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THE

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

SKETCHES OF PENTATEUCH CRITICISM.

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INTRODUCTORY.

In every well-ordered gallery of paintings on the Continent it is customary to illustrate the progress of the art by classifying the collection according to the different schools. Thus in one room we have the glories of Italian masters, in another the sensuous productions of a Rubens and his disciples, in another the hard, cold lines of a Cranach; but all so arranged as to illustrate the history of painting in various countries. Such collections, historically arranged, are most important for students of the art.

The historical method is not less useful in other departments of study. In theology it has been especially recognized in the wide field of church history. It is accepted as an axiom that no one can properly understand the church of the present day, unless he can trace the progress of that church from the time of its Founder down to our age. And we may remark in passing, it ought also to be as universally accepted that no man can understand the New Testament aright without a thorough knowledge of the Old.

We are now engaged with certain questions in connection with the origin and composition of the Old Testament Scriptures. These questions, however, centre in the Pentateuch. If we were simply to regard the most pressing needs of a

world lying in wickedness, we might perhaps wish that they had never been raised, although we must believe that they will lead to a better understanding of the Scriptures. We cannot, however, ignore them, and if we do not ignore them we are bound to make a thorough study of the subject. Whatever the results may be, they cannot overthrow the divine and inspired character of God's word; that has been abundantly attested through the witness of the Spirit and in the experience of millions. Not all can pursue these studies. The faithful pastor and conscientious preacher have no time for them. There is but one class of theologians who can, and they are the professors of Old Testament Theology in our various seminaries. In this work they need the sympathy and prayers of all their ministerial brethren. The position which they hold in this country is not only one of solemn responsibility to Christ, but also of positive peril to themselves should the results of their investigations not seem to be in accord with the various standards received by different denominations. One might well desire to escape such a responsibility, — not to say peril, — and pursue only those studies which warm the heart and tend to edification; and yet some must devote themselves to these discussions, and if they do they must undertake them fairly and honestly. They must, if possible, go to the bottom of the subject. But how can this be done, unless we trace the course of Old Testament criticism from its beginning down to the present time? It was the desire to understand the subject more thoroughly which led the author of the proposed Sketches, some six years ago, to begin the collection of materials[1] for this work; and while he could wish, on some accounts, to delay the publication of these articles, yet the time seems to be ripe for a description and discussion of the course of Pentateuch criticism.

Foreshadowings of a Critical Tendency.

There were for a long time certain conditions which were highly unfavorable to a criticism of the Pentateuch, if they

[1] It is fair to say that the materials for these Sketches have been drawn almost exclusively from original sources.

did not render it impossible. The Jew who really believed that the denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch would result in his forfeiture of eternal blessedness — not to speak of the terrors of an excommunication such as Uriel Acosta suffered — would use the utmost ingenuity to remove every difficulty which he might find, or, failing in this, would rather conceal it. Nor were the theories of inspiration generally current in the church favorable to freedom in discussion of these questions. Hence this element must be kept constantly in view, as well as the inadequate knowledge of Hebrew grammar and the principles of interpretation on the part of Old Testament students before the Reformation.

We need not be surprised, therefore, to find the first foreshadowings of criticism among heretics and heathen, who were unchecked by doctrine or discipline; and the first establishment of criticism among those who had broken loose from all restraints of creeds, and among the Roman Catholics, who in placing the authority of the church above Scripture were released from those restraints which the Protestants felt during the period of strict orthodoxy which followed the times of the Reformers. And we may remark, in this connection, that the great freedom which obtains among German theologians at the present day is due, among other causes, to the principle of perfect freedom in teaching (*Lehrfreiheit*) which no judicial court can abridge.

1. *Among Heretics.*

Going back, then, as far as we can, we find at least something that reminds us of an attempt at criticism in the writings of Ptolemaus, a Gnostic, and a disciple of Valentinus. In a letter to Flora, one of his followers, he presents the view that the entire law contained in the Pentateuch was not given by one legislator, God, but that it was to be divided into three parts, in which the commands of God, of the elders, and of Moses himself are contained.[1] This view, however, does not seem to have arisen from any critical examination

[1] Epiphanium Panarii, Lib. I. Tom. II. Haer. xxxiii. Cap. iii.

of the Pentateuch, but was simply based on a very superficial interpretation of some New Testament passages, where God (Matt. xv. 4) or Moses (Matt. xix. 8) or others are represented as speaking, and it is easy to conjecture that his connection with the Gnostic school of Valentinus was the occasion of his opinions.

At an early period we find the heretical sect of the Nazarenes denying that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch as we now have it, although they acknowledged that there was such a person as Moses, and that he received a legislation, but not the one which was in circulation at their time.[1] It seems clear, however, that their rejection of the Pentateuch was due to their asceticism, because they considered it wrong to use flesh for food or in sacrifice.

While we do not find in these any evidence of a critical tendency, we discover traces of it in the Clementine Homilies, which arose among the Ebionites in the early part of the third century, where the writer says that "the law was given by Moses, without writing, to seventy wise men to be handed down, ... but [it was not written] by Moses; for in the law itself it is written, 'And Moses died, and they buried him near the house of Phogor,[2] and no one knows his sepulchre till this day.' But how could Moses write that Moses died?"[3] In still another passage,[4] we read that "Moses having by the order of God delivered the law, with the explanations, to certain chosen men, some seventy in number, in order that they also might instruct such of the people as chose, after a little the written law had added to it certain falsehoods contrary to the law of God; ..... the wicked one having dared to work this for some righteous purpose."

It is probable that these doubts as to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch arose rather from certain presuppositions

[1] Epiphanii Panarium, Lib. I. Tom. I. Haer. xviii.Cap. i.

[2] This is according to the reading in the Septuagint version of Deut. xxxiv. 6: *καὶ ἔθαψαν αὐτὸν ἐν Γαὶ ἐγγὺς οἴκου Φογώρ.*

[3] Homily iii. Chap. xlvii., quoted from the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, Vol. xvii., Edinburgh, 1870.

[4] Ibid., Homily ii. 38.

as to what it should be, than from a very careful criticism of its contents; that is, the criticism was probably the result of a theory; for they considered that those passages which seemed to speak of a plurality of Gods, or attributed to him human passions, or attributed crimes to such men as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, must be spurious additions.

2. *Among Heathen.*

Celsus (178 A.D.) does not attack the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. He simply rejects its divine character; maintaining that the account concerning creation cannot be true, because he is inclined to accept the theory of those who maintain that the world was not created. He further says that Moses found his teaching among wise people and learned men, and so acquired a divine name.[1]

The emperor Julian (b. 331; d. 363 A.D.), however, who had been trained as a Christian, while not rejecting the Mosaic authorship altogether, seems to have recognized the existence of passages which could not be attributed to Moses. He is quoted by Cyril as saying: "In some places the hierophant Moses spoke about God rather according to the taste of the people than according to the truth. His words are neither right, nor worthy of God. ..... But Ezra, in other places, made additions according to his own opinions."[2]

3. *Among Jews.*

The Jews, as we have remarked, were under special bonds not to hold any view that would even seem to call in question the Mosaic authorship. Hence if any had their doubts they

[1] Keim, Celsus's Wahres Wort, Zürich, 1873, pp. 9, 10.

[2] Cf. Neumann, Prolegomena in Juliani Imperatoris Libros Quibus Impugnavit Christianos, Lipsiae, 1880. pp. 20–21.

> ποτὲ μέν φησι τὸν ἱεροφάντην Μωυσέα
> δημαγωγοῦντα μᾶλλον ἢ ἀληθεύοντα τοὺς περὶ
> θεοῦ ποιήσασθαι λόγους, οὔτε ἔχοντας ὀρθῶς
> οὔτε μὴν ἐοικότως αὐτῷ (sc. θεῷ) γεγονότας.
> ποτὲ δὲ τὸν Ἔσδραν ἀπὸ γνώμης ἰδίας
> προσεπενεγκεῖν τινα διατείνεται.

took pains to conceal them from the ordinary reader. There are, however, two Jewish writers belonging to the Middle Ages who exhibit a critical tendency.

The first of these was probably Isaac ben Suleiman, or Israeli, a celebrated African physician, mathematician, and astronomer, who lived to be nearly a hundred years old, and was one of the most productive writers of his time (d. 940 A.D). The only thing that we know about his critical opinions is found in a comment by Ibn Ezra on Gen. xxxvi. 31, where we read: "And these are the kings which reigned in the land of Edom before the children of Israel were under the rule of a king."[1] Ibn Ezra remarks on this passage: "There are those who say that this section was written prophetically; but Isaac says in his book that this section was written in the days of Jehoshaphat." The reasons on which Isaac bases his opinion are, that Hadar (ver. 39), whose wife was Mehetabel, is the same as Hadad (cf. 1 Chron. i. 50), the Edomite who is mentioned in 1 Kings xi. 14–20, and that Mehetabel is the same as the unnamed sister of Tahpenes the queen of Egypt, whom Pharaoh gave to Hadad, the contemporary of Solomon, to wife.

There are many others as well as Isaac who have been staggered by this allusion in Genesis to a king in Israel. There are really only three explanations of the difficulty, either, as the orthodox Jews suggested, that the passage was written prophetically, or the finical explanation given by Ibn Ezra, that Moses is the king of Israel intended here (Deut. xxxiii. 5), or to suppose with Isaac that this passage was really written after there were kings in Israel. Nevertheless Ibn Ezra makes sport of the theory, and says that the author of it is rightly called Isaac (laughter), because every one who

[1] Maier, in the Studien und Kritiken, Hamburg, 1832, p. 639, says that this is an Isaac ben Jasos, a Spaniard, who lived in the eleventh century. Siegfried, however, in his dissertation, entitled Spinoza als Kritiker und Ausleger des Alten Testaments, Berlin, 1867, p. 11, declares that it is Isaac ben Suleiman, who is also called Israeli; cf. Geiger's Judenthum und Seine Geschichte, ii. p. 78; and for a short sketch of his life Graetz, Geschichte der Juden, Leipzig, 1871, Vol. v. pp. 282–284.

hears his explanation of the passage will laugh at it, and prophesies that his book is destined to be burned — a prophecy which may have been fulfilled. In any case we would not be justified in inferring more from this quotation given by Ibn Ezra than that Isaac ben Suleiman held that there were interpolations in the Pentateuch.

The second Jewish critic is Ibn Ezra (b. about 1088; d. 1167 A.D.) himself, a Spanish Jew of Toledo, who was celebrated for versatility of mind and range of knowledge.[1]

While his writings have been preserved to us, yet the constitution of his mind was so peculiar that we cannot clearly determine what his real views as to the authorship of the Pentateuch were. His doubts, although expressed in a recondite manner, led Spinoza to claim that he really denied the Mosaic authorship.[2] In his comment on Deut. i. 2 Ibn Ezra says: "If thou shalt understand the secret of the twelve, also and Moses wrote this book (Deut. xxxi. 6), and the Cananite was then in the land (Gen. xii. 6), in the mountain of Jehovah he appeareth (Gen. xxii. 14), also behold his bed is a bed of iron (Deut. iii. 11), thou shalt recognize the truth."

