calculation shows conclusively that it could not have been accomplished between the 10th and the 14th of the month Nisan, when the Feast of the Passover is said to have been kept, and the people, therefore, are presumed to be healed, and able to move about. Were five minutes allowed in each case, and the operator tasked to work twelve hours every day during six days of the week, the time required to

operate on something over 600,000 men would be thirteen years and more! By miraculous interposition only, therefore, could the business have been got through in the three days between the 10th and 14th Nisan; and even then, another miracle would have been wanted to heal the people in so short a space of time. The circumcising done somehow, however, as said, Jehovah speaks to Joshua, and says:—

“This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.”

Can we as reasonable men believe that such words ever came from God?

We have already had occasion to say that God cannot be conceived as speaking save through the mouth of man. He, therefore, we conclude, was mistaken who said that God spoke; as he too erred who imagined that the Egyptians bore about them a badge of reproach in that which has now been cut off in Israel, or that God's handiwork can be amended by any interference of man. Far from symbolising their superiority over other peoples, the initiatory rite of the Jews is persistent testimony to the essentially sensual character of the religious system they inherit from their forefathers; worshippers as they were of the nature God under a certain symbol, frequently characterised as *the abomination* in their writings, and against the display of which, as we apprehend it, in the Temple, we find several of the more modern prophets loud in their denunciations.

We have practices analogous in some sort to the Jewish rite, though with less of meaning, among races we characterise as savage, whilst we are wont to think of the ancient Israelites as the elect of God, and continue to take them for our masters in religion?

Setting the religious aspect of circumcision aside, we see savages in some quarters of the globe knocking out a front tooth or two, cutting off a joint from one of their fingers, or slitting their nether lip, and

distending it with a bung, by way of improving themselves, doubtless, and "rolling away the reproach" of a neighbouring tribe who have no such notable mode of showing their superiority to the rest of barbarous humanity.

The *flint knife*, enjoined in the marginal reading of our English version, is remarkable?

And not uninteresting from an archæological point of view, as pointing to times when tools of bronze and iron were still unknown; to times when a certain sanctity was attached to *stones*; when they were set up under trees as emblems of the Generative Power, when they were thought to be possessed of sense, and were even worshipped as Gods,* and when the only cutting instruments owned by man were flints and agates chipped or ground to an edge. The early God of Israel would not have his altar built of dressed stones; it must be of unhewn blocks: "If ye lift up a tool upon it, ye have polluted it."

Here we encounter another of those strange and meaningless interruptions of the narrative, of which we have had more than one instance already?

Having been informed that the Passover was observed on the 14th of Nisan, and that the manna ceased as soon as the children of Israel began to eat of the fruits of the land of Canaan, we are told that "it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes, and behold there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua said to him: Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said: Nay; but as Captain of the host of Jehovah am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face on the earth and did worship, and said: What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the Captain of Jehovah's host said unto Joshua:

* "And Joshua took a great stone and set it up under an oak, and said to the people: Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us, for *it hath heard* all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us."—Joshua, xxiv. 26, 27.

Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

This on the face of it is no very important information; neither is the act required of such significance as to have needed so august a presence as the Captain of Jehovah's host to make it?

Surely it is not; for one foot's breadth of earth is as holy as another; and the only difference between the shod and unshod foot is that one rests on dressed and the other on undressed hide. The mere intimation that the speaker was the "Captain of Jehovah's host," moreover, must have left Joshua in the dark as to the purport of the visit paid him; the indefinite "Nay" of the visitor to his challenge leaving it open to question which side the Captain of the host was to take in the impending engagement before Jericho. Gilgal, however, was one of the oldest and for long among the most renowned of their holy places to the children of Israel. The apparition and intimation may therefore have been contrived by the writer to illustrate the antiquity and peculiar sanctity of the site; or it may have been introduced as a parallel to the vision vouchsafed to Moses in the burning bush on Mount Horeb when he was ordered to take off his shoes, the ground on which he stood being holy. The Captain of Jehovah's host, to conclude, bears a highly suspicious likeness to one of the Amschaspands of the Zoroastrian system, and may help to confirm us in our persuasion that the writing before us must be referred to times posterior to the Babylonian captivity.

Resuming the thread of the story, we are informed that Jericho is at length laid siege to and closely shut up—none coming out, none going in—and that Jehovah himself condescends to give certain new and hitherto unheard-of orders for the conduct of the siege. For six successive days the besiegers are to compass the city once on each day, the priests bear-

ing the Ark and blowing on the sacred trumpets of rams' horns as they march; but on the seventh day—violation of the Sabbath, by the way, and giving us to know that the Commandment to keep it holy could not yet have been known—on the seventh day they are to compass it as many as seven times, and the blasts on the ram's horn trumpets are to be louder than ever. At the proper moment Joshua is to stretch out his hand with his spear, the priests are to blow their best, and the people are to shout with a loud voice, on which the walls will fall down and the city will be won!

Such a mode of taking Jericho could hardly have been contemplated by Joshua when he sent out the spies and confirmed the compact made with Rahab; any information he may have had from her through them being turned to no account. All, however, is done according to superior orders?

And the result follows: The rams' horns are lustily blown; Joshua raises his spear; the people shout; the walls tumble down; and the Israelites walk into Jericho without striking a blow.

The inhabitants, innocent of all offence, thus miraculously thrown on the mercy of the invaders, will, we may presume, be ordered by Jehovah to be mercifully dealt with?

Coming commissioned by their God, as they imagined, to spoil and to slay, mercy in the early Israelitish wars was a thing unknown. On the contrary, the city had been proclaimed *Cherem* to Jehovah, and we know what that implies: Every living thing within it must be put to death, and every lifeless thing consumed by fire. "The city," says the leader, "shall be devoted, even it and all that are therein, to Jehovah; only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and those that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent." "And," proceeds the story, "they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both men and women, young and old; ox, sheep,

and ass." All that breathed were put to the sword, and the city, with all it contained, was burned to the ground; "only the silver and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of Jehovah."

Not content with burning Jericho to the ground, Joshua, for no conceivable reason, would never have it rise from its ruins. "Cursed be the man before Jehovah," says he, "that riseth up and buildeth Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest shall he set up the gates of it."

But Jericho, had it ever been ruined, must by and by have been rebuilt, notwithstanding Joshua's curse; for David desires the messengers he had sent to congratulate Nahum on his accession to the throne of Ammon, but who having been mistaken for spies had been ill-used by the Ammonites, to tarry at Jericho until the signs of the disgrace put upon them had disappeared. "Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return," are the words of King David (II. Samuel, x. 5). At a much later period in the history of Israel, indeed, and to make matters tally with Joshua's denunciation, it may be supposed, we learn that in the reign of Ahab, more than five centuries after the age of Joshua, "Hiel built Jericho, and laid the foundation thereof in Aborim, his first-born, and set up the gate thereof in his youngest son, Segub (I. Kings, xvi. 34). The interdict assigned to Joshua is, therefore, from one who lived during or after the reign of King Ahab.

Jericho is ruined, then, but faith is kept with Rahab?

She, her father's household, and all that she had, it is said, were saved alive, "because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho; and she dwelleth in Israel unto this day."

Were the text to be taken quite literally, Rahab would appear to have been very long lived?

Rahab may possibly be here used in a generic sense:—Rahab and her daughters dwell among ourselves *even unto this day!*

When a town was declared to be Cherem, or devoted, it was of course unlawful for individuals to appropriate any part of the spoil?

All then belonged exclusively to Jehovah; in other words, what was not put to death and burnt came to the priesthood; and, that no one might trespass through ignorance, Joshua has been particular in warning the people against theft—the unpardonable sin, in such a case:—“Keep ye in anywise from the thing that is devoted, lest ye make yourselves devoted,” says he, and so implicate the camp of Israel and trouble it. But Achan, the son of Carmi, has been imprudent enough to take of the devoted thing, and the anger of Jehovah is kindled against Israel.

