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*THE DIVINE NAMES IN GENESIS.*

## V. THE LIMITS OF TEXTUAL UNCERTAINTY.

It is now time to gather up the threads of this protracted and sometimes, I am afraid, intricate discussion, and to consider with unprejudiced minds how it fares with the documentary theory of the Pentateuch, after the most elaborate assault that has yet been made under the banner of "textual" criticism. I have pointed out, in the opening article of this series, that Dahse, like others of his school, greatly exaggerates the importance of the divine names for the analysis of the Pentateuch; but no one will deny that they have a certain importance, or that if, as regards the names for God, the text with which critics have operated could be shewn to be either demonstrably wrong or hopelessly uncertain, the evidence for the documentary hypothesis would at some points (at least in the analysis of J and E) be sensibly weakened. In succeeding articles I have examined at great length the new and positive suggestions that Dahse has brought to bear on the problem, and hope I have convinced my readers that he has failed to substantiate any one of them. I have called attention incidentally to certain fallacious assumptions, errors in reasoning, and misstatements of fact, which detract from his argument, and seem to me to reveal a bias in favour of anything that makes for the strengthening of his own speculations. If it were a mere matter of repelling a particular attack, it would hardly be necessary to add anything to what has already been said. But the controversy raises a wider issue than that. It will doubtless have left on the minds of some of my readers an impression that after all said and done the situation does not remain exactly as it was before. It will be felt that even if every specific argument has been fairly met and success-

fully refuted—and I do not assume that this will be universally granted—yet the general precariousness of the textual data is so much greater than has hitherto been realised that confidence in the results of critical analysis must be seriously shaken. I apprehend, in short, that the real effect of Dahse's work will be rather the diffusion of a vague uncertainty as regards the Hebrew text in general, than the solution of any problem by the light of new constructive principles. I will therefore endeavour, in this concluding paper, to sum up the arguments for and against the trustworthiness of the Massoretic text, and to shew that within the margin of uncertainty which admittedly exists, there is a solid and sufficient working basis for the literary analysis of the Pentateuch, and for such use of the divine names in that analysis as a reasonable criticism requires to make.

## 1.

Textual criticism, as practised by Dahse, is a combination of three processes : *first* the determination of the oldest text by documentary evidence ; *second* the attempt to establish the original reading by internal considerations ; and *third* the formation of hypotheses to explain the variations which the text has undergone in the course of its transmission. The second method, we have seen, is inapplicable to the case of the divine names ; and the third, although a perfectly legitimate process in itself, has so far proved illusory even in the skilful hands of Dahse. It remains to consider whether by the first method alone we can compass a solution of our problem, or whether it leaves us in such uncertainty as to render abortive *ab initio* any attempt to recover the original readings of the sources of the Pentateuch.

(1) It is a sound critical maxim that the correctness or originality of a reading is not to be questioned when it

presents no inherent difficulty, and when all documentary evidence is united in its support. It has already been shewn that there is no case where a reading of the divine name can be either accepted or rejected on *internal* grounds ; it must now be added that a considerable number of readings cannot rightly be challenged on *external* or documentary grounds. In all such cases the true text must be regarded as established. But this principle is set at nought, if not by Dahse himself, at least by his allies Wiener and Schlögl. The former, it appears, is of opinion that only in the rarest instances can it be ascertained whether the original text of Genesis read Yahwe or Elohim (Dahse, p. 32 f.),—just enough instances, I suppose, to prove that the MT is not to be trusted ! Schlögl carries his scepticism so far that he feels himself at liberty to change every J in Genesis into E, even in cases—some thirty in number—where E is not read by a single text (see April EXPOSITOR, p. 312 note). If the range of uncertainty were really as great as these two writers imagine, there might be some excuse for this drastic procedure ; but their uncritical handling of the material leads them to overestimate the extent of the divergence. In any case, it is surely the abnegation of textual criticism to set aside the unanimous testimony of MSS. and versions to a particular reading, merely because the documents are at variance in a certain number of other places.

(2) The area of uncertainty with which we have to reckon is pretty nearly measured by the divergence between the MT and the LXX. No doubt the Sam. and the younger versions deviate in a few cases (about fifteen in all) from MT and LXX, where these two are in agreement. But these are mere family differences, which need not be taken into account until we have settled the much bigger question of the relation of the LXX to the Hebrew text as a whole. Now the “ textual ” critics seem to me to go astray by not

observing that the LXX counts only as a single witness (whether for or against the MT), that its original text must be recovered before it can be cited as evidence against the MT, and that when recovered it cancels all the variants in its MSS. and daughter-versions. That *we* are uncertain in many cases what the original LXX was, does not alter the fact that it must have been either one thing or another, and not two things at once, or three. It is the first business of the textual critic to ascertain what the best reading of the LXX is: if that reading turns out to be the same as the MT, he must obviously forego the liberty of appealing to the weaker reading as evidence of the uncertainty of the MT. If, on the other hand, the true LXX proves to be irrecoverable, he must remember that that result neutralises the testimony of the LXX, and does not directly affect the credit of the MT.

(3) Here, however, we are confronted by the supreme difficulty of ascertaining in many cases what the reading of the original LXX was. But in this investigation, the advocates of "textual" criticism deliberately adopt principles which can only be characterised as a loading of the dice against the MT. Dahse (p. 31) quotes with strong approval four rules laid down by Wiener for determining the value of LXX variants. We will examine them. (a) The first is to the effect that where all LXX authorities agree *in opposition to the MT*, we may be certain that they preserve the original reading of the LXX. I venture to think that the unanimous reading of all LXX authorities must be accepted as the original LXX *whether it differs from MT or not*.<sup>1</sup> Thus, we find in Dahse's tables over eighty divine names (about one quarter of the whole number) to which

<sup>1</sup> It is true that there are cases where all LXX MSS. agree in what is manifestly a Greek corruption, and therefore not the reading of the original LXX. But if that has happened in any of the divine names, we should never be able to find it out. The documentary evidence is the final authority in this case.

no internal variants of the LXX are recorded; and it is important to observe that there are only five of these cases where the LXX goes against the MT (iv. 4, iv. 26, xiii. 10a, 10b, xxx. 27). By Wiener's rule the original LXX would be established only for these five names. I maintain, on the contrary, that in all the eighty odd places the original LXX is as well established as in the nature of the case it can ever be.—(b) We are told that where some LXX authorities support the Hebrew, while the variant is supported by "strong" LXX authority, the variant will be the original reading of the LXX. On this I remark again that the variant will be the original LXX reading, if the authorities in favour of it are sufficiently "strong" to be decisive. But the maxim involves, besides, a plausible abuse of a critical canon which is valid only when it is clear that the Greek variant rests on a Hebrew basis different from the MT. If of two LXX readings one comes under that description, and the other is a close rendering of the existing Hebrew, so that the former cannot have arisen through Greek corruption from the latter, then it is obvious that the first retains the true text of the LXX, and the second is a later accommodation to the received Hebrew text. (It is, of course, a further question which of the two *Hebrew* readings is the original). But the rule cannot be applied at all in cases (such as the divine names) where we can never be sure that the variant presupposes a divergent Hebrew, and where the liability to inner-Greek corruption is at least as probable an explanation as the tendency to assimilate to the later Hebrew.—(c) The third rule, that where Origen is known to have altered the text in conformity with the Hebrew, the unaltered text will be the original reading, even if all or most other LXX authorities support the Hebrew, is a truism, and therefore correct in substance; although it is not easy to see how we can know of an Origenic

alteration except through "other" LXX authorities<sup>1</sup>—  
 (d) The last rule, that where Lucian alone goes against the MT his text represents an original Hebrew variant, though not necessarily the original text of the LXX, is simply an unfounded and ill-informed assertion. So much for the four critical principles to which Dahse has pinned his faith, and which in his opinion vindicate Wiener's claim to be taken seriously as an authority in textual criticism. As for "other canons" which were to emerge in the course of Wiener's inquiry, Dahse does not refer to them; and as I am not now dealing with Wiener, but with Dahse's estimate of Wiener, I will leave them unnoticed.

(4) In the present state of LXX criticism, we have no more satisfactory means of discovering the divine names in the original LXX than the old-fashioned method of consulting the oldest and best MSS. The study of minor recensions may conceivably in the future bring us nearer to a determination of the true LXX than we are at present; but the results of such study are as yet too problematical to help us in dealing with so variable an element of the text

<sup>1</sup> What Wiener is capable of meaning by such a statement may perhaps be gathered from a flagrant example of his carelessness and ignorance on p. 26 of his *Essays*. That page is occupied with a list of "those readings in Genesis ii. iii. for which Hexaplar information is available." In the last line he boldly states, on the authority of Field's Hexapla, that in iii. 23 ΛΟΒΔ was added to the text (by Origen), although he cannot cite a single MS. to that effect. A glance at Field's additional note to ch. iii. reveals the source of Wiener's error. There, sure enough, Field marks the κρπος of iii. 23 as a Hexaplar addition; and gives his MS. authority for so doing. But unfortunately Field follows a different numbering of the verses from Wiener; and what is there correctly said of iii. 23 is simply what Wiener has already given in the line before, under iii. 22! The merest tyro might have seen that he was on a false scent when he failed to find an important reference of Field confirmed by Brooke and M'Lean. I will add that if Wiener had read the Greek before him he could not have made this colossal blunder, for the word ερεν would have showed him that our v. 22, not v. 23, was referred to. Let us hope that his fall will teach him more sobriety of judgment when next he is tempted to set down his opponents' resistance to his own short-sighted conclusion to dishonest and fraudulent motives.

as the divine names of the LXX undoubtedly are. And while Dahse's researches in this direction are no doubt important, they would be more promising if he did not allow them to be 'side-tracked' by his too facile and improbable assumption of separate Hebrew originals. In the meantime, at all events, if we are to make any practical use of the LXX at all for the text of the divine names, we must be content to work mainly on the basis of existing MSS. (whether of the original Greek or of daughter-versions), carefully eliminating those readings which are marked as Hexaplaric alterations, and for the rest following the guidance of the oldest and most carefully written codices. Now, I fully admit that this rule about the best MSS. imposes a task of the utmost delicacy on the investigator; and I have no pretension to speak on such a question otherwise than with great diffidence. Nevertheless, after the best examination I am competent to make of the MS. evidence supplied by Dahse, I will express the belief that the readings of the divine names in the Sixtine and Cambridge editions (which seldom differ) represent in the great majority of instances the consensus of the best MSS. Making allowance for some doubtful cases, I find that there are about sixty passages where the Cambridge edition reads a different name from the MT. The number of relevant occurrences of one or other of the divine names in the MT of Genesis is about 320 (in the LXX nearly 330); hence the cases in which the standard LXX throws any doubt on the accuracy of the MT number three-sixteenths of the whole. Roughly speaking, we may take it that that fraction expresses the extent of the "margin of uncertainty" with which criticism has to reckon in the divine names of Genesis.

(5) On general grounds, the MT has substantial claims to be preferred to a variant of the LXX in all doubtful cases. (a) The MT is the result of successive transcriptions in one and the same language; the LXX is a translation from one



language into another. It is not denied that a version *may* represent a purer text than a recension in the original language ; but in the absence of proof that this is the case, the presumption is all in favour of the original, because it is not subject to the uncertainty which inevitably attends the mental process of translation ; especially when, as is abundantly clear in the case of the LXX, word-for-word translation was not aimed at.—(b) The MT is the lineal descendant of the official Palestinian recension of the OT ; the LXX represents at best an Alexandrian recension whose text was certainly not transmitted with the same scrupulous fidelity as that of Palestine. For (c) as regards the divine names, the Samaritan Pantateuch shows that the Palestinian text has undergone practically no change from a time prior to (or at all events not much later than) the separation of the Palestinian and Egyptian recensions. The LXX text, on the contrary, has been in a state of perpetual flux as far back as its history can be traced. It makes no difference whether this be due to accident or (as Dahse has tried to shew) to deliberate revision : on either view the fact remains that the names of God have been handled with a freedom which was not allowed to Jewish scribes.—(d) While the LXX contains particular readings which are shewn by internal evidence to be superior to the Hebrew, yet an examination of its general text proves that on the whole it is inferior to the Massoretic Hebrew. I do not think that this will be disputed by any competent Old Testament scholar. The MT is often emended from the LXX, but practically never except for some superiority, real or supposed, attaching to the reading presupposed by LXX, in particular cases.—(e) The liability to error is far greater in Greek than in Hebrew. In the original text we have the distinction, not easily overlooked, between a proper name יהוה and a generic name אלהים. In Greek we have only the difference of

two appellatives *κύριος* and *θεός* (often contracted in MSS. to *κς.* and *θς.*), a difference without much significance to a Greek-speaking writer, and therefore apt to be effaced through the natural predilection for *θεός*.

(6) From these observations we may now deduce the principles to be chiefly applied in using the LXX as an instrument of textual criticism. They are succinctly stated by Driver as follows (see his *Genesis, Addenda II*, p. xlv f.).<sup>1</sup> It must be shown (1) "that the (LXX) variant is not due to a paraphrase or loose rendering on the part of the translator, but really depends upon a various reading in the Hebrew MS. used by him; and (2) that this variant reading in the Hebrew has substantial claims to be preferred to the Massoretic text as being the original reading of the Hebrew," by "its yielding a better sense and its being preferable for philological or grammatical reasons." Now in the case of the divine names neither of these conditions can be completely fulfilled. If, indeed, the LXX is unanimous, or nearly so, in reading a different name from the MT, there is some slight presumption that its Hebrew original was different, and so far the first condition is complied with; though even then we cannot be sure that the variation is not due to the translator's indifference to the distinction between the two Hebrew names for God (comp. the case of Job below), or to scribal or editorial changes of older standing than the earliest extant witnesses to the LXX text. But the second condition can never, in the case of a divine name, be realised, for the simple reason that neither sense nor grammar is ever affected by the substitution of one name for another; and I hesitate to admit (with Driver) even an isolated instance here and there in which the LXX reading is to be preferred on such grounds. If, therefore, a textual critic gives the preference to LXX readings, as such, he

<sup>1</sup> Comp., to the same effect but more fully, Swete, *Introduction to the O.T. in Greek*, p. 444 f.

must be prepared to maintain the *general superiority of its text*; and he is bound in consistency to carry out his principle in his treatment of the text as a whole. But if he essays this he will speedily land himself in a *reductio ad absurdum* of the critical axiom with which he starts. It is notorious that the LXX contains many readings which presuppose a Hebrew text, not only inferior to the MT, but absolutely inadmissible; i.e. one which no commentator with a regard for the meaning of the passage could possibly accept. Yet if the divine names of the LXX are to be adopted in preference to MT, merely because they are in the LXX, upon what principle can the rejection of these other impossible LXX variants be defended? There cannot be one law for the names of God, and another for other variants; and a rule that leads to absurd consequences in the latter case must be wrong from the first.

## 2.

The initial mistake of the Higher Criticism, according to Dahse, was that its founders took no pains to verify the text of the divine names before using them as a clue to the structure of the Pentateuch. We can now judge from the result of our previous discussions what progress they would have been likely to make if they had laid that caution to heart. "He that observeth the wind shall not sow"; and it is just possible that if the pioneers of the critical movement had known all that Dahse and Wiener could now tell them about the uncertainty of the MT, they would have been deterred from an enterprise which has done more to vitalise the study of the Old Testament than any other contribution that has ever been made. And I think that Dahse, and especially Wiener, would find life very uninteresting if they had to pursue the barren round of textual studies without the joy of battle against the imposing edifice which has been built on the foundation laid by those rash and misguided men.

Be that as it may, the question for us to consider is not whether textual criticism ought to have strangled the documentary theory at its birth, but whether it is able to destroy it now,—in other words, whether the proved uncertainty of the MT makes the use of the divine names valueless as a criterion of diverse authorship.

I remark, in the first place, that apart altogether from the soundness of the MT, the germ of the documentary theory is contained in Dahse's admission that the original (or at least the earliest accessible) text of Genesis had a mixed distribution of the names for God: i.e., there was an alternation of Yahwe and Elohim. This, he says, is the conclusion at which all recent textual critics—Redpath, Eerdmans, Wiener, as well as himself—have independently arrived (p. 41). To be quite fair, I do not know whether Dahse conceives the *original* text to have been mixed in the sense indicated; but he certainly admits it of the oldest text we can now imagine, and he cannot get his own theories under way on any other supposition. And indeed it would be very difficult to account for textual heterogeneity of this kind arising out of a primary simplicity; and we are entitled to infer that the alternation of the names for God was in the documents from the beginning. Now I have already pointed out that this leaves open a distinct *possibility* that the mixed distribution may be an index to mixed authorship. But we can go further, and say that it is not only possible but *certain* that at least two writers are concerned in the composition of Genesis. That is an inevitable inference—granted the alternation of the original names—from the express statement of Exodus vi. 2, 3. It was a wise precaution on Dahse's part to try to clear his path of this obstacle at the outset; but if there be any section of his book which has failure written over it more legibly than another it is his treatment of the text of these verses. I have dealt with this matter at length in the first article, and argued

that the writer of Exodus vi. 2 f. could neither have recorded previous revelations of the Deity under the name Yahwe, nor have put the name into the mouth of any of the patriarchs: It is true that Dahse eliminates the name Yahwe from the earlier self-disclosures of God; but he has never suggested that it ought always to be removed where it occurs in human speech before Moses. We see that such passages cannot have come from the same source as Exodus vi. 2 f. Therefore, to put it at the very lowest, there are at least two writers in Genesis: one who could not use the name Yāhwe under given circumstances, and another who could and did. But really that is an absurdly narrow restriction of the inference. The natural conclusion is that one writer will have been consistently Elohistic and the other consistently Yahwistic, however many more writers there may be of either class. And with that conclusion we are well on our way to a documentary theory of the Pentateuch. What is to prevent us from following up the clue? Is it not worth while to make the experiment, whether with the Massoretic text or any other? It is playing King Canute over again for any school of critics to interpose their veto, and say that the attempt should never have been made, and must not be made now.

The next point to be emphasised is that the acceptance of the MT as a basis of operations by no means implies the assumption of its infallibility. No critic of standing has ever imagined that it is immaculate, even in the matter of the divine names. Criticism has gone to work on the presumption that it is substantially accurate, but at the same time with a clear understanding that errors may occur here and there. It is alleged no doubt, that while critics acknowledge the abstract possibility of mistakes in the text, they take no account of it in practice, but proceed to carve out their documents with a solemn mechanical precision which would only be justified if the authenticity of the divine names were absolutely guaranteed. Now it need not be denied

that critics are under a temptation to push their analysis to an extreme in this direction. It is perfectly natural that, having found the distinction of the divine names in the MT a useful clue to the separation of sources, and having no reason to question its correctness in any particular instance, they should follow it out to its last consequences. But there are few, if any, cases where a generally accepted division of documents rests on the divine names alone; and critics would be the first to admit that if any such case existed the uncertainty of the text would be a consideration of serious importance. The truth is that this objection springs from that exaggeration of the dependence of the documentary theory on the divine names which seems ineradicable from the militant "text critical" mind. It is never realised that the divine names have served their purpose when they have put criticism *on the track* of a distinction of sources which approves itself by many other characteristic differences, and which would have no critical value if such differences did not exist. When this is understood there will be no disposition to cavil at the notion that a true theory may be extracted from an imperfect text.