What truth then had Ibn Ezra in mind? Either that these passages, which are regarded as anachronisms by critics in a work written by Moses, are interpolations, or that the Pentateuch in its present form was not written by Moses. The wily Ibn Ezra leaves this question undecided, although, perhaps, he divulges the secret of the twelve himself in his

[1] He was perhaps too much of a traveller to be very prosperous. At any rate he humorously describes his ill-success in securing a fortune as follows: "I am trying to get rich, but the stars are against me. If I were to take up the business of winding-sheets nobody would die; were I to take a stock of candles the sun would not go down to my dying day." — Graetz, Geschichte der Juden, Leipzig, 1871, p. 186.

[2] Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, Hamburgi, 1670, p. 104: "E. primo de scriptore Pentateuchi: quem fere omnes Mosen esse crediderunt, imo adeo pertinaciter defenderunt Pharisaei, ut eum haereticum habuerint, qui aliud visus est sentire, et hac de causa Aben Hezra, liberioris ingenii vir, et non mediocris eruditionis, et qui primus omnium, quos legi, hoc praejudicium animadvertit, non ausus est mentem suam aperte explicare, sed rem obscurioribus verbis tantum indicare."

comment on Deut. xxxiv. 1, where he says respecting the words "And Moses went up," "In my opinion Joshua wrote from this verse [i.e. the twelve verses in the chapter]; for after Moses went up he [Moses] did not write, and he [Joshua] wrote it prophetically." Further, with regard to verse 6, Ibn Ezra remarks on the words "Unto this day," "These are the words of Joshua, and he put this writing in order at the end of his days."[1]

Although this and other passages which might be quoted from Ibn Ezra would seem to indicate either directly or by implication his belief in the Mosaic authorship, and that he considered the texts cited (Deut. xxxi. 9; Gen. xii. 6; xxii. 14; Deut. iii. 11) merely interpolations, yet when we remember that Graetz affirms that he had pantheistic tendencies and, along with an almost fanatical orthodoxy, maintained a half concealed scepticism, ridiculed the mystical interpretation of Solomon's Song, doubted the authenticity of the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah, and could not take the supernatural accounts of the Bible literally, but had to give them a rationalistic interpretation,[2] we can conclude that Spinoza may not be so far from the truth when he recognizes in Ibn Ezra his forerunner in the denial of the Mosaic authorship.[3]

[1] It is certain that the "Super-commentator" on Ibn Ezra in ספר מרגליות תורה, Amsterdam, 1721, fol. 134[b], does not give Ibn Ezra's views on this passage, but simply the explanation common among the orthodox Jews. Part of his comment is as follows: "All these things were said to Moses prophetically, and he wrote them so. And why does the wise say, And Moses wrote: 'And he [Moses] went?' (Deut. xxxiv. 1). 'His knowledge [i.e. Moses,' in writing this before his death] was equally by way of prophecy. Also in the mountain of Jehovah he appeareth (Gen. xxii. 14) there was not a thought of the house of the sanctuary [i.e. it was not written after the Temple at Jerusalem was built], and he says that there shall be his shekinah; also behold his bedstead is a bedstead of iron ..... these, it is necessary to say, are by the spirit of prophecy." Every anachronism could be removed by the pious Jew by having recourse to the spirit of prophecy; the most orthodox party even made Moses recount the story of his own death and burial (Deut. xxxiv. 5–12) by the same spirit of prophecy, and added, with a childlike simplicity, "And Moses wept." — Baba bathra, 15[a]: ומשה מיחב ברשע.

[2] Geschichte der Juden, Vol. vi., Leipzig, 1871, pp. 183 ff.

[3] Cf. Benedicti de Spinoza Opera quae supersunt Omnia, Jenae, 1802, Vol. i. p. 277.

4. *Among Christians.*

It is difficult to decide just how much we are at liberty to infer from Jerome's (d. 420 A.D.) utterance, when he says: "Whether you choose to say that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, or that Ezra was the restorer of the same work, I have no objections."[1] We cannot decide whether this utterance was due to a critical examination of the Pentateuch, or simply to the apocryphal story found in the fourth book of Ezra (xiv.), where it is said that the whole world is in darkness, because the law has been burned, and where Ezra prays that God will send him his Holy Spirit that he may reproduce the law. Certainly this story of the burning of the law and its reproduction by Ezra is quite sufficient to account for what he says about the authorship of the Pentateuch.[2]

During the Middle Ages we can hardly speak of criticism in the case of Abelard (b. 1079; d. 1142 A.D.), who knew neither Greek nor Hebrew. Yet he raises the question as to the authorship of Deut. xxxiii., xxxiv., whether Moses added these chapters in a prophetical spirit, or some one else.[3] Doubtless he represents Ezra as editing the Old Testament with great freedom with reference to the story found in the apocryphal book of Ezra, to which we have just alluded. He says: "Ezra, as far as the needs of the readers seemed to require, not only rewrote this, but also added many other things to the Old Testament Scriptures."[4]

Coming down to the time of the Reformation we find Luther expressing himself with a great deal of freedom. He does not think it likely that inspiration had any influence upon the form of the Old Testament books, and considers it probable not only that Jeremiah, but also that Hosea, Isaiah, and Ecclesiastes received their final form through other

[1] Adversus Helvidium: "Sive Moysen dicere volueris auctorem Pentateuchi; sive Esdram ejusdem instauratorem operis, non recuso."

