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A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE III.

HIGHER CRITICISM AT HIGH - WATER MARK.¹

BY EX-PRESIDENT SAMUEL COLCORD BARTLETT, D.D., LL.D.

It is a fortunate thing to have a scheme or speculation that is claimed by its friends to be revolutionary presented in its most favorable aspect by a cautious and reputable advocate. This good fortune in regard to the so-called Higher Criticism is secured in a series of seven articles by Professor S. I. Curtiss of Chicago, an active Christian worker, a Hebrew scholar and teacher in a hitherto conservative institution established by an intelligent body of evangelical churches, and himself a pupil, admirer, and to some extent a follower of Delitzsch. The series was prepared for, and pre-announced and commended by, a denominational paper of wide circulation, expressly to "furnish information," although it is curiously added by the journal, "he has not appeared as an advocate," when he has done little else. His long explanatory introduction is conciliatory; he avoids the offensive tone of Wellhausen; does not definitely commit himself to the "refinements" of Cheyne, nor distinctly allude to the extreme views of Cornill, or even the more moderate ones of Briggs. He substitutes the words "purely subjective" for the terms "unhistorical," "fiction," "altogether false," applied by other writers of this school to the Scripture accounts; speaks of "putting a discount on the narratives," rather

¹A series of seven articles by Professor S. I. Curtiss in the *Congregationalist*, from April 14 to June 2, 1898, on the Higher Criticism: what it is; its method; its problem; its conclusions on the authorship, interpretation, and authority of the Old Testament.

than of openly denying them; and the process which Kuenen (as he mentions) calls "a pious fraud," he terms "the literary resurrection of Moses to speak words which he would have spoken if living"—which, however, according to the theory, he never did speak. He also remarks, concerning the attempt of "many critics to deny historicity [that is, historic truth] to the stories of the patriarchs," "We can simply say, 'Not proven.'" So this is all that can be done for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: their lives are saved to history and the world, at least for the present, by the Scotch verdict that their non-existence is "not proven." This notwithstanding the Saviour's emphatic saying concerning the three, that God "is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Indeed, the cautious reserve in the formal statements of his positions constitutes the chief difficulty in examining them. The characteristic and distinctive views of the modern school of higher critics, and of the author himself, are to be found more in the illustrations, subordinate remarks, and ultimate disclosures, than in the main propositions advanced. