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THE  
CHURCHMAN

JANUARY, 1895.

ART. I. — BIBLICAL CRITICISM AT THE EXETER  
CHURCH CONGRESS.

THE practice at Church Congresses of selecting a large subject for discussion, and assigning different parts or aspects of it to the various readers and speakers, is one that we do not deprecate, for it is a necessity, but it has a chilling effect on the audience. When the mind has been brought into a state of tension by an eloquent appeal or a well-sustained argument on a point of deep interest, it is hard to have to turn away from it to another point similar to that which has been under consideration, but not identical with it. Professor Ryle seemed to feel this when he prefaced his paper by a warning that the exciting topics dealt with by Dr. Stanley Leathes were not to be expected in an essay on the Apocrypha. The Bishop of Gibraltar's paper on "The Grounds of our Belief in the Divine Origin and Authority of the Holy Scriptures," Dr. Driver's and Dr. Stanley Leathes' on "The Growth of the Old Testament," Dr. Sanday's and Mr. Lias' addresses on "The Fulness of Revelation in the New Testament," and Professor Ryle's paper on "The Value of the Apocrypha," are legitimately grouped together under the title of "Biblical Criticism." But it is evident at a glance that they deal with distinct sections of a vast theme, and are connected co-ordinately rather than consequentially. The after-discussion is therefore sporadic in character, and no one subject is thoroughly threshed out. The Bishop of Gibraltar's paper was a calmly-worded statement that our belief in the Bible is grounded partly on external, partly on internal, evidence, each of which supports the other. Professor Sanday generously gave a great part of his time to commending other people's books, and ended by pronouncing that the doctrines of the Trinity, of the Logos, of the Atonement, and of the union of the Christian with Christ, are, in his judgment, strengthened rather than weakened by critical study. Mr. Lias, if we understood him right, seemed rather to deny

than to maintain his thesis, for he did not appear to look back to the revelation of the New Testament as being full and complete, but forward to a development "starting with the Articles of the Christian Creed as a body of first principles," such development being "guided by the writings of Evangelists and Apostles, and above all by the words of Christ." He justly remarked that thus "the theology of the future will present in many respects a most startling contrast to the theology of the past." Professor Ryle's essay attributes to the Apocryphal books a high value for Christian study. With these few remarks we pass on to the two papers which, owing to their subject, possess the greatest interest at the present moment, Dr. Driver's and Dr. Stanley Leathes' papers on "The Growth of the Old Testament."

Dr. Stanley Leathes, in a grave and earnest manner, put forward an argument for the organic unity of the Old Testament as it exists, whose growth he likened to that of a tree. To prove the antiquity of the law and the earlier history, he began with the post-captivity prophets as being that part of the Old Testament about which there is least room for difference of opinion. These, he maintained, presupposed the Levitical Law and the history and the other prophets, as, in like manner, the Decalogue, in the Fourth Commandment, presupposed the first chapter of Genesis.

For the manner in which he worked out his argument we must refer to the paper itself, which well deserves to be studied.

We have reserved Dr. Driver's paper till last. The writer had plainly set before himself the task of not offending his hearers' susceptibilities, while at the same time he did not withdraw from any of the positions which he has already taken up. The criticism which he passed on the prophets is such as, except for omissions (the predictive element is not mentioned), would be generally accepted. Where he differs from most of his fellow Churchmen, he did not argue, but made assumptions. He assumed, for example, that pieces of poetry in the historical books were the first elements of the Old Testament, and he assumed the existence of two competing schools—the prophetic school (subdivided into a primary and secondary, or Deuteronomic school) and the priestly school, from which the historical books emanated. We are not charging him with any dishonesty in this. He had not time for arguing the whole case, and therefore he assumed as facts the conjectures of Astruc and his German followers, which he has himself, with Dr. Cheyne's help, transplanted into English soil. But we must read between the lines in order to understand the force of the summary argument laid by him in the most inoffensive terms possible before the Church Congress.

The question that has to be decided is not whether there are any objections to the theory called by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol traditional, or any objections to the theory which Mr. Gladstone has called negative, but whether the objections to one of these theories are greater or less than the objections to the other. There are objections to everything. "There are objections," said Dr. Johnson, "to a vacuum and objections to a plenum, but one or the other must be true." There are objections to Homer being regarded as the author of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey," and there are objections to the authorship being assigned to others. There are objections to Shakespeare's having written the plays that go under his name, and there are objections to attributing them to Bacon or to anyone else. If the objections to the new theory as to the way in which the Bible originated are fewer than those which lie against the theory hitherto accepted, the new theory has vindicated its claim at least to careful consideration; if they are more, it has no standing ground.

The received theory is that the Bible holds a unique position owing to its inspiration, by which is meant the action of God the Holy Ghost on the minds of the writers, by which they were led into all truth; that it consists of the Pentateuch, the historical, prophetic and other books; that the writer of the Pentateuch was Moses; of Joshua, one of the elders that outlived Joshua; of Judges, one in the earlier times in the monarchy; of the prophetic books, the prophet to whom they are assigned, and so on. It is granted that the theory has its difficulties.

The new theory is that the Bible holds a unique position owing to its inspiration, by which is meant the high moral purpose of the writers, and the good effect that their writings produce on the minds of their readers; that it consists of a Hexateuch, of historical and prophetic and other books, and that the Hexateuch in its present form was written by a student living in Babylon in the sixth century B.C. This student is known by the designation C, and we must constantly remind ourselves that C was a real living man, not a symbol. To judge whether the objections to Moses' authorship of the Pentateuch, or to C's authorship of the Hexateuch, are the most weighty, we must picture to ourselves the manner in which the latter compiled the Hexateuch.

Historically we know nothing of C, but analytically—that is, by an inspection and examination of the Bible—a school of German thinkers, endorsed by Dr. Driver, have inferred that about the year 550 B.C. there were living among the Jewish exiles four literary students and antiquaries. The eldest of these four goes under the name of the second Deuteronomist,

“because he was strongly imbued with the spirit of Deuteronomy.” A little junior to him was a man called H, to whom are attributed ten chapters of Leviticus (chap. xvii.-xxvi.), which received from Klostermann in 1877 the title of “The Law of Holiness,” which they have since retained. Contemporary with him was one called P, and shortly after him came C, who put the whole of the early historical books of the Bible into the shape in which we now have them.

How did C proceed in this great work? We may suppose him sitting in his room in Babylon at his study-table in front of eight desks standing in a row before him. On the first of these desks there would lie open a roll or book containing the early Jewish poetry, from the Song of Moses to the Song of Solomon. On the second desk would be a roll written by J, a native of southern Palestine, who lived about the year 800, and wrote a history of the Jewish people from the earliest times down to the death of Joshua. On the third desk there would be a roll written by E, a contemporary of J, who lived in Northern Palestine, and, like J, wrote a history of the Jewish people from the earliest times down to the death of Joshua. On the fourth desk there would be a harmony of the two books just mentioned, which was composed by a harmonist named J-E about the year 750. On the fifth desk would be lying a roll written by the first Deuteronomist about the year 700, containing some parts of the book of Deuteronomy. Then followed the three books written by C’s contemporaries. On the sixth desk would lie the work of the second Deuteronomist, who wrote parts of Joshua and Judges. On the seventh the ten chapters on Holiness written by H. On the eighth a very important roll by P, containing a history from the creation, embodying parts of the writings of J and of E, and ending, like them, with the death of Joshua.

The method in which C made use of the ample material before him was singular. While composing the books of Genesis and Exodus, he appears to have placed his table opposite the desks of J and of E and of P, and to have copied from one of them a verse, or a half verse, or the third part of a verse, or several verses, and then to have proceeded to the two others and treated them in like manner. For example, in Ex. xiv. he copied verses 1-4 from P; verses 5-7 from J; verses 8 and 9 from P; the first half of verse 10 from J; the second half of verse 10 from E; verses 11-14 from J; verses 15-18 from P; the first half of verse 19 from E; the second half of it and verse 20 from J; the first third-part of verse 21 from P; the second third-part of it from J; the third third-part of it and verses 22 and 23 from P; verses 24, 25 from J; verse 26 and one-third of verse 27 from P; the

other two-thirds from J; verses 28, 29 from P; verses 30, 31 from J.

Having thus finished the books of Genesis and Exodus, C closed the rolls of J and of E, and did not open them again, although their history continued throughout the next five books. He seems to have moved his table on to the third desk, on which the harmony of J-E was lying, placing by its side the two desks holding the rolls of P and H, his two contemporaries. His method was the same as before. For example, in Levit. xxiii., he took the first third-part of verse 39 from P; the second third-part from H; the third third-part from P; verses 40-43 from H; verse 44 from P. We are not told whether P and H were present, and gave their sanction to the mutilations which they each suffered at C's hands.

In Numbers the Harmonist J-E and P had to be combined. In chapter xx. C did this as follows: he took the first half of verse 1 from P; the second half from J-E; verse 2 from P; the first half of verse 3 from J-E; the second half from P; verses 4, 5 from J-E; verse 6 from P, etc. Very delicate work!

On reaching Deuteronomy C had to harmonize J-E, P, and the first Deuteronomist, who had lived in the age of Manasseh. Thus in chapter xxxiv. he took the first half of verse 1 from P; the second half of verse 1 and verses 2-7 "in the main" from D<sup>1</sup>; verses 8, 9 from P; verse 10 from J-E; verses 11, 12 from the Deuteronomist. In Joshua C had again three authorities to combine—J-E, P, and the second Deuteronomist—two of them contemporaries of his own. So in chapter ix. he took verses 1, 2 from D<sup>2</sup>; verses 3-8 and half of 9 from J-E; half of verse 9 and verse 10 from D<sup>2</sup>; verses 11-14 and half of verse 15 from J-E; half of verse 15 from P; verse 16 from J-E; verses 17-21 from P; verses 22 and 23 from J-E; verses 24, 25 from D<sup>2</sup>; verses 26 and 27, down to the beginning of its last line, from J-E; the last line of verse 27 from D<sup>2</sup>.