Achan’s transgression of the law of Cherem becomes known in rather a roundabout way?

Proceeding with his work of conquest, not witting that aught has been done amiss, Joshua sends out spies to take the measure of the next town that lay in the way—Ai by name. The spies return and report the place of little strength, and its defenders few; a body of two or three thousand men, say they, would suffice to smite it. So a corps of three thousand is told off for the duty. But they behave ill; they flee before the men of Ai, six-and-thirty of them are slain, and the rest are chased from before the gate of the town unto Shibarim; “wherefore the hearts of the people melted and became as water.”

Joshua takes this much to heart?

He rends his clothes, falls on his face before the Ark, with the Elders of Israel puts dust upon his head, and says:—“Alas, O Jehovah God! wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content and dwelt

on the other side Jordan! O Jehovah! what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round and cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt thou do for thy name, the mighty?" (De Wette.)

This is surely not a becoming address on the part of Joshua; reproachful as it is to Jehovah and unworthy of himself as leader of the host. Instead of owning that his men had been seized with a panic fear, or that he had erred in sending an inadequate force against Ai, he throws the blame of the defeat upon his God, and even threatens him with the evil constructions of the Canaanites for having led his elect into difficulties. But Jehovah comes to the foolish mortal's aid, though addressing him in terms more brusque than we have been wont to find applied to Moses when he has ventured to ask his God what the Egyptians would think of him did he not carry his people triumphantly through their troubles:—"Get thee up," says Jehovah; "wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned; they have taken of the accursed [devoted] thing, and have also stolen and put it among their own stuff."

Jehovah is made by the writer to look sharply after his interests—he will have nothing that should be his appropriated by another; he even knows where the things purloined have been bestowed. So he is reported as saying farther to Joshua:—"Up, sanctify the people; for thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: There is an accursed [devoted] thing in the midst of thee, O Israel; therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, because they were accursed; neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed from among you. And it shall be that he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burned with fire, he and all that he hath."

A little leaven leavens the lump, indeed; but were

one thief among thousands to make cowards of the rest, there would, we trow, be little courage in any army that ever took the field, whether in ancient or modern times. The virtuous Israelites, however, who had never, in a body, borrowed silver and gold, and fine raiment from the Egyptians, at the instigation of their God, as they say, must now be purged of the offender who had taken to himself of the devoted thing. But why Jehovah, who is cognisant of the theft, should not also have instantly pointed out the thief, does not appear. Lots are the means adopted for finding him out; and though we know that the lot is as likely to fall on the innocent as on the guilty, inasmuch as a miracle was now required, so is it forthcoming, and Achan the son of Carmi, the delinquent, is taken.

His guilt divulged, Joshua addresses the culprit?

In a speech that begins in a fine fatherly spirit, but does not so end assuredly: "My son," says Joshua, "give, I pray thee, glory to Jehovah, God of Israel! Make confession unto *Him*, and tell *me* now what thou hast done?" To which the unhappy Achan replies most penitently now that he is known for the thief: "Indeed I have sinned, and thus have I done. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonian garment and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I took them, and they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent." And there, sure enough, as Jehovah had indicated, the stolen things are found "among the other stuff." "And Joshua and all Israel with him," continues the record, "took Achan and the gold, and the silver, and the garment, and his sons and his daughters, and his oxen and his asses and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor, and all Israel stoned them with stones, and burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. So Jehovah turned from the fierceness of his anger."

The story here must surely be apocryphal,—invented for a purpose?

It has every appearance of being so at all events; yet may it have an old tradition for its root. The God of the early Israelites was by no means the God of their later descendants, the Jews. He was a jealous, revengeful, partial being, never to be approached empty-handed, only to be appeased by the sacrifice of life through the shedding of blood, and not to be defrauded of his share of the spoil. The tale, however, may have been invented as a pendant to the story of Phinehas, when he slew Zimri and Cozbi at a blow, and so stayed the pestilence that was making such havoc in the camp. Or it may have been devised to terrify the people against all privy appropriation of aught especially that was held by prescriptive right to belong to the priesthood.

Achan is the sole offender; but we find that he alone is not made to suffer for his crime?

In old and barbarous times, as among some savage or half-civilised communities in the present day, all that belonged to the house were held answerable for the act of its head—wives, sons, daughters, cattle, goods and chattels—all that breathed died, and all that had value was burned or confiscated, in case the penalty for the deed done were death.

And wholesale sacrifices of the kind were required by Jehovah, God of Israel?

So says the record: "Joshua and all Israel took Achan and all that belonged to him unto the valley of Achor, and the leader addressing the offender, said to him: Why hast thou troubled us? Jehovah shall trouble thee this day. And Israel stoned him with stones and burned them with fire; so Jehovah turned from the fierceness of his anger."

What are we in these days to think of the tales of such horrors?

We are to see them for what they are: libels on humanity, blasphemies against the Supreme. Their

writers may have thought that their God Jehovah required silver and gold, and brass and iron, and the blood of the innocent as well as the guilty to appease his anger; but we who live in this 19th century of the Christian era know that God, the Ineffable Supreme, requires nothing of us but love of him and love of our neighbour, in other words, obedience to his laws and deed towards our neighbour as we would have deed from him to us. Let the writings before us therefore be seen for what they are—records of a barbarous age, delivered by unenlightened men, and unworthy longer to be looked on as the word of God or as means available for the education and improvement of the world. The mention of the Babylonian garment might assure us that so much of the tale as refers to it, must at all events be of modern date; for a horde escaped from slavery and but just setting foot on the southern confines of Palestine, after long wandering in the wilderness, could have known nothing of Babylonian garments; and we may be well assured that the tents and hamlets of the Amorites were as little familiar with shekels of silver and wedges of gold in the days of Joshua as he and his warriors could possibly have been. These are all particulars added to colour a tale of late invention that most certainly can form no part of the true word of God to man.

The town of Ai, however, stands in the way, and must be taken; and Jehovah, not trusting as yet entirely to the military genius of Joshua, though the Captain of his own choice, proceeds to give him particular instructions as to how he is to set about the business:—"Take all the people of war with thee," says Jehovah, "and arise; go up to Ai; see, I have given into thy hand the King and his people, the city and the land; and thou shalt do to Ai and her King as thou didst to Jericho and her King; only the spoil thereof and the cattle thereof shall ye take for a prey to yourselves. Lay thee an ambush for the city

behind it." And this Joshua proceeds to do; he sends 30,000 mighty men of valour away by night to lie in ambush and attack the city from behind, whilst he himself with 5,000 more will make a feint of attacking it in front. "And it shall come to pass," says he, "that when they come out against us we will flee before them, and they will follow after us;" seeing which the 30,000 men in ambush are to show themselves and seize on the city; "for Jehovah your God," continues the tale, "will deliver it into your hand; and when ye have taken the city, ye shall set it on fire: according to the commandment of Jehovah shall ye do."

Jehovah, portrayed ruthless as ever, appears even to have been on the field in person upon this occasion?

Like the Gods of other ancient peoples, he of the Israelites is presumed to be there to help his friends and discomfit their enemies. Venus, in the *Iliad*, shields Paris when in danger, and favours the Trojans; Pallas has Achilles and the Greeks under her protection; and so in the *Jahvehiad* is Jehovah with the Israelites in the fight before Ai. The men of the feint on this side the city take to flight when attacked; the defenders pursue; and now, says Jehovah to Joshua, "Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai, and I will give it into thy hand." Joshua brandishes his spear, the ambush of 30,000 arise (an ambuscade of 30,000 men!), march into Ai, set it on fire as commanded, smite the inhabitants from behind, as its defenders are now smitten by Joshua and his party in front, and the day is won. "They let none of them escape; Joshua drew not his hand back wherewith he stretched out the spear until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. And all that fell on that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai, but they took the King alive, and brought him to Joshua." The cattle and spoil are appropriated by Israel, and the town is burnt and made "a heap of desolation unto this day." The unoffending Chief of Ai, to con-

clude the bloody business, is hanged on a tree until sun-down (in other words, he is crucified as a sacrifice to the sun-god), when his body is cast before the gate of what was the city of his people, and a heap of stones is raised over it that "remaineth unto this day."