[2] See The Levitical Priests, Edinburgh, 1877, pp. 153 ff.

[3] Diestel, Geschichte des Alten Testaments, Jena, 1869, p. 212.

[4] "Esdras, prout sibi videbatur legentibus sufficere, rescripsit tam hoc, quam alia pleraque scriptis Veteris Testamenti adjecit.

hands.[1] In his Table Talk he says: "What difference would it make even if Moses himself had not written the Pentateuch?[2] He admits that there are contradictions in the historical facts of the Old Testament, and that there are chronological difficulties.

A contemporary of Luther, Carlstadt[3] (b. 1480; d. 1541 A.D.), went much further than he, claiming that no one, unless entirely demented, could ascribe the Pentateuch to Moses. He not only denies the Mosaic authorship, but also that of Ezra.[4] He considers it certain that Moses after he had received the law of God gave it to the people,[5] but says it is doubtful whose diction we have in the Pentateuch. He affirms that no one could successfully contend that the Pentateuch was written by Moses until after he had accurately ascertained the Mosaic diction. This he considers impossible, because we have the speeches of so many different persons.[6] Furthermore he affirms that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses, because the portions which refer to the death of Moses are written in the same style as those which precede.[7] Carlstadt is the first, then, who explicitly denies the Mosaic authorship; but he is still more significant for our Sketches as foreshadowing those who have discovered different documents in the Pentateuch.

In striking contrast to Carlstadt is Andreas Masius, an eminent jurist, who was born in Belgium in the first half of the sixteenth century, and who died in 1573. His attainments in Hebrew, Syriac, and sacred learning were remarkable, and his seemingly wide acquaintance with Rabbinical literature surprising. He is best known to scholars by his Commentary on the Book of Joshua.[8] This work is justly

[1] See Köstlin on Luther in the Real Encyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche, Bk. viii. Stuttgart und Hamburg, 1857, p. 609; and Lutheri Exegetica Opera Latina, Erlangae, 1860, Vol. xxii. p. 8.

[2] Real Encyklopädie, Ibid, "Was thäte es, wenn auch Moses diesen [den Pentateuch] nicht selbst geschrieben hätte?"

[3] See his De Canonicis Scripturis Libellus in Credner, Zur Geschichte des Kanons, Halle, 1847.

[4] Ibid., pp 369, 370. [5] Ibid., p. 364. [6] Ibid., pp. 364, 365. [7] Ibid., p. 368.

[8] Josvae Imperatoris Historia, Antverpiae, 1574.

praised by Richard Simon for its learning and critical acuteness.[1]

Although he maintains that Ezra, either alone or with others who were distinguished for piety and erudition, under the influence of the Divine Spirit, compiled Joshua, Judges, Kings, etc. from existing annals, yet he confines their labors with reference to the Pentateuch to the insertion of explanatory words, sentences, or to the introduction of modern names in place of those which had become obsolete.[2]

From this it will be seen that Masius, far from denying the Mosaic authorship in whole or in part, held the very conservative position that the interpolations which had been made were introduced by inspired men. Nevertheless, his writings were interdicted by the Roman Catholic church.

FIRST PERIOD, 1650—1800.

THE MOSAIC AUTHORSHIP ATTACKED ON THE BASIS OF ALLEGED INCONSISTENCIES AND ANACHRONISMS.

We now come to the first period in the history of Pentateuch criticism. In Ibn Ezra and Carlstadt we have had examples of radical views; but their utterances are sporadic. They do not mark a period.

[1] Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament, Rotterdam, 1685, p. 444.

[2] The form of statement in Bleek's Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Berlin, 1878, p. 16, tends to give a wrong impression as to Masius's view. Bleek says: "In dessen Vorrede und an verschiedenen anderen Stellen erklärt sich Masius entschieden dahin, das der Pentateuch in der Gestalt, worin er uns vorliege, nicht das Werk des Moses sei, sondern des Esra oder eines anderen Gottbegeisterten Mannes, *der z. b. manche ältere Namen in die später üblichen geändert habe* und dergl." The emphasis should be placed on the last clause which I have italicised, otherwise Masius's position would be misunderstood, for he says: "Mihi certe ea est opinio, ut putem, Ezdram, sive solum, sive una cum equalibus, insigni pietate et eruditione viris, coelesti spiritu afflatum, non solum hunc Josuae, verum etiam Judicum, Regum, alios, quos in sacris, ut vocant, Bibliis legimus libros, ex diversis annalibus apud Ecclesiam Dei conservatis compilasse, in eumque ordinem, qui jam olim habetur, redegisse atque disponisse. Quin ipsum etiam Mosis opus, quod vocant πενταteυχον, longo post Mosen tempore, interjectis saltem hic illic verborum et sententiarum clausulis, veluti sarcitum, atque omnino explicatius redditum esse conjecturae bonae afferri facile possunt. Nam ut unam, exempli causa, dicam Cariath-Arbe saepe illic Hebron nominatur et tamen hoc illi urbi nomen a Calebi filio Hebrone impositum esse graves autores tradiderunt."