Such is the manner in which, according to Dr. Driver, C produced "the Hexateuch"—a thing unknown to Hebrews, Greeks, Latins, and, till within the last few years, to Germans and Englishmen—which Dr. Stanley Leathes calls "a nondescript and amorphous." We have added no feature to the Professor's sketch except the desks. It is possible that C may have preferred having the rolls on his table, but the rolls he must have had, and he must have used them in the way that we have described.

Now, against which of the competing theories do most objections lie? Is it more reasonable to suppose that Moses wrote the history of his own time, like Julius Cæsar, as we have it, or that C compiled it out of eight pre-existing histories

not one of which was ever heard of in Jewish or Christian history until the middle of the nineteenth century after Christ, and which disappeared from the face of the earth the moment that C had done with them? Is it to be supposed that C went about collecting all the MSS. of all the eight histories and burnt them? Some of them, the historical poems and the histories by J and E and J-E, existed before the Israelites were carried away into Assyria. Did they take no copies with them? And could the Jewish authorities at Babylon have been willing to make a bonfire of all their copies at C's request? Was such a thing ever heard of in the history of nations? Where are they—those parts which C rejected, and which must have been as much and as little inspired as those parts which he retained? If they cannot be found themselves, where is the record of them? Not a shadow of a shade of a hint of their existence survives! Then, as to methods. We have no difficulty in imagining to ourselves a writer who wrote down his own experiences, as Moses is supposed to have done, and to whom a vision of previous things was Divinely granted; but can we even imagine the possibility of a history being concocted in the way in which C is supposed to have concocted his? Look at the last example that we have given—which comes straight from Dr. Driver. Or, look at Josh. xx.: there C is represented as taking verses 1, 2 and the first line of 3 from P; then two words from D<sup>2</sup>; then two lines from P; then two verses (4, 5) from D<sup>2</sup>; then two lines of verse 6 from P; then four lines of the same verse from D<sup>2</sup>; then three verses from P. Was a history ever written in such a way, or could it be? Try what you could do with the history of England on this principle. Take a book of old ballads, three of the old annalists—Florence of Worcester, Geoffrey of Monmouth, William of Malmesbury—and four modern historians, Macaulay, Froude, Freeman, Green, and make your history by putting together three sentences from one, two words from another, two lines from another, two sentences from another, two lines from another, four lines from another, three sentences from another. Do you believe that your compilation would be regarded as an original work for 2,000 years, and that you would produce what C is represented as producing—not a thing of shreds and patches, like the wrong side of a piece of tapestry, but a flowing narrative so full of felicities as to have forced those well-known words of pathetic eulogy from Dr. Newman?

Again, as to inspiration. Would it be more or less easy to believe that Moses was inspired than the unknown student working at his MSS. in a back street of Babylon? The new school has answered this question by evacuating the meaning

of the word inspiration. In their mouths it no longer means the action of the Divine mind on that of the writer, but the action of the writer's mind on the minds of his readers.

Putting inspiration aside, as we are thus compelled to do, should we feel more or less sure of the accuracy of the facts recorded if we believed them to be recounted by one who witnessed them, or by a literary man who lived about a thousand years afterwards, and reported them in the words of other writers, the oldest of whom lived about 700 years after the times at which they occurred, and the greatest number of whom were his own contemporaries?

We are constantly told by men who have not studied the subject, and desire the reputation of not being bigoted, that the only question raised by critics is a question of authorship which does not affect the substance of the Bible, and need not affect our belief in its authority. It is not true. We can see that it is at least possible that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and therefore we are able to believe that he did so. We can see that it is impossible that C could have written it in the way suggested, and therefore we cannot believe it. We can suppose that if Moses wrote, he wrote honestly. We cannot regard J, E, P, H, D as anything but falsifiers representing themselves as living when they did not live. We can believe that Moses was inspired; no one even professes that C, or those whose works he mutilated, were inspired in the hitherto accepted sense of the word inspired. We can believe in the occurrence of a miracle, such as the crossing of the Jordan, if narrated by an eyewitness, even on human testimony, but what guarantee for its truth have we in the fact that it found a place in a narrative not Divinely guarded from error, written 700 years after the event, and quoted by an unknown editor living in Babylon 300 years later? At least, let us recognise the seriousness of the issue.

*De vita et sanguine agitur.*

F. MEYRICK.

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ART. II.—A CRITICAL SURVEY OF THE CHARACTER  
AND WORK OF DR. PUSEY.<sup>1</sup>

PART II.

IT is not quite apparent what period of her history seemed to Pusey to furnish the model to which the Church should conform. One thing, however, is quite clear, that Pusey

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of E. B. Pusey, D.D., Canon of Christ Church, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford," by Henry Parry Liddon, D.D., Canon of St. Paul's.