But it will be asked, Is it credible that the MT has preserved the original names with even the substantial fidelity which is the necessary condition of successful analysis? Granted that it is the best text available, it is still a stupendous assumption that any text can have retained even approximately the names as they stood in the hypothetical primary documents of Genesis! It would certainly be a very remarkable phenomenon. But before we pronounce it incredible, we must reflect that the divine names have in fact been transmitted with only the slightest variation since the fourth century B.C. A century more brings us to the redaction and promulgation of the Pentateuch; and it is only reasonable to suppose that during that century the preservation of the canonical text was as carefully attended

to by the Temple authorities in Jerusalem as in the ages that followed. The danger zone is undoubtedly the period from the seventh to the fifth century, when the oldest Yahwistic and Elohist documents had been amalgamated, but were not (so far as we know) under ecclesiastical control. That confusion of the divine names might have arisen under these circumstances cannot be denied, but that it was probable is more than we have any right to affirm. We do not know what precautions were taken to safeguard the integrity of the text; and we do know that Jewish scribes were capable of an astonishing degree of accuracy in transcribing the names for God. From the examples given below, it will be seen that it is by no means an extravagant assumption to hold that in the MT we have a substantially correct reproduction of the divine names as they stood in the original documents.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An interesting and, if I mistake not, convincing illustration of fidelity of the MT to an original autograph comes to hand as I write, in a paper by Joh. Herrmann on "The divine names in the text of Ezekiel" (*Alttestamentliche Studien, Rudolf Kittel zum 60 Geburtstag dargebracht*, pp. 70-87). It is all the more surprising because the MT of Ezekiel as a whole is often very corrupt; and because several of the most recent scholars had come to the conclusion that the divine names in particular had been so tossed about by transcribers that it was impossible to tell what the original names were, while Cornill was of opinion that the LXX is much nearer the original than the MT. The question is as to the distinction between the names יהוה אֱלֹהִים and יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ (is used by Ezekiel only in a generic sense). Herrmann shows in a conclusive manner that Ezekiel's usage can be reduced to a few simple and easily intelligible rules, and that with insignificant exceptions these rules are strictly observed in the MT. (1) The double name אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ is used only in three connexions, viz (a) the introductory formula אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ; (b) in the concluding formula, אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ; and (c) in addressing the Almighty by name. Now in the MT אֱלֹהֵינוּ occurs 217 times, and of these all but 9 are covered by the three conditions just stated. In the formula (a) the double name appears 122 times, against 4 instances of אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ. In (b) we have 81 times אֱלֹהֵינוּ and only 4 times אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ. Of (c) there are only 5 examples, and no exceptions. (2) אֱלֹהֵינוּ alone occurs 218 times, and regularly in the following cases (a) in the phrase אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ (87 times, against 4 examples of אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ; (b) after a construct state (excluding אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ) (94 times, against 4 exceptional occurrences of אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ in this connexion); (c) אֱלֹהֵינוּ also occurs 37 times in other connexions. The bare אֱלֹהֵינוּ is used only 4 times, and that in a proverb quoted from the mouth of the people (xviii. 25, 29, xxxiii. 17, 20). It is impossible to resist the inference that Ezekiel's own practice

The final proof of the essential soundness of the MT, as a guide to documentary analysis, is—the documentary theory itself. Dahse on p. 14 quotes a sentence from De Wette to

was regulated by the principles here indicated; and that the few exceptions noted represent the amount of error that has crept into the transmission of the Hebrew text. Turning to the LXX, Herrmann finds that in its best text (that of B) 't, except in xx. 38, is invariably rendered by *κύριος*: on the other hand, 'N is represented 58 times by *κς κς*, twice by *αδωναι κς* (but this may be a Hexaplar correction), 143 times by *κς*, 7 times by *κς ο θς*, and 9 times by *κς θς*. A few LXX variants comply with the rules given above, and are therefore to be regarded as original; but it can no longer be maintained that the LXX is the better text, or that it rests on a Hebrew basis differing from the MT. We need not here enter into the question raised by the peculiar distribution of the various renderings in the LXX; but on this and other points Herrmann's essay deserves careful perusal.

A more familiar case is the indiscriminate use of the divine names in the LXX of Job. It is well known that the scene of that book is laid outside the land of Israel, and that the problem of retribution is supposed to be discussed on a basis of what we may call natural religion. Hence in the Dialogue the name Yahwe is carefully avoided (it occurs only in xii. 9, in a passage which is obviously interpolated); and archaic names for God are almost exclusively used: viz. *El* (55 times), *Eloah* (41 times), and *Shaddai* (31 times); (*Elohim* only six times). In the prose Introduction and Epilogue, on the other hand, as well as in headings of speeches, Yahwe is freely employed (30 times), along with 12 cases of *Elohim*, mostly in connexions where the general name of God is alone suitable. It is again impossible to doubt that here the MT has in the main preserved the names used by the author, and that the translators of the LXX have failed to reproduce the original readings. Thus, if we take the B text of Swete, we find from Hatch's Concordance that in the Prologue and Epilogue, while Yahwe is regularly rendered by *κύριος* (once *κς ο θς*), *Elohim* is represented 3 times by *κς* and 4 times by *θς*: in the Speeches, *Elohim* is rendered once by *θς*, 4 times by *κύριος*, and once by *κύριος ο θς*; *El* 37 times by *κς* and twice by *θς*; *Eloah* 19 times by *κς* and 8 times by *θς*; and *Shaddai* 9 times by *κς*, and 16 times by *παντοκράτωρ* (once *κς παντ.*) (I omit the cases where *El* is rendered by *ισχυρος* and *Shaddai* by *κανος*, because these are peculiar to the text of Theodotion, from which Origen supplemented the genuine LXX. It is possible that some of the other renderings given were also Theodotion's; but enough will remain to prove the indiscriminateness of the original LXX).—Dahse will hardly maintain that here the LXX has a purer text of the divine names than MT, or that the book of Job must have existed in several Hebrew recensions. He says that in regard to the originality of the divine names each book must be considered by itself. I agree. But that does not at all affect the general principle here insisted on, that Hebrew copyists were capable of a degree of exactness in handling the names of God which was not attained by Greek translators and copyists, because they lacked the instinctive sense of difference which was native to the Hebrew mind.



the effect that the correctness of the MT is vouched for by its careful retention of "the characteristic features of the various authors, and of the separate pieces of which many books are composed"; and comments on it as follows: "Thus the very point in dispute—the originality of the MT—is taken for granted, and the possibility is overlooked that what are called characteristic features of the various authors may be merely peculiarities of the MT." That seems to me a very hasty and inept criticism. Amongst the distinctive characteristics which De Wette had in mind there are many which no version could obscure, and which cannot possibly be regarded as peculiar to the MT. I will shew this immediately; and it will be found that De Wette's statement is perfectly unimpeachable. What it means is simply this: that the names of God in the MT have been accepted as a tentative clue to the literary structure of the Pentateuch, that this clue has led to the discovery of many characteristic differences between different strata of the history and legislation, and that these results by their coherence and mutual compatibility furnish convincing proof that the initial assumption was well founded.

Now to illustrate this proposition in detail would be to write a critical commentary on Genesis. At the close of an article already too long, it is not possible to exhibit the full strength of the argument. But without attempting a demonstration we may look briefly at a few selected examples which will at least vindicate the principle of the argument and shew that it is not one to be contemptuously dismissed as a mere *petitio principii*. I believe they will also make it clear that no theory based on the synagogical lectionary can explain the distribution of divine names in Genesis.

i. One of the earliest, and now most familiar, results of documentary analysis was the recognition of two separate accounts of the creation in Genesis i., ii. They are distinguished not only by material differences of representation—as

in the order of the creative works—but by stylistic differences of the most penetrating kind, as well as by a few technical characteristics in expression, such as **נָרָא** in chapter i. and **צַר'** in chapter ii. No one who has once had the contrast pointed out to him, and is gifted with a feeling for literature, can fail to perceive that in passing from one narrative to the other we enter a new world of thought, or to have conveyed to him an irresistible impression of diversity of authorship. Moreover the transition from the one account to the other is clearly and even abruptly marked. It comes in the middle of *v.* 4 of chapter ii. ; and just there in the MT the name of God is changed: instead of Elohim we have Yahwe Elohim. Is this to be set down as an accidental circumstance? No, replies Dahse, but it is due to the fact that just at this point a new Seder commences. Well, let us see. It is certain that the new Seder does not explain the other and deeper differences that are observed—differences of conception, of tone and atmosphere, of language. These must have been in the record before the Seder-division was made; and why not the distinctive use of the divine names as well? What is the use of a pericope-theory which deals only with a single feature of the text, and leaves so many other characteristics utterly unexplained? Has it never occurred to Dahse that instead of the divine names being determined by the Sedarim, the Sedarim may have been in part determined by the divine names? That is the obvious explanation in this case. Or, to state it more accurately, the lectionary is arranged in large measure in accordance with the sense. The scribes saw that there was a break at ii. 4, and therefore they chose that as the place where a new lesson should begin.