As we have already indicated, Pentateuch criticism had its origin in the ranks of unbelievers, who, free from all dogmatic presuppositions, gave expression to their opinions as to the origin of the Pentateuch, without fear or favor. The first division in the period is marked by tearing down.

I. Destructive Critics.

1. *Hobbes* (b. 1588; d. 1679 A.D.).

The first of these destructive critics was the famous English philosopher, Hobbes. During his residence of five years at Oxford he is said to have devoted himself to the study of the Aristotelian logic and physics; and several years later, during his second residence in France, to the study of mathematics. He afterwards became a tutor in the family of the earl of Devonshire, with which he retained his connection as long as he lived. At the beginning of his career his association with this family gave him superior opportunities for travel and acquaintance with distinguished men. Although he belonged to the church of England, and was highly moral and upright in his life, his teaching was antagonistic to revealed religion. While giving instruction in mathematics to the Prince of Wales, who had retired to France, he was preparing his Leviathan, which first appeared in England in the year 1651.[1] This work contains his critical views on

[1] For the particulars of his life see his Vita in his Opera Philosophica, edited by Molesworth, Vol. i. Londoni, 1839, pp. xiii sq., and the Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. xii. New York, 1881, pp. 31–40. The claim which Siegfried makes on internal grounds in his Spinoza als Kritiker und Ausleger des Alten Testaments, Berlin, 1867, p. 8, that Hobbes derived his critical views from Peyrere and Spinoza is utterly groundless. The Leviathan, in which Hobbes's theories concerning the Mosaic authorship occur, was begun about 1647, and published in English in 1651, nineteen years before Spinoza's Tractatus Theologico Politicus, and twelve years before that work was ready for the press. Even the Latin edition of the Leviathan appeared in Amsterdam in 1668, or two years before the Tractatus. The Preadamitae of Peyrere was not given to the public until 1655, or four years after the Leviathan. This shows how something more than internal criticism is necessary to settle the question of priority, and how far astray those who are engaged in Pentateuch criticism may go who rely almost wholly on internal evidence in determining the priority and age of documents.

the Pentateuch. He claims that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses for the following reasons:

(1) Because we read in Deut. xxxiv. 6, "concerning the sepulchre of Moses, that 'no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day.' It is therefore manifest that those words were written after his interment." He meets the objection which may be raised, that the last chapter of the Pentateuch was written by some other man, although the rest was of Mosaic origin, by referring (2) to Gen. xii. 6: "And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land." From this he infers that these "must needs bee the words of one that wrote when the Canaanite was not in the land; and consequently not of Moses who dyed before hee came into it." (3) In Num. xxi. 14 "the writer citeth another more ancient book, entituled, The Book of the Wars of the Lord, wherein were registered the Acts of Moses at the Red Sea, and at the brook of Arnon." He therefore concludes that the books of Moses were written after his death, although he does not attempt to fix the date. Nevertheless, he concedes the Mosaic authorship of certain portions of the Pentateuch, as will appear from the following quotation: "But though Moses did not compile those Books entirely, and in the form we have them; yet hee wrote all that which hee is there said to have written: as for example, the Volume of the Law, which is contained, as it seemeth, in the XIth of Deuteronomie, and the following chapters to the XXVIIth, which was also commanded to be written on Stones in their entry into the land of Canaan. And this also did Moses himself write (Deut. xxxi. 9, 10) and delivered to the Priests and Elders of Israel, to be read every seventh year to all Israel, at their assembling in the Feast of Tabernacles. And this is that Law which God commanded that their Kings (when they should have established that form of Government) should take a copy from the Priests and Levites; and which Moses commanded the Priests and Levites to lay in the side of the Arke [Deut. xxxi. 26]; and the same which, having been

lost, was long time after found again by Hilkiah, and sent to King Josiah [2 Kings xxii. 8], who, causing it to be read to the People [2 Kings xxiii. 1–3], renewed the Covenant between God and them." [1]

Although these views would now be considered highly conservative by modern critics, yet the publication of the book in which they occur raised a storm of opposition among the clergy who were in France with Charles the Second, and resulted in his dismission from the royal party. It is interesting to notice that Hobbes, in assigning Deut. xi.–xxvii. to Moses, very nearly anticipated the view now held by some critics as to the original code embodied in the Book of Deuteronomy.

2. *Peyrere* (b. 1594; d. 1676 A.D.).

The second of the destructive critics was a Frenchman, who was born at Bordeaux. At the age of fifty he accompanied the French ambassador to Denmark. On his return he entered the service of the Prince of Condé, and went on a special mission for him to Spain. He followed him later (1648?) to the Low Countries. His work on the Preadamites was prepared during his residence of several years in Holland, and was published in 1655 A.D. It was condemned by the parliament of Paris, and in the following year he was cast into prison at Brussels by order of the archbishop of Mechlin, but was afterwards released through the influence of Condé. He then visited Rome, where he was graciously received by Alexander VII., on his retraction of his book and his abjuration of the reformed faith. He afterwards returned to France, where he spent his days. He is said to have been ignorant of Hebrew and Greek, and to have understood but little Latin.

The following epitaph was inscribed on his tomb:

> "Le Peyrere ici git, ce bon Israelite,
> Hugenot, Catholique, enfin Préadamite,

[1] Quoted from the original edition, London, 1651; see also the edition by Molesworth, London, 1839, Vol. iii. pp. 368, 369.