So much for Ai, its King, and its people, thus dealt with in furtherance of Jehovah's promise to the forefathers of Israel to give them a land that flowed with milk and honey. Would not Blood and Tears, to judge from the tales before us, have been better chosen words? Let the reader refer to the sieges of Jericho and Ai as first acts in the drama of getting possession of the covenanted land, and answer bravely to his own conscience whether they would or not.

And what are we as reasonable, merciful, and responsible men, with the details of such atrocities before us, to think of those theologians of the present age who persist in forcing the writings of a barbarous people upon us as the source—sole source, moreover—whence passably becoming ideas of God and his dealings with the world are to be derived?

As reasonable and not utterly benighted men we are to think and feel assured that they are altogether unreasonable, and are living in a state either of wilful or unconscious blindness.*

After his triumphs at Jericho and Ai, Joshua builds an altar of whole stones, as said, to Jehovah, God of Israel—Jahveh-Elohe-Israel—on which burnt-offerings and peace-offerings are presented, and on the stones of which it is composed a copy of the Law of Moses is engraved, not a word of all that Moses commanded being omitted in the writing, or in the reading aloud to the people which followed?

* Well may Strauss have said: "How many of the laity understand the Bible?—how many of the clergy understand it?—how many of them are *willing* to understand it?"

This, in part at least, is somewhat extraordinary intelligence—circumstance, matter, time, and place considered; for the altar is set up on Mount Ebal, and all that passes by the name of Law of Moses could scarcely have been engraved on its twelve unhewn stones. But Mount Ebal is in Samaria, some days march away for an army operating in Canaan with its base at Gilgal; and it is now quite certain that nothing was known among the Israelites under the title of Law of Moses until the reign of Hezekiah, seven hundred years after the days of Joshua, according to the usual reckoning.

Seeing the difficulty of engraving the whole of the Pentateuch or Thora on twelve rough stones, Bible harmonists have said that it was the abstract of the Law comprised in the book of Deuteronomy which Joshua carved on the stones?

An assumption, however, by which the difficulty is not got over; for every competent and candid critic now knows that Deuteronomy is among the most modern of the five so-called books of Moses, and that the bulk of the book, with the exception of a few verses met with here and there copied from Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, does not date from days farther back than the reign of Josiah.

Others of the inhabitants of Canaan are now said to take alarm at the terrible doings of the Israelites?

The Kings of the Amorites, Hittites, Canaanites, and other septs dwelling on this or the western side of Jordan, hearing of what has been done to Jericho and Ai, band themselves together and prepare to resist the invaders. But the people of Gibeon, nearer the scene of action, stricken with a panic fear, as it seems, and despairing of any effectual resistance, go otherwise to work, and succeed by guile in binding Joshua and the princes of Israel by an oath to spare their lives. A deputation present themselves in the camp, and make show of having come from afar: the sacks and wine-skins they have with them being old and rent,

their clothes patched, their shoes clouted, and the bread they still possess, "though taken hot from the oven when they set out," as they say, being now "dry and mouldy." Joshua inquires of them who they are, and from whence they come? From a far country, say they in reply; and having, like Rahab the harlot, heard of the great fame of Jehovah the God of Israel, and all he had done for his people in Egypt, against Sihon, King of Heshbon, and Og, King of Bashan, against the Amorites beyond Jordan, and doubtless also against the people of Jericho and Ai, they had come their long journey to entreat the leader of the dreaded host to enter into a league of amity with them.

Joshua falls into the snare?

"Because he had not asked counsel at the mouth of Jehovah," says the text, "he made peace with them and let them live, all the princes of the congregation swearing to the league." Had he but taken counsel of the mouth of Jehovah, as he ought to have done, he would have been better advised: instead of engaging to let them live, he would doubtless have found himself authorised to deal with them in another fashion. Commanded to hold them Cherem, as in other instances, he would have been enjoined to slay and despoil, instead of simply enslaving and putting them to tribute. All that breathed—men and women, old and young—would then have been put to death, and the silver and gold, the brass and iron they possessed been paid into the treasury of the God!

Joshua and the Israelites, of course, soon discover that they have been imposed upon—that the footsore and ragged deputation came from no far-off country, but verily from the cities of Gibeon, Cephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath-Jearim, all close at hand?

The people, therefore, murmur against Joshua and their chiefs: they would much have preferred putting the Gibeonites to the sword, and appropriating their spoil; "but they smote them not, because of the oath

of the princes," and are pacified by having them made hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation of Israel. Joshua, we need not doubt, rates the deputation soundly for having deceived him, they pleading in excuse the rumour gone abroad that Jehovah the God of Israel had commanded his servant Moses to give his people all the land for a possession, and to destroy all its native inhabitants from before them. Joshua therefore keeps the hands of the children of Israel from the throats of the Gibeonites; but, as the story says, "he made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of Jehovah in the place which he should choose, even unto this day."

How may this be interpreted?

The hierodouli or slaves of the Temple, built by King Solomon—if it were not perchance of the second Temple, built by the remnant that returned from their captivity in Babylon—on Mount Moriah, in the city of Jerusalem, are turned by the writer into Gibeonites subdued by Joshua.

The Gibeonites have made peace with Joshua then, but the Kings or chiefs of the cantons, their neighbours, threaten them for having come to terms with the invader?

Five of these Kings gather their fighting men together, and make war on Gibeon for its selfish desertion of the common cause. But Gibeon sends to Joshua at Gilgal, entreating for speedy succour and assistance; all the Kings of the Amorites that dwell on the mountains being now gathered, as they say, against them. Joshua is not slow to obey the summons of his new allies. He moves at once from Gilgal in the night; falls suddenly on the host of the five confederates, discomfits them, and slays them with a great slaughter. But he has not been without a powerful ally of another kind than the dastardly Gibeonites to aid in the work of destruction, for "Jehovah," as we learn, "cast down great

stones from Heaven upon them, so that there were more that died with hail-stones than the children of Israel slew with the sword." More than this, and still more marvellous, it is here we read that Joshua, addressing Jehovah, says, in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou moon in the Valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still in the midst of Heaven, and hasted not his going down a whole day." The moon, too, although her light could not have been wanted in face of the sun, paused, it is said, in her course, whilst the chosen seed avenged themselves on their enemies. "And there was no day like that before or after it, that Jehovah hearkened to the voice of a man; for Jehovah fought for Israel." We have so often had occasion to differ from the writer that for once we rejoice to find ourselves in accord with him: there certainly never was, and never will, "until chaos come again," be a day like that which saw the sun stand still in Heaven, and haste not his going down for a whole day at the word of a man!

Had the writer been content with his hail-stones of Jehovah—in other words, his great hail-stones—it would not have been difficult to admit that such a contingency as a hail-storm occurring in the course of a skirmish in Judea was well within the limits of possibility, but the standing still of the sun and moon in Heaven, in other words, the arrest of the earth in its revolution, to give Israel the better opportunity to slaughter the Amorites, takes the tale entirely out of the pale of belief. Such an occurrence, as against Nature, *i.e.*, against God, is an absolute impossibility. The narrator himself, indeed, must have had misgivings as to the credibility and reception of his story, for he seeks either to bolster it up, or to shift the responsibility for its truth from his own to another's shoulders, appealing as he does to an inaccessible source as his authority. "Is not this written," says he, "in the Sepher Hajjashar?"—the

Book of the Just, now lost to us. Reference to such a document shows that the writer drew from an older source than is the text in which we have his tale, a document, however, that certainly did not date so far back as the days of Joshua, inasmuch as we learn elsewhere (II. Samuel, i. 17 and seq.) that it is from the Sepher Haijashar that the touching lament, put into the mouth of David for Saul and Jonathan, is derived. The Book of Joshua, consequently, could not have been compiled and put together in the indifferent fashion in which it meets us until after the reign of David, second King of Israel.