That this is the true explanation appears when we look at the end of the second Seder at iii. 21. There we have an instance of unintelligent division, for it is clear that the story of Eden is continued to the end of the chapter. But we frequently find throughout Genesis that in the Seder-

division a regard to the sense is interfered with by a marked tendency to commence a lesson with a divine utterance ; and that is why Seder 3 begins unnaturally at iii. 22. Now in the MT the double name for God is continued, past the Seder-division, to the close of the Paradise-story. It is evident, therefore, that in this case the use of the divine names does not follow the lectionary, but the literary affinities of the composition ; and there is thus good reason to suppose that it was established in the text before the latter was divided into separate sections.

ii. Chapter iv. is a section uniformly Yahwistic, with the exception of Elohim in v. 25. I cannot here enter on the discussion of the relation of this chapter to chapters ii., iii, or the significance for criticism of the double name in the latter. If the reader will refer to any good commentary on Genesis he will learn that there is reason to think that the facts of the MT, down even to the isolated E of iv. 25, furnish a key to the literary composition of the sources. But I cannot adduce that as evidence here.

iii. At the beginning of chapter v. we come upon reminiscences of the style of chapter i. (' create,' ' likeness of God ');<sup>1</sup> and again the change to Elohim marks the transition. The genealogy thus introduced extends to the end of the chapter, as does the use of E, except the one J in v. 29, where again it has a critical significance for the finer shades of analysis which cannot be expounded here. In vi. 1-8 we have a section of entirely different character, commencing with a fragment of ancient mythology, in which the name J alone appears. Now in the fourth Seder these verses are included along with chapter v. ; and the change from E to J at v. 29 is inexplicable by any plausible modification of the pericope-hypothesis. On the other hand, it is explained by the hypothesis of different documents.

<sup>1</sup> And, it should be added, a great many other characteristics of the Priestly Code.

iv. We come to the story of the Flood (Parasha II. = vi. 9-ix. 17), which is a crucial passage as between the documentary and pericope theories. On the one hand we have an alternation of J and E in which the Sedarim-division is completely ignored.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it is certain that in this section there is a dovetailing of two flood-narratives, which can be separated with remarkable precision. They are distinguished by a great variety of characteristic differences: they assign different physical causes for the flood (one a forty days' rain, the other a breaking up of the fountains of the great deep); in one the flood begins to subside after 40 days, in the other the waters continue to rise for 150 days; one distinguishes clean and unclean animals and brings the former by sevens, the latter in pairs, into the ark, while the other admits only one pair of each species without ceremonial distinction; one speaks of the sexes as "man and his wife," the other more prosaically as "male and female"; and so on. Again, portions of the story are duplicated (e.g. vi. 17-22 || vii. 1-5; vii. 7 || vii. 13; and many more). Now the analysis which has resulted in the discovery of all these distinctions started from the alternation of the names J and E; and from first to last it has never found occasion to discard that clue as misleading; that is to say, there is no case where the use of J or E conflicts with the other indications of authorship which have emerged during the investigation. I do not say that there may not be cases where the analysis is determined solely by the divine names, and where therefore a mistake in the transmission of the name vitiating the analysis is a possible contingency. But if there be any such case it is only where the other indications are indecisive,<sup>2</sup> and admit of

<sup>1</sup> In Seder 6 (viii. 1-14) no doubt we have a uniform use of E; but there are only two instances! In Seder 5 (vi. 9-vii. 24) the names are: EEEEE JJEEJ; and in S. 7 (viii. 15-ix. 17): EJJJEEEEEE,—a distribution which from *that* point of view is promiscuous, and irreducible to any principle or rule.

<sup>2</sup> Thus in vii. 9 the indications are so conflicting that it is difficult to say

two equally (or almost equally) feasible solutions of the literary problem. That in every crucial instance the various lines of evidence converge, and lead to the isolation of two independent and almost continuous narratives, is a strong proof that J and E are distinctive of two primary documents, and that the MT has preserved the peculiarities of these documents with singular fidelity.

v. In chapters x:–xvi: the only distinctive divine name that occurs in the MT is J; <sup>1</sup> and consequently these chapters afford no illustration of our immediate theme. But in chapter xvii. we come suddenly on an E section interposed between two J sections. This chapter forms a Seder by itself—another example of intelligent division of the Law, assisted perhaps by the abrupt change from J to E in the fundamental text. At first sight it seems open to Dahse to claim that his hypothesis gives at least as good an account of the names as the documentary theory. But that claim cannot be allowed. It is not at all clear why the authors of the lectionary, or those who manipulated the divine names in accordance with its divisions, should have kept up the monotonous use of J through nearly six Sedarim, or a Parasha and a half, and then all at once have resolved to introduce a little variety. Besides, the diversity of authorship is a fact. Chapter xvii. abounds in expressions which critics have learned to recognise as peculiar to the Priestly Code, and which on any view do not occur even singly, not to say in such profusion as here, in any of the passages marked by J. Unless the pericope-hypothesis is prepared to face the explanation of this phenomenon (which of course it cannot do), it is idle to pretend that it is the last word on the problem of the divine names. It is true that the first name in the section is J, and that its presence is not explained by the critical hypothesis. But may it not fairly be set down as the exception which proves the rule?

whether the אלהים of MT, etc., or the יהוה of Sam., Vulg. etc., is the true reading.