Quatre religions lui plurent à la fois;
Et son indifference etoit si peu commune
Qu'apres quatre vingt ans qu'il eut à faire un choix;
Le bon homme partit, et n'en choisit pas une."[1]

Peyrere, in his book Praeadamitae,[2] in which he seeks to prove, on the basis of Rom. v. 14, that there were men in existence before Adam, claims that the Pentateuch is not an autograph of Moses, for the following reasons:[3]

1. Because in the last chapter of Deuteronomy an account is given of Moses' death, which he himself could not have written.

2. On account of the expression (Deut. i. 1) "beyond Jordan." If Moses had written these words he would have said, on this side Jordan, since he had never crossed it. The author, however, who compiled Deuteronomy wrote "beyond Jordan," because he lived in the Holy Land. This expression is used many times in Deuteronomy.

3. As the Book of the Wars of Jehovah is mentioned in Num. xxi. 14, in which the things which were done in Arnon were by Moses himself, he holds that that book was neither written by Moses, nor could have been written by him. He believes that Moses wrote commentaries on all the remarkable occurrences, from which, long after Moses' death, this Book of the Wars of Jehovah was composed, from which finally the Book of Numbers was taken. Hence Numbers is not even an apograph derived from an autograph, but has rather come from an apograph.

4. The things which are related in Deut. iii. were written very long after Moses' death: (1) in verse 14 where we read;

[1] We suggest the following rendering:

"Peyrere lies here, that good Israelite,
Huguenot, Catholic, Preadamite.
Four religions bewail him together,
But indifference, light as a feather,
Brought him to eighty without chosing one.
He has left the world, and declared for none."

[2] The book is not unfrequent as a 16°, and appears with the following title: Praeadamitae Sive Exercitatio super versibus duodecimo, decimotertio, et decimoquarto, capitis quinti Epistolae D. Pauli ad Romanos [place not designated] 1655.

[3] Ibid., pp. 185 ff.

"Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, unto the coasts of Geshuri and Maachathi; and called them after his own name, even Bashan the tent-villages of Jair unto this day." Moses could not have said "unto this day" if he had written [this], "for Jair himself scarcely possessed that village at the time when Moses is introduced as saying these things. Hence it is evident that the author of this Deuteronomic passage wished to show from the farthest and most primitive origin how the village of Jair received its name, deriving it from the time of Moses, which was long before his own. (2) So, too, he argues that Moses could not have written Deut. iii. 11, as there would be no object in calling the attention of the people to the bed of the giant whom they had already seen. He says it is far more probable, that the historian in order to secure credence for his narrative mentions the iron bed as a most certain proof.

5. Since the reference in ii. 12 is to the Idumeans who were first conquered in the time of David (2 Sam. viii. 14), this passage of Deuteronomy was not written in the time of Moses, but first after the age of David.

Peyrere therefore concludes, in the most emphatic way, that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses. He holds, moreover, that many things which are obscure, confused, disarranged, omitted, etc. are due to the fact that the Pentateuch is an apograph, and maintains that contradictions and variations have arisen because these books have sprung from different authors.

Peyrere's theory of inspiration is interesting as having much in common with some of the theories of modern conservative critics. While he seems to hold that the autograph is human, and that it is difficult to separate between the divine and human elements, yet he thinks that with the divine assistance, as the hound, even where there are many footprints, is able to follow the game, and as blind Isaac could distinguish the voice of Jacob from the hands of Esau, so we can distinguish the voice of God from the hands of men.

Not to discuss his theories respecting the Pentateuch, which may be better treated when we come to the apologists of this period, we must remark that while the theory of human and divine elements in Scripture is of great importance, Peyrere makes the mistake of supposing that we can separate here between the soul and the body. The Scriptures are divine-human as Christ is the God-man.

The question cannot be easily solved as to the genesis of Peyrere's criticisms on the Pentateuch, whether they arose from his theory of the Preadamites or not. That theory was certainly favorable to such criticism, for when the question was raised why we have no account of these Preadamites in Genesis, he could not only reply, in accordance with this theory, that the plan of giving only the history which immediately bore on that of the Jewish nation would exclude such an account, but also as we have not the autographs, which are fragmentary in their composition, a reference to the Preadamites might well have been omitted.

3. *Spinoza* (b. 1632; d. 1677 A.D.).

By far the greatest name among the destructive critics of the First Period is that of Benedict Spinoza. His ancestors were Portuguese Jews,[1] who proudly claimed with the rest of their countrymen a royal lineage from the tribe of Judah, and who had sought for many centuries to establish harmony between science and religion.[2] His parents lived in comparative comfort in the Jewish colony at Amsterdam, which had been formed by migrations from Spain and Portugal.

Perhaps no one has exerted a greater influence on the methods of biblical study than Spinoza. As a boy he was precocious, and astonished his teacher by his attainments. Besides his knowledge of Rabbinical lore, he laid the foundation of a good classical education in the best school in Amsterdam. If we are to believe a not improbable story his early life had a touch of romance. It is said that he became enamored of the daughter of his teacher, but the gift of an expensive

[1] Colerus, The Life of Benedict de Spinoza, London, 1706, p. 1.

[2] Auerbach, Spinoza's Sämmtliche Werke, 1 Band, Stuttgart, 1841, p. xvi.

necklace turned the scale in favor of a wealthy rival. If this story be true,[1] it is certain that he soon found consolation in philosophy.