This tale of the standing still of the sun and moon in their apparent course must surely be one of the parts of the Old Testament which, in face of the science of our age, has failed to find apologists?

So might we have expected. Nevertheless, attempts have not only been made to explain away but even to defend the statement, and in the *physical impossibility* implied to find an illustration of the *power*—we do not know that any one has ventured to add: of the *goodness* and *mercy* of God. But early indoctrination still makes men incompetent to see things as they are, and lets them of the power to distinguish between what is no more than contingent *statement* and that which is *absolute or necessary truth*. Blind sentiment then takes the lead of open-eyed intelligence, and blank absurdity and hideous cruelty are seen in the disguise of wisdom and beneficence.*

* It is not a little extraordinary that so bold a thinker and, in matters of science, so well-informed a man as Spinoza should have been tempted to offer a natural explanation of the *myth* relating the still-stand of the sun and moon at the word of Joshua. He says (assuming it as a fact that the daylight lasted longer than usual) that Joshua and those about him, ignorant of the true cause of the longer continuance of the light they witnessed, believed that the sun stood still on the day in question. They never thought of referring it to

With the great ally he had, or thought he had, in his God Jehovah, Joshua could not fail to put the five Kings of the Amorites, in alliance against Gibeon, to the rout?

They are defeated, as matter of course, with signal slaughter of their peoples, they themselves only escaping immediate death by hiding in a cave at Makkedah. This being told to Joshua, he, to make sure of his prey yet not to interrupt the pursuit and slaughter, orders great stones to be rolled to the mouth of the cave, and a guard set over it. "Pursue after your enemies and smite them," says he; "suffer them not to enter into their cities; for Jehovah your God hath delivered them into your hand." The triumph complete, Joshua and the men of war return to the camp at Makkedah, and—*væ victis!*—it is now the turn of the chiefs who are hidden in the cave:—"Bring forth those five Kings unto me out of the cave," says Joshua. Calling his officers about him, he bids them put their feet on the necks of the prostrate chiefs, and assures them that if they continue strong and of good courage, thus will Jehovah aid them to do to all against whom they fight. But this is not yet the end; for Joshua, continues the record, inspired by Jehovah, and with his own hand, we may presume, even as Samuel did to Agag, "smote them and slew them, and hanged them on five trees until the going down of the sun." The dead bodies were then taken down and thrown into the cave wherein, having sought a refuge, they now found a grave; its mouth, to conclude, being stopped up with great stones, "which remain unto this day."

Such *hangings up before the sun, or until the going down of the sun*, so frequently mentioned in the He-

any less obvious cause, such as *the ice and hail which then filled the air, and might have given rise to a higher refractive power in the atmosphere than usual.*—Tr. Theol. Polit., ch. ii., p. 60, of the English version.

brew Scriptures, must be presumed to have a special significance?

That they have, cannot be doubted, and that they were sacrificial is scarcely questionable. The *trees* on which the suspensions took place were *crucifixes*, and the attitude of the victim was that which appears to have been assumed by the Semitic peoples generally in the act of adoration. At the dedication of the Temple, for instance, Solomon, it is said, "stood before the altar of Jehovah and *spread forth his hands towards heaven* and said: Jehovah, God of Israel, there is no God like thee," &c.; and when he had made an end of "praying all this prayer and supplication unto Jehovah, he arose from kneeling on his knees *with his hands spread up to heaven*" (1 Kings, viii. 22 and 54). Those *stretchings out of the arms*, again, with or without the *Rod of God* in his hand, of which we read so frequently in connection with the mythical history of Moses, must have had the same significance—they implied prayer and adoration. Moses stretches out his hand when he divides the flood of the Red Sea and when he draws water from the rock, but most notably of all when he gains the victory over Amalek. Waited on by Aaron and Hur, he has ascended the hill that overlooks the field; "and it was seen," says the text, "that when Moses held up his hands, that Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hands, that Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur *stayed up his hands*, the one on the one side, the other on the other side, *until the going down of the sun*. And Joshua discomfited Amalek." (Ex. xvii.) The rude Figure in the woodcut on the next page, after a Votive Tablet of Hicembalis, King of Massylia and Numidia, to his Deity the Sun-God Baal—older in all likelihood than anything we have in the Hebrew Scriptures—is in the very attitude of the victim on the accursed tree as well as of Moses and Solomon in the act of

prayer, and is surely not a little interesting when seen in connection with the great Catholic Christian symbol of mediæval and modern times.*



Joshua, to whom the idea of mercy appears to have been unknown—as, indeed, it would have been out of season, acting as he does under orders from Jehovah to smite and not to spare—never pauses now in his career of conquest over the tribes standing in the

* The rude and very ancient tablet figured above was brought by Sir Grenville Temple, in 1833, from Magrawa, the site of a Lybo-Phœnician settlement in the Beylik of Tunis, and is described and figured in the *Trans. of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1834*. The inscription in the Phœnician character has been deciphered by Gesenius: *Scripturæ Linguæque Phœniciaë Monumenta*, 4to, Lips. 1837, and is to the following effect:—*Domino Baali Solari, Rege Eterno, qui exaudivit preces Hicembalis: "To the Sun-God Baal, Eternal King, who heard the prayers of Hicembalis."*

way of the chosen seed, their enemies only because occupants of the soil on which they had been born, and their title-deeds no other than indentures from God when he gave them power to subdue and make it fruitful?

He advances from one victory to another, according to the record, *might* his only rule of *right*.

And the countenance and aid of Jehovah?

So he or the writer who uses the sacred name may have imagined; but enlightened humanity knows nothing of God's countenance or favour save with deeds in conformity with his eternal laws—with those in special which proclaim the sacredness of human life, and forbid appropriation by force or fraud of aught that is another's.

But the Canaanites, it has been said, were a wicked race, and so were disinherited, as they deserved?

Of the state of civilisation and morals among the Canaanites we know little; and that little not always in their favour. But they were farther advanced in the arts of life, as it seems, than the horde that invaded them. They were settled denizens on the land of their birth, not wandering nomads like the Israelites; they dwelt in walled towns, associated as independent petty republics, and lived in peace or at war with one another as interest or passion prompted. If perchance they were not entirely moral in their generation, and their religion was stained with what we now look on as indecency, and with blood, what, it is fair to ask, were the Israelites who came up against them? Let the reader refer to the chapters of the book of Exodus in which so many commandments with a social bearing find expression; and, if he have it not already, let him thence acquire the formation that will enable him to answer the question.

Favour or no favour, Joshua is a daring leader, and his warriors are braver, more numerous, better armed, or better led than their opponents, so that he takes in

succession Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, and Hebron, and does to each and all of them as he had done to Jericho and Ai, putting the men, women, and children to the sword, and appropriating their spoil, utterly destroying all that breathed, "as Jehovah the God of Israel commanded" (x. 40).

So many of the cities of the level land, or land of Canaan, and their territories thus subdued, Joshua turns his attention to the Perizzite, the Hittite, the Jebusite, and the Canaanite which dwell in the more mountainous districts. Jabin, King of Hazor, had, in fact, allied himself with the clans just named, and "come up against Israel with much people, even as the sand on the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many." But Jehovah, as on other occasions, bids Joshua not to fear them, for "to-morrow, about this time, I will deliver them all slain before Israel, and thou shalt hough their horses and burn their chariots with fire."

Israel, with such assistance, prevails ?

Of course!—Jehovah delivers all into the hands of his ruthless favourites : Jabin and his confederates are smitten until none of them remain ; " Joshua did unto them as Jehovah bade him : he houghed their horses and burnt their chariots with fire." Hazor, the leading place in this unsuccessful stand against the invaders, is particularly mentioned as suffering summary chastisement. Taken by assault, we may presume, Jabin the King of Hazor, and all the souls therein, are smitten with the sword, none of them being left to breathe, and the town itself with all within it is burnt to ashes. Hazor, in a word, had been made *Cherem* ; and we are already familiar with the terrible significance of this word. The other cities confederate with Hazor are also taken ; but they are not burned down ; the victors content themselves with slaying their inhabitants and appropriating the spoil. " There was not a city," says the record, " that made peace with the children of Israel, save the

Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all the others they took in battle;" for it was of Jehovah to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle that they might have no favour, but be utterly destroyed as Jehovah commanded Moses"—that is to say, they were led to their destruction by Jehovah himself.

There is the saying of a heathen writer, that God first makes mad those he would ruin; but in the book, every word of which is still received by so many among the most civilised peoples of the earth as inspired by God, we should scarcely have expected to find the Supreme Creator presented as leading men to their destruction. Let us think for a moment of God hardening the hearts of the Canaanites to oppose their invaders, and commanding the indiscriminate slaughter of men and women, with the particular houghing of horses and burning of war chariots with fire!

Had the book been truly inspired by God it would most assuredly have contained no such commandments. Do we, however, accept the definition of inspiration given by one of the few consistently pious, thoroughly competent, and candid biblical critics of our day as: "*The expression of man's religious consciousness;*" and that of "*God's promises of the land of Canaan to the Israelites,*" as: "*the spontaneous consciousness of the writer and his nation,*"* we come to a much better understanding of the text than when it is seen as the result of any immediate intimation or inspiration from God. It is, indeed, and can by no possibility be more than a picture by the writer of his God Jehovah, and the destinies of his people. God, most assuredly, no more hardened the hearts of the Canaanites to resist Israel than he hardened the heart of Pharaoh, in older times, when refusing to let Israel go; and he no more ordered the children of

* S. Davidson, D.D. *Introd. to Study of the Old Testament*, I., p. 440 et seq.

Israel to go in, slay and take possession in Canaan, than he inspires a neighbouring people of our own day to covet certain lands that border the Rhine, and another to desiderate the domains of the Sultan, whilst he inclines the hearts of the Teuton and Turk to hold their own. It was the want of elbow-room and the need they felt for escape from the *nomad* to the *settled state* that drove the Hebrew of old to cast longing eyes on the better watered and more fertile lands of Canaan, and led him on, with arms in his hand, prepared to slay where liberty to settle was denied. The story of the invasion of Palestine by the children of Israel, as we have it, is a poem, its historical foundations, in all likelihood, no broader than those of "The Tale of Troy divine." Myth and legend, largely as they pervade every part of the early Hebrew story, are so conspicuous in Joshua that an astrological and allegorical meaning has even been connected with the whole of the book. Jericho, it has been said, may be the Moon-city, Rahab the Moon-goddess (Rahab, increase, from the waxing of the Moon through the first half of her orbit), and Joshua himself another Hercules or Sun-god, pointedly referred to as a Beth-schemite or of the House of the Sun (Ha-Schem, the Sun, a name of the Hebrew god), of whose birth and descent, further than that he was the son of Nun [the fish], we have no information, though we are told that his death and burial took place at Timnath-Heres—eclipse of the Sun, or the obscurity that follows his setting.*

Some considerable time, we must presume, was spent in these wars of conquest and spoliation of Joshua?

Five or six years, according to the usual reckoning, but this is merely conjectural, and though Joshua is said to have taken "the whole land and given it

* See Drummond, *Œdipus Judaicus*, 4to., London. Reprinted, 8vo., London, 1868. Higgins, *Anacalepsis*, 2 vols., 4to., London; and Nork, *Biblische Mythologie*, II., 226.

for an inheritance to Israel," so that at length "the land rested from war" (xi. 23), we by and by learn that "there yet remained very much land to be possessed" (xiii. 1); a statement which, doubtless, approaches the truth more closely than the one first made. Many towns and districts were very certainly never subdued in Joshua's time, nor, indeed, for long after: "As for the Jebusites, the children of Judah could not drive them out; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day—a statement that must date from some considerable time after the reign of David. Neither would it seem did Ephraim slay and drive out the Canaanites from the lands allotted to them, in the manner first described: "They drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute."

With the land thus partially subdued, Joshua nevertheless proceeds to the difficult task of dividing it among the victors according to their tribes?

To avoid dispute, apparently, and charges of partiality, he has recourse to lots, and gives an engagement as from Jehovah that the peoples still in possession should in due season be driven out. The tribe of Levi, alone, is to have none of the land as an inheritance, "the sacrifices of Jehovah, God of Israel, made by fire, are their inheritance;" they are, however, to have certain cities, situated in the territories of the other tribes, for dwelling-places. The admission but just made that there still remained much land to be possessed, and that the slaying and driving out had by no means been so complete as reported, now finds confirmation in the statement that "the five Lords of the Philistines, the Canaanites north of them—the Avites, the Gibbites, all Lebanon, and the Sidonians"—as well as certain other tribes more centrally situated,—the Geshurites, Maachathites, and Jebusites, had not only not been slain or driven out,

but had not as yet been even molested ; they continued to dwell among the Hebrews of old, as they did in the days of the Jewish writer of the age of Josiah (xiii. 13). The *veni, vidi, vici* of the Book of Joshua is thus found, after all, to be an empty boast.

On the above showing there is obvious discrepancy in the accounts we have of the doings of Joshua ?

The discrepancy is endless. The country could evidently have been overrun and subdued to a very limited extent only. Instead of being exterminated, the native populations remained in most parts even numerically superior to the Israelites. But the natives, graziers here, agriculturists there, divided among themselves doubtless, and quarrelling at times, must still have been unused to war on any great scale. Their assailants, the Israelites, on the contrary, are represented as soldiers trained and armed for battle, acting as invaders in a body under a single leader, and superior through discipline to any opposition that could be offered them. There was, therefore, no necessity for the indiscriminate slaughter paraded by the Jewish annalists for the purpose of magnifying Jehovah and his people Israel.

The vast multitude said to have left Egypt and made to toil so long in the wilderness, disappear soon after Joshua comes upon the stage ?

After the questionable Census in the plains of Moab, we hear no more of the six hundred thousand and odd able-bodied men, from twenty years of age and upwards, armed for war. The force in the field under Joshua, though greatly exaggerated in numbers, doubtless, is a comparatively compact body, more easily handled than any larger mass, but still, we may imagine, more than sufficient to make resistance useless on the part of the Canaanites. They could, in fact, have seen nothing for it, in the majority of instances, but submission ; a course to which they may have been the more easily reconciled when they found that the invaders were of their own kindred,

spoke the same or a dialect of the same language, followed the same social usages, and with little difference observed the same religious rites as themselves. The Hebrews and Canaanites were in truth, as we have seen, scions of the same Semitic stock, and intermingling freely through the whole of the earlier and by much the longer period of their history—each taking the sons and daughters of the other as husbands and wives—they became amalgamated at length into the people whom we finally know as the Israelites, or, in a more restricted sense, as the Jews.

Such a conclusion, however, does not tally with the gist of the general history?

It must be true none the less; for though Jehovah is pledged by the writers of the Hebrew records to drive out the native populations before his elect—the children of Jacob, the wily—as the pledge was never redeemed, so need we have no misgivings in concluding that it never came from God, among whose eternal ordinances, as we read them in the book of Nature, it has no place.

What then becomes of the many stringent enactments so frequently repeated, from the mythical days of Abraham and Sarah downwards, against taking daughters of the soil to wife?

As we see that these were all against the customs of the country, and were never observed by high or low until after the Captivity, we conclude that they are the product of the very latest legislation. They belong, in fact, to times when the Jehovistic religious party had got the upper hand in the state, and the bigotry and intolerance that spring up whenever men in power imagine themselves the favourites of heaven, their views alone agreeable to God, and all who differ from them as no better than accursed, had ripened into a system.

There is particular as well as general discrepancy, also, as regards the districts and cities said to have been conquered by Joshua?