<sup>1</sup> אלה in ch. xiv., xvi. 13 does not count.

vi. The alternate use of J and E is resumed at chapter xx. That chapter (= Seder 17) is itself in MT Elohistie (except v. 18); chapters xxi. (S. 18) and xxii., xxiii. (S. 19) are mainly so (except xxi. 1a, b, 33; xxii. 11, 14a, b, 15, 16). Can the facts here be explained on the theory of Elohistie authorship, varied by occasional insertions from Yahwistic sources? The answer is that criticism, still following the guidance of the divine names of the MT, finds no reason to distrust it, but, on the contrary, discovers that it is frequently confirmed by independent considerations. The detailed proof of this assertion, however, cannot be given here; and I content myself with citing in conclusion one or two instances of *parallel narration*; i.e., the occurrence of two (or three) different versions of what is obviously a single incident or legend, which have been kept separate without any attempt to weld them (as in the story of the Flood) into a connected composition. We will take three examples.

(a) The account of Abraham's denial of his true relation to Sarah in order to save his life in a foreign country. This is first told in xii. 10-20 in a thoroughly Yahwistic connexion (cf. J in xii. 17); then with characteristic variations in chapter xx., which is Elohistie except in the explanatory addition of v. 18. A third version of the incident, with Isaac and Rebekah in place of Abraham and Sarah, is given in a Yahwistic dress in xxvi. 7-11.

(b) The story of the flight or expulsion of Hagar and birth of Ishmael in chapter xvi: (Yahwistic) and xxi. 8-21 (Elohistie).

(c) The patriarchal treaty with Abimelech of Gerar and naming of Beersheba, xxi. 22-31 (*mainly* Elohistie) and xxvi. 26-33 (Yahwistic).

Now we do not for a moment dispute the contention that a writer, especially a collector of old traditions, might record two or more versions of the same incident without perceiving their original identity. But what is not very credible is that a writer should invariably distinguish his parallels by

using J in the one and E in the other. Yet this is done in the three cases before us. In the first (*a*) there are two J narratives, a fact which points to the existence of two strata within the Yahwistic document, but does not in the least obscure the significance of the parallelism between the documents J and E where it occurs. In (*c*) we have two versions of a single episode; though there are grounds for thinking that in xxi. 22-31 two narratives are interwoven: one (22-24, 27, 31) marked by Elohim, and the other (25, 26, 28-30) containing no divine names, but *probably* Yahwistic (see *ICC*, p. 325). We do not really need to trouble ourselves here with this refinement of analysis: the fact remains that we have at least two parallel narratives, one Elohist and the other (xxvi. 26 ff.) Yahwistic. The important point is that the book of Genesis contains examples of dual narration, and that the names J and E closely follow the line of cleavage marked out by the parallelism. The mere existence of duplicates is itself a strong indication of composite structure; and when this is reinforced by a distinctive use of the divine names it surely counts as evidence that J and E are characteristic of two main documents, and can safely be employed as a criterion of authorship.

We cannot pursue this subject further. If we were to extend our survey to all the cases where two narratives have been worked into one, we should find much additional ground for confidence in the substantial soundness of the MT in its transmission of the divine names. But I venture to think that even the few illustrations that I have been able to give are sufficient to shew that the Massoretic recension has led criticism on the right track in its effort to disentangle the sources of Genesis. It is difficult to imagine that any one who has fairly and carefully considered them will endorse the confidently reiterated assertion of Dahse, that the names of God in Genesis have nothing whatever to do with the variety of documents of which the book is composed.

Meanwhile, at all events, my task is finished. I do not

suppose for a moment that what I have written will convince my able and resolute, but always courteous opponent ; although I hope I may have succeeded in shewing why he has failed to convince me. Nor do I imagine that I have brought any new facts under his notice, as I gladly acknowledge that he has brought a good many under mine. It is true that I have been unable to see that these facts are of a kind to justify the revolutionary conclusions which Dahse deduces from them ; and I cannot but think that his critical attitude is determined, not so much by any new facts he has brought to light, as by speculative constructions, resting on precarious combinations, and carried through in defiance of facts of a much larger order which are the common property of all Old Testament scholars. I believe also that I have shewn he has sometimes mistaken the facts, as all men are liable to do. At the same time it is impossible to lay down his book without a profound respect for the painstaking spirit of research to which every page testifies, and warm appreciation of the service which the author has rendered, and is still capable of rendering, to the scientific study of the Pentateuchal text. While I still believe that the documentary theory of the Pentateuch is in its essential elements unassailable by textual criticism, and hold that even its traditional textual basis has not been seriously unsettled, I am far from thinking that the last word has been said about the problem of the LXX and its bearing on the history of the Hebrew text. Dahse's work has made it impossible for critics to treat that problem lightly, and has set a high standard of accuracy and thoroughness to those who shall attempt it. My reply will have served its purpose if it has made clear that continued adherence to the critical theory is compatible, not only (as he will readily admit) with honesty of purpose, but also with some intelligent apprehension of the issues raised by the newest type of what is called textual criticism.

JOHN SKINNER.