Although he was a man of unblemished character, and reticent in regard to his views, his orthodoxy fell under suspicion, and failing to give a satisfactory account of himself, and at the same time declining to accept a thousand florins annually, which was offered him as hush-money in case he would preserve the semblance of a faithful adherence to the tradition of the fathers, he was excommunicated, at the age of twenty-three, from the synagogue. He endured this terrible blow, which separated him entirely from his kindred and people, with calmness, and supported himself by polishing glass lenses. Though this afforded a very slender income, he refused to receive the aid of friends, which was freely offered, and declined a flattering invitation to a professorship in Heidelberg, lest he should be compelled to abridge his liberty or give offence to the cause of religion by his speculations. While he was not a Cartesian, he was at first much influenced by Des Cartes' system of philosophy, of which he was at one time an expounder,[2] although he was afterwards exposed to the antagonism of the Cartesians because he did not follow their leader.[3] Whether we speak of German rationalism, or of the modern historico-critical method in the treatment of Scripture, we find almost all the views now held by modern biblical critics germinally contained in his system. He is the first, so far as we are aware, who insists on a strictly grammatical and historical treatment of the text, and who lays the foundation for a true Biblical Theology by the exclusion of an *eisegesis*,[4] which had been so prevalent, and

[1] Pollock, Spinoza, His Life and Philosophy, London, 1880, p. 13, pronounces the story of the necklace as mythical, since Clara Maria Van den Ende could not have been more than eleven or twelve years old when Spinoza was a student with her father.

[2] Renati des Cartes Principia Philosophiae, Pars i. et ii., Amstelodami, 1663.

[3] In his second letter to Henry Oldenburg, he criticises the philosophy of Des Cartes and Bacon; cf. Auerbach in Spinoza's Sämmtliche Werke, 1 Band, Stuttgart, 1841, pp. xlvi–xlix.

[4] See cap. vii. De Interpretatione Scripturae, in his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, at the beginning.

which still was the favorite mode of interpretation for a long period.

While we cannot follow him in making reason the supreme arbiter of religious and biblical questions, in his denial of prophecy, miracles, and the supernatural,[1] yet we must admire that love of truth which could neither be bribed nor intimidated, and which sunk every personal consideration in what he regarded to be the good of the many.

His method of treating Scripture is set forth in his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, which first appeared in 1670 A.D. He holds that we need to know as far as possible the circumstances under which the books of the Old Testament were written.[2] He maintains that on the whole we have a truthful record, although the facts of history may have been presented in a subjective way. He denies the supernatural, the miraculous,[3] and the prophetic,[4] so far as prophecy has to do with future events. He affirms that the books of the Old Testament were not written by command, but only casually, to meet the wants of some men, and that these books are chosen from many.[5] He claims that it is not the object of the Scriptures to teach science,[6] but simply obedience;[7] hence he says that whatever is false or adulterated could only have happened in the circumstances of history or prophecy,

[1] See especially cap. vi. De Miraculis, ibid.

[2] See cap. vii. De Interpretatione Scripturae, iii.: "Deinde ne documenta aeterna cum iis, quae ad tempus tantum, vel paucis solummodo ex usu poterant esse, confundamus, refert etiam scire qua occasione, quo tempore et cui nationi, aut saeculo omnia documenta scripta fuerint."

[3] Cap. vi. De Miraculis, § 1: "Nihil contra naturam contingere, sed ipsam aeternam fixum et immutabilem ordinem servare, et simul quid per miraculum intelligendum sit."

[4] Cap. i. De Prophetia: "Possumus jam igitur sine scrupulo affirmare, Prophetas non nisi ope imaginationis, Dei revelata percepisse, hoc est, mediantibus verbis, vel imaginibus, iisque veris aut imaginariis. Cap. ii. De Prophetis: "Sic etiam ipsa revelatio variabat, ut jam diximus, in unoquoque Propheta pro dispositione temperamenti corporis, imaginationis, et pro ratione opinionum, quas antea amplexus fuerat."

[5] Cap. xii.: "Libri utriusque Testamenti non fuerunt expresso mandato, uno eodemque tempore, omnibus saeculis scripti, sed casu, quibusdam hominibus. .... Libri Veteris Testamenti ex multis electi fuerunt."

[6] Cap. xiii.: "Scripturae intentum non fuisse scientias docere."

[7] Cap. xiv.: "Intentum scripturae esse tantum, obedientiam docere."

and that it makes little difference in regard to salvation whether such things have been adulterated or not, although he considers it incredible that posterity delivered the main elements of history otherwise than as they had received them from their predecessors.[1]

He is the father of rationalism in his treatment of all those parts of Scripture which seem to him to be contrary to reason.[2] But as he says that theology has no other object than obedience and piety, he concludes that it is not subject to reason,[3] and hence that the requisitions of the Scriptures in regard to obedience and piety, which he considers the sum of religion, are not contrary to reason. He affirms that the Holy Scriptures, or revelation, are most necessary, since through the light of reason we could not see that simple obedience is the way to holiness, and there are very few who acquire the habit of virtue through the leadership of reason.[4]

For the same reasons as those already mentioned by Ibn Ezra he concludes that Moses could not have been the author of the Pentateuch as we now have it. But he adds the following, which he considers more weighty in disproving the Mosaic authorship:[5]

1. The author of these books not only speaks concerning Moses in the third person, but also testifies many things respecting him; e.g. Moses was the meekest of all men (Num. xii. 3); Moses the servant of God [Jehovah] died (Deut. xxxiv. 5); there never arose a prophet in Israel like Moses (Deut. xxxiv. 10). On the other hand, in Deuteronomy, where the law is described which Moses had explained to

[1] See the last part of chap. xii. [2] Cap. xv.