Hebron, for instance, is said in one place to have been taken and smitten with the edge of the sword, and the king and all the souls therein so utterly destroyed that not one was left alive (x. 36). But in another place Caleb says to Joshua, "Now, therefore, give me this mountain, Hebron, where Jehovah spoke in that day, how the Anakims were there and the cities great and fenced. If so be that Jehovah will be with me, *then I will drive them out* as Jehovah said. And Joshua blessed Caleb and gave him Hebron for an inheritance." Hebron consequently had not been captured, neither had its inhabitants been exterminated in the manner declared. By-and-bye, indeed, we are told that *Caleb* drives out the three Anakims, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai from Hebron (xiv. 12); but at a later period in the story, we learn that "*After the death of Joshua the children of Judah* went up to Hebron, fought against the Canaanites who dwelt there, and slew the three Anakims, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai (Judges i. 9), who had all already been first put to the sword by Joshua, and then driven out by Caleb!*

Much the same story is told of Debir as of Hebron?

Joshua and all Israel with him, it is said, fought against Debir; took it; smote it with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all that breathed—"as he had done to Hebron, so did he to Debir" (x. 38). But immediately afterwards we find that Caleb, after clearing his possession, Hebron, of the Anakim, goes up against Debir, and makes proclamation that whosoever takes the city, to him will he give his daughter Achsah to wife; and that Othniel, the son of Kenaz, succeeds, and is rewarded in the terms of the proclamation (xiv. 16-17). But then we have Othniel as the Hero and Achsah as the prize in connection with the city of Kirjath-Sepher—called

* Comp. De Wette: *Introd. to O. T.* by Th. Parker, II., 165, and seq.

Debir of old, says the writer, in times posterior to the death of Joshua (Judges i. 11-13).

From these and the numerous other contradictory and obviously mythical statements of the book of Joshua we conclude ?

First, that the book is a compilation from fragments, mainly traditional, and in many cases purely mythical; and second, that we have the writings of two—if not of three or more—different individuals jumbled together. Besides the information proper to the book itself, there are many allusions to particulars with which we are already familiar in writings that have gone before, as well as with others, in works more sober in their tenour and more reliable as authorities, that come after it. References to the plagues of Egypt and the wonders done in that country are put into the mouths of Rahab and the Gibeonites; the passage of the Jordan is plainly a parallel to the passage of the Red Sea, and needless, inasmuch as the river is fordable; Moses is the hero of the legislation and Joshua the hero of the conquest of the promised land; Moses had a wonder-working rod, and Joshua has a wonder-working spear; Jehovah appears to Moses in the burning bush, and the Captain of Jehovah's host appears to Joshua, and in the very words used to Moses bids him loose his shoe from off his foot, the ground he stands on being holy; and, to conclude, the death and burial of Joshua at Timnath Heres in the dark bears some analogy to the mysterious death of Moses on Mount Nebo.

Beside the general distribution of lands to the tribes, there are a few particular allotments to distinguished individuals ?

We have seen Caleb put in possession of Hebron, and we now learn that the sons of Aaron, the priests, are handsomely endowed; they have no fewer than thirteen cities assigned them. But, as the sons were only two, we are at a loss to imagine what use they

could have made of so munificent a gift: they could not have occupied thirteen cities, and in the days referred to there was no letting and sub-letting; possessions were for individuals and their families, and the transmission of property only took place by sale or inheritance among the members of each several tribe. Such an anachronism as the presentment of thirteen cities to the priesthood can scarcely be conceived possible even at a date so remote as the age of Solomon; the statement before us, therefore, we must conclude, was made after the reign of that sovereign.* And now, continues the text, "Jehovah gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give to their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein, and Jehovah gave them rest round about . . . and there failed not aught of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel—all came to pass" (xxi. 43-45).

This must be a note supplied by a late hand, ignoring much of what had been said before?

It has every appearance of being so, standing as it does in flagrant contradiction with the statements we have but just had made that there still remained much land to be taken in and possessed; that the children of Judah could never drive the Jebusites out of their city, nor the sons of Manasseh expel the Canaanites from the district assigned them, &c. Neither, indeed, were the Geshurites ever got rid of, but continued, the text tells us, "to dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day," *i.e.*, unto the day when the writer lived, some time assuredly, longer or shorter, after the reign of Solomon.

The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, which have kept their word to Moses that they would aid the other tribes, their brethren, in the conquest of the promised land, now take their

See Kuehnen. *Hist. critique de l'ancien Testament*, Tr. de l'Hollandais, T. I., p. 330, 8vo, Paris, 1866.

leave, and set out in return to their own territory beyond Jordan, with the blessing of Joshua and a charge that they should diligently keep the commandments and observe the law which Moses the servant of Jehovah had given them?

They depart, and having come to the banks of the Jordan in the land of Canaan they are minded, it is said, to build an altar, "a great altar to see to," according to the text.

This was piously intended, doubtless, and in thankfulness to their God who had so marvellously befriended them and their brethren in their great enterprise?

So might we conclude; but, strange to say, it is taken as a mortal offence by the ten tribes they had just left; "the whole congregation of Israel, it is said, gathered themselves together at Shiloh to go up to war against them."

This seems extraordinary?

So would it be assuredly, could anything of the kind have occurred at the Early period of Hebrew history assumed. Then, and for long ages after, there were numerous holy-places, with rude altars of earth and unhewn stones, scattered over the country, at Hebron, Beth-El, Beer-Sheba, Gilgal, Sechem, Siloh, Lachish, Dan, &c., dedicated to the Hebrew God or Gods—El, Elohim, Isra-El, or by whatever other name known, under whatever form represented, at all of which sacrifices could be duly and lawfully offered. The ire of the congregation of Israel, however, ceases to strike us as extraordinary when the writing is referred to post-exilic times, when the only shrine to which oblations could be lawfully brought was the one on Mount Zion, and the only God to be addressed without sin was Jehovah, God of the reformed religious party in the kingdom of Judah. The story, if it be more than a myth, if it have any historical foundation at all, must refer to an episode in the rivalry between Judah and Israel, in the days

of Jeroboam, or still later, but here relegated to the remote age of Joshua and the Epoch of the Conquest.

The congregation of Israel (Judah) expostulate with Reuben and Gad (Israel or Éphraim) before proceeding to extremities and coming to blows with them ?

They send Phinehas, distinguished as we already know by the 'murder of Zimri and Cozbi, so much approved of by Jehovah, if the record may be trusted, and with him ten princes of the tribes. Coming up with the sons of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh, at Gilead, they say :—“ What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel ” [Jehovah, the God of Judah, being here to be understood] “ in that ye have builded you an altar ? If the land of your possession be unclean, then pass ye over into the land of the possession of Jehovah, wherein Jehovah's tabernacle [Temple on Mount Zion, to be understood] dwelleth ; but rebel not against us in building you an altar beside [in addition to] the altar of Jehovah *our* God.”

The Reubenites and Gadites will be much amazed at this interference with the custom of their fathers—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and themselves, of setting up an altar whenever and wherever they were minded so to do ?

That they must have been taken aback there can be little question, and we should find them saying so, assuredly, had we the true account of the incident out of which, we must presume, the story of the text to have arisen ; but we have it not, we have only the travestied Jehovistic narrative, in which the parties inculpated are made to say :—“ God, God Jehovah [Judah's God] knoweth, and Isra-El [Éphraim's God] shall know, if this has come to pass through falling away from Jehovah or rebelling against him, may there be no help for us this day ! If we have built us an altar to turn from following Jehovah, or to offer burnt-offerings or thank-offerings thereon, may

Jehovah avenge it! And if we have not rather done this to the end, that in time to come when your children say to our children, 'What have ye in common with Jehovah, seeing that Jehovah hath made Jordan the boundary between us and you—ye have no part in Jehovah.' . . . Therefore, said we, we shall build an altar, neither for burnt-offerings nor for sacrifice, but for a witness between us and you, and between your generations and our generations after us that we do service to Jehovah, and come to him with our burnt-offerings, our sacrifices, and our thank-offerings, so that your children shall not in time to come say to our children, 'Ye have no part in Jehovah.' Far be it from us, therefore, say we, this day to fall away from Jehovah by building an altar for burnt-offerings and meat-offerings, and sacrifices, other than the altar of Jehovah our [the word should be your] God that stands before his dwelling-place" [the Temple of Jerusalem to be understood].

The account here is not only tautological and extremely prolix in the original, but, when closely scanned, is seen to be at variance with other parts of the Hebrew Scriptures?

Hardly to be understood either without the comment here supplied in some small measure by the few words within brackets. Explanation more at large is found when note is taken of the two great religious parties, Elohist and Jehovist, into which the Hebrew people came to be divided subsequently to the reign of Solomon. Of these the Elohist represent the Catholics, the Jehovist the Protestants, of modern times. The Elohist "stand fast on the ancient ways," have their strength in the kingdom of Israel or Ephraim, and they possess numerous altars or holy places; the Jehovist, more advanced, have their stronghold in Judah, with the Temple on Mount Zion as the only shrine or holy place they acknowledge. The Elohist, in a word, abide by the

worship of the old Hebrew God El Elohe Israel, and continue to sacrifice to him under the semblance of the Bull. The Jehovahists, again, having attained to the conception of the Oneness and Omnipresence of Deity, had abandoned the Idea that God could be presented under any *similitude*, but inconsistently maintained that he could only be lawfully addressed at his Shrine on Mount Zion. Reuben and Gad, we see, do not deny that they had built an altar; but they are made by the Jewish writer to belie themselves, and say that it was not intended for burnt-offerings nor for sacrifice, but for a witness between them and their brethren. Altars, however, were never built save for sacrifice, it was the Cairn or Heap of stones, and upon occasion the single stone pillar under a tree or by a well, that was the proper memorial monument. The text but just quoted, in its inconsistencies and its statements at variance with all we know of use and wont among the early Hebrews, shows unmistakable signs of late writing and of yet later editorial manipulation in the transparent purpose it presents to set Jehovah above El Elohe-Isra-El.

The religious difference between the two sections of the Hebrew people may possibly have lain at the root of the fatal disruption that turned into two the single kingdom conquered by David and ruled over through the greater part of his life by Solomon?

There may be some truth in this. United, Judah and Ephraim might, as it seems, have made head against either Egypt or Assyria, operating so far from home, and have even held their own, under a competent leader, in the hilly and easily-defended country of Northern Palestine against Chaldea. But divided, hating each other with the blind and deadly hate that is engendered of religious difference, and often at war with one another, they became in succession the easy prey of even the least powerful of their enemies.

If Reuben and Gad had built, or were minded to

build, an altar at all, it could therefore only be for sacrifice and oblation; and their offence lay in this, that it was not to Jehovah, but to the God El-Elohe-Israel, Chiun, or Chamos, whose Tabernacle, Image, and Star had been borne by them and their fathers in the wilderness for forty years, according to the prophet Amos (v.), that they were about to bring their offerings?

In the olden time there was not only no restriction as to the building of altars for sacrifice, but every facility was given for their erection. Jehovah [the name should here be Elohim] orders Moses to say to the children of Israel, "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt offer thereon thy burnt-offerings." It was only when the Temple of Jerusalem had been built, and proclaimed by the Jehovistic or Jewish party, the sole shrine at which their God Jehovah could be worshipped, that the building elsewhere of an altar for sacrifice and oblation came to be regarded as a trespass of such magnitude that it could only be atoned for by bloodshed. The Hebrew people of the age of Joshua must not be seen as the Israelites of Jeroboam and his successors of the age of the writer, setting up altars and bringing offerings to a Golden Calf as the God who had brought them out of their Egyptian bondage; they must be paraded as observant of the Law of Moses, eight centuries before it was even imagined to be in existence, and nine centuries before the second Temple of Jehovah, God of Judah, had been built!

Phinehas the priest and the other delegates express themselves satisfied with the disavowal they receive from Reuben and Gad of any purpose on their part to raise an independent altar?

They say: "This day we perceive that Jehovah is among us. Because ye have not committed this trespass, ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of Jehovah." The children of Israel, it is said in continuation, "blessed God, and did not

go up in battle array to desolate the land wherein Reuben and Gad had their possessions ;” and they, it is added, called the altar they had built “Ed—*Witness* that Jehovah is God.”*

The words which speak in this place of the “delivery of the children of Israel out of the hand of Jehovah” must have a special significance?

The writer would, doubtless, persuade his countrymen and co-religionists that all departure from the so-called Law of Moses—which had been brought to light, we may suppose, a short while before his time—and any sacrifice offered at a shrine other than the Temple of Jerusalem, would bring Jehovah down upon them with war or pestilence for their presumption. He would have them believe that his God Jehovah would not be slow, through the instrumentality of such a zealot as Phinehas, or by war or pestilence to make them smart for daring to worship God in any but the prescribed, though it were, perchance, the an-

* It is with great diffidence that we venture to differ from so accomplished a Biblical scholar as Professor Kuehnen in our interpretation of this curious episode in Hebrew history. Referring to Joshua xxi., Professor Kuehnen says :—“How we see Israel zealous for the unity of worship! What—build an altar outside of Shilo, the holy place! This were indeed a sin of the gravest complexion, which the parties inculpated make haste to explain away as they best can. The great thing in the writer’s mind is to have the calf of Jehovah centered at Shilo, and allowed at no other place.” But we are persuaded that it is Judah that is here zealous against Ephraim, after the disruption of the kingdom. The question, in our opinion, is not about having an altar *anywhere save at Shilo*, but of having an altar *anywhere save at Jerusalem*. The narrative in the text Professor Kuehnen believes to be derived from the document he styles ‘The Book of the Origins;’ and, as he refers the composition of this book to no more ancient a date than the reign of Solomon, we see that the history may very well refer to times by no means so remote as those of Joshua. In the shape in which we have the tale, it is probably from the pen of a Jewish writer, who lived not earlier than the reign of Josiah, and is an indifferent invention—*ad majorem Jehovahæ gloriam!* The text is confused, tautological,

tique way, and even the way of their immediate fathers and of most of themselves.

The Jehovists were the Iconoclasts of the days of Josiah and a few of his successors. They were the men who ruined the High-places, broke in pieces the stone columns, and slew the priests of Baal, burnt the wooden pillars of Aschera, pulled down the booths of the infamous Kadeschim, destroyed the brazen Serpent—said to be that which Moses set up on a pole in the wilderness—made a bonfire of the Chariot of the Sun that stood in the porch of the Temple, and so on. They present themselves in almost all things as prototypes of the early reformers of modern times, who were not always content with breaking in pieces the images and wrecking the altars, but did not hold their hands from the solemn piles in which what they styled *The Idolatry* had been carried on.

With the departure of Reuben and Gad to their possessions beyond Jordan, "a long time after Jehovah had given rest to Israel," according to the

and bears obvious marks of editorial manipulation; but the burden of the narrative assimilates itself perfectly with the state of things existing between Judah and Ephraim in days subsequent to the age of Solomon. It is not uninteresting to note that the site of the ED or WITNESS altar spoken of appears to have been recently discovered in the course of the Ordnance Survey of Palestine, proceeding at this time. There is, it seems, a remarkable lofty white peak visible from the modern Jericho, twenty miles distant, projecting like a bastion, and closing the valley of the Jordan. From the summit of this peak there is a magnificent and very extensive view. Accessible on the north side only, the surveying party there obtained the name, Tal'at abu Ayd—the ascent leading to Ayd. The lofty peak in question, conspicuous in days when writing had become familiar to the Jews as it had been from time immemorial, was probably in want of a history, and has been supplied with one by the writer of the Book of Joshua. The times with which we have ventured to connect the narrative of the 22nd chapter of Joshua implies our persuasion that the tale has reference to incidents much later than any that can be referred to the days of the mythical successor of the still more mythical Moses.

text, Joshua, now far stricken in years, calls the Elders of Israel around him ?

And reminds them, in imitation of Moses, when he had the notice that he was to die, of all Jehovah had done for them. Modestly passing over his own achievements, he speaks of the partition he had made among them by lot, not only of the lands overrun and possessed, but of those of the peoples which still remained to be conquered and taken in. But he informs them that they have only to be of good courage, to do all that is ordained in the book of the Law, to serve none of the gods of the native tribes among whom they settled, and particularly to contract no marriages with their women ; the Jewish writer showing himself as well aware, in his day, as we are in ours, of the power of the *female propaganda* in securing outward conformity, at all events, if not always inward assent, to the religious dogmas and rites which are the fashion of the age.

But if they failed to follow the advice now given them ?

Then should they smart for it: "Do ye in anywise go back and cleave to the remnants of the nations left among you," says the text, "making marriages with them and they with you ; know for a certainty that Jehovah your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you, but they shall be snares and traps unto you, scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off the land. It shall come to pass that as all good things are come upon you which were promised, so shall Jehovah bring upon you all evil things. When ye have transgressed the covenant of Jehovah and have gone and served other gods, then shall the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given you" (xxiii. *ad fin.*).

This has a great look of prophecy after the event ?

There can be little question of its being so in

reality. God as *Immanent Cause*, *In All* and *Of All* that *Is*, cannot be jealous of other gods, for there are none such; and God neither favours nor is angry, in any human sense, with act of man or event that comes to pass. Such language is the effect of anthropomorphosing God and supposing him possessed of human appetites, passions, and prejudices — a sin that must be charged against the writers of the Hebrew Scriptures, above all others. In the texts just quoted we see iteration of the old system of contract or bargain between Jehovah and his people, upon which we have observed already; and in the warnings against serving *other gods* we have fresh assurance that Jehovah was believed by the Jews to be but one among many gods, and not a little jealous of their power.

Joshua continues his parting address ?

Or rather we have another writer beginning it for him anew and varying it in particulars here and there. The first oration, which breaks off at the end of chapter xxiii., is continued at the 14th verse of the 24th chapter, and in terms that are not a little remarkable, the usual interpretation put upon the Hebrew Scriptures considered. "Now, therefore," says the writer, "fear Jehovah and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the Gods which your fathers served on the other side of the stream [the Jordan] and in Egypt, and serve ye Jehovah. And if it seem not good unto you to serve Jehovah, then choose you this day whom ye will serve,—whether *the Gods which your fathers served on the other side of the stream*, or the Gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house we will serve Jehovah."

Joshua therefore gives the people their choice of the God or Gods they would serve; and in what is said incidentally we now learn that *Jehovah was not the God* who was served either in Egypt or beyond Jordan, the proper boundary between *the Divinities of one*

Pantheon and Those of another. We discover at length, and at the very end of our task that JEHOVAH could have had nothing to do with freeing the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage; but that it was verily THE GOD whose similitude was presented by Aaron to the wanderers in the guise of the Bull-Calf, who had led them out of captivity. The writer of the Book of Joshua, plainly enough, has no idea of God as ONE and ONE ONLY; he recognises a multiplicity of Gods with Jehovah his own God among the number. All we have had in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, therefore, about Jehovah as the God of Israel, his apparitions to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, his personal communications and immediate commandments to the chiefs of the chosen seed, &c., &c., vanish into nothing. We have, in a word, no *Records* of the distant ages and strange doings referred to in the Pentateuch, but *Poems* by writers who lived, as we believe, for the most part after the Babylonian Captivity.

To Joshua's proposition as to the God they would serve the people answer and say?

"God forbid that we should forsake Jehovah to serve other Gods; for Jehovah is he that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, and did great wonders in our sight, and preserved us all the way wherein we went and among all the people through whom we passed."

This does not tally exactly with what Joshua has but just been made to say, and with very much besides that we have had already; for Aaron the priest has presented them with a Golden Calf as the God that brought them out of Egypt, and Jehovah has not only broken out on the people for their backslidings on numerous occasions and slain them by thousands with the sword and pestilence, but has inflicted forty years of wandering in the wilderness, and, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, has killed off all of adult years who had left Egypt.

How, then, should we now have the people speaking of Jehovah as their God, of the wonders they had seen, and the care that had been taken of them in their journeyings?

It were very hard to say, could we not with the most perfect assurance refer the writing we have before us to a very late period in the history of the Hebrew people, and even divine the motive that led to its composition.

Joshua does not receive the people's ready acceptance of the new God Jehovah in place of their own and their fathers old Gods without a warning?

"Ye cannot serve Jehovah," says he, "for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake Jehovah and serve other Gods he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you after he hath done you good."

The people are not frightened by these somewhat formidable assurances?

They say: "Nay, but we will serve Jehovah," on which Joshua tells them that now they are witnesses against themselves, that they have chosen Jehovah to serve him. So he makes a covenant with the people and writes the words of it in a book; takes a great stone and sets it up under a tree and says: "Behold this stone shall be a witness to us; for it hath heard (!) all the words of Jehovah which he spake unto us. It shall therefore be a witness unto you that ye deny not your God"—Jehovah, the God just chosen, understood.

By which procedure we see that Joshua, or the modern writer who is using his name, had not got beyond the old religious notions of his forefathers. He sets up a stone pillar, symbol of the life-giving power, under the shade of a living tree, so long an object of worship with man escaping from the merely animal into the more properly human or speculative sphere of existence. It is not unimportant to observe

that the stone is referred to as *having heard* all the words spoken. It was not only the Symbol of the God, therefore, but the God himself—Deity at once, and Deity's dwelling-place. The Book in which Joshua is said to have written what is called "The Law of God" has not come down to us?

The Book we have, which passes under the name of Joshua, contains little or nothing that has not an immediate bearing on the conquests and partition of the promised land, and so cannot be that now referred to. If it ever existed, and it may very well never have had being out of the imagination of the historian of Joshua's deeds of spoliation and slaughter, it has perished in the wreck of ages.

Having done his work, Joshua has now only to be gathered to his fathers?

He dies, it is said, at the advanced age of one hundred and ten years, and is buried on the borders of his inheritance in Timnath-Heres, as we have already had occasion to learn.

We have anticipated almost all that need be said of the age and authorship of the Book of Joshua. That it is of relatively modern composition, there can be no doubt; and from the repeated references we find to late incidents in Hebrew history, we see that he whose name it bears could not have been its author. It is, in fact, a sort of appendix to Deuteronomy, and the style and peculiar forms of expression show, almost beyond question, that the writer of Deuteronomy was, in great part at least, the writer of Joshua also, although it bears many marks of subsequent editorial manipulation. Both Elohist and Jehovist documents appear in the text. The Book of Judges has furnished the compiler with several of his statements, and in this has left our modern harmonists with a crop of contradictions that have sorely taxed their ingenuity to reconcile with the

accredited idea of inspiration. A few of these we have had occasion to notice in the course of our commentary. The mention of *Jerusalem*, which occurs oftener than once, would of itself suffice to take the writing out of the age whose history it details; for Jerusalem was Jebus until the reign of David; and the obvious reference made, in more places than one, to the sufferings that befal a city in a state of siege, and the miseries that wait on exile, point unequivocally to the invasion of the Chaldeans and the Babylonian captivity. The Book of Joshua, therefore, in its present shape, cannot be of older date than the age of Manasseh. Speaking of the first twelve chapters of the Book, containing the tale of the invasion of the land of Canaan, Professor Kuehnen gives it as the result of his inquiries, that "the author cannot be regarded as an entirely credible historian." Dr. Davidson, having determined the time of the Deuteronomist as falling in the reign of Manasseh, and ascribing, as he does, Deuteronomy and Joshua to one and the same compiler, concludes that the Book before us was compiled during the reign of that monarch.