[3] Cap. xv.: "Quare tam hanc, quam illam Maimonidis sententiam explodimus et pro inconcusso statuimus, quod nec Theologia rationi, nec ratio Theologiae ancillari teneatur, sed unaquaeque suum regnum obtineat." Cf. cap. xiv.: "Superest jam, ut tandem ostendam, inter fidem, sive Theologiam, et Philosophiam nullum esse commercium, nullamve affinitatem, quod jam nemo potest ignorare, qui harum duarum facultatem et scopum et fundamentum novit, quae sane toto coelo discrepant. Philosophiae enim scopus nihil est, praeter veritatem: Fidei autem, ut abunde ostendimus, nihil praeter obedientiam et pietatem."

[4] See the end of chap. xv. [5] Cap. viii. De Origine Pentateuchi.

the people, and which he had written, he speaks and relates his acts in the first person (Deut. ii. 1, 17, etc.). The writer, after he has reproduced the words of Moses, proceeds to speak in the third person, and to relate how Moses gave this law in written form to the people. Spinoza therefore says: "All this, namely, the manner of speaking, and even the entire connection of the history, make us thoroughly believe that these books were written by another, and not by Moses himself."

2. It is to be remarked that in this history it is not only related how Moses died, was buried, and that the Hebrews mourned for him thirty days, but also, besides this, a comparison is made between him and all the other prophets that arose after him.

3. Some places are not named with the names which they had when Moses was alive, but with those which they received long afterward; e.g. Abraham followed the enemy to Dan (Gen. xiv. 14), a name which the city received long after the death of Joshua (Judg. xviii. 29).

4. Some of the narratives extend beyond the lifetime of Moses; for it is related in Ex. xvi. 35 that the children of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to the land that they were to inhabit; concerning which we find the narrative in Josh. v. 12. Besides, we read in Gen. xxxvi. 31: "These are the kings who reigned in Edom before a king reigned over the children of Israel." Without doubt the historian here names the kings which the Idumeans had before David conquered them and placed garrisons in Edom itself (2 Sam. viii. 14).

From all this Spinoza concludes that it is clearer than the sun that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, but by some one who lived many generations after Moses. He also maintains that the books which Moses wrote, and which are cited in the Pentateuch, are different from the Pentateuch.

1. *The Book of the Wars of God.* — From Ex. xvii. 14 it appears that Moses at the command of God wrote a

description of the war against Amalek, but in what book does not appear from this chapter. But in Num. xxi. 14 a certain book is cited which is called Wars of God [Jehovah]; and in this book doubtless the war against Amalek, besides all the encampments which are attested as described by Moses (Num. xxxiii. 2) were narrated.

2. *The Book of the Covenant.* — Moses first read this book when Israel entered into covenant with God. It contains only those laws or commands of God which are narrated in Ex. xx. 22–xxiv. This appears both from the fact that Moses wrote out the things which were necessary for the covenant, as well as from the brief time which he had to place them in writing (Ex. xxiv. 4).

3. *The Book of the Law of God.*— In the fortieth year after the exodus Moses explained all the laws which he had given (Deut. i. 5), and pledged the people anew (Deut. xxix. 14), and finally wrote the book (Deut. xxxi. 9) which contained these laws as explained and the new covenant. This is called the Book of the Law of God, which is afterwards increased by Joshua through the narration of the covenant into which they entered with God the third time (Josh. xxiv. 25, 26). But since we have no book which contains this covenant of Moses and at the same time of Joshua it must necessarily be conceded that this book has perished. He holds therefore that Moses wrote no other books than those that have been mentioned and the song (Deut. xxxi. 30).

Although Spinoza admits that what he calls the senate may have communicated the commands of Moses in writing to the people, yet he holds that since much occurs in the Pentateuch which could not have been written by Moses, it is contrary to all reason to affirm that he is the author of the Pentateuch. He says: "The connection and the order of the narrative show that there was only one historian..... who wished to describe the old history from its first beginning to the first destruction of the city..... All these books, therefore, are directed to the one object to teach the words and commands of Moses, and to confirm them through the

result of circumstances." Spinoza concludes from the simplicity of their contents, from their close connection, and the fact that they are apographs, that they were written many centuries after the events occurred, and conjectures that their author was Ezra. He regards him as a sort of a compiler who was not able to put the finishing touches on his work, and says that he often took the narratives from the most diverse authors, and often only copied without examining his materials sufficiently, or bringing them into order.

The coincidences between the views of these three writers in denying the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch are indeed remarkable, but there is no evidence that they came from a perusal of each others writings, although Spinoza, as it seems, had the idea of his Tractatus Politicus suggested to him by Hobbes's Leviathan,[1] but we may not infer from this that he derived his critical views from him. Neither Hobbes nor Peyrere seem to have been versed in the original of the Old Testament Scriptures, as Spinoza was. They were not biblical critics, but men of the world, and yet they agree with Spinoza in their conclusions, and these are destructive.

We shall see how in the First Period, as well as in those that follow, there were two classes who sought to defend the faith,— one of constructive critics, who, while accepting the essential truth of Spinoza's criticisms, sought, as they thought, to raise the shattered edifice of tradition into a more beautiful and enduring structure, while the other, denying the validity of the critic's premises, strove to maintain the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch intact. It will be our aim in the next article to examine the views of the constructive critics.

[1] Pollock's Spinoza, His Life and Philosophy, London, 1880, pp. 88, 312–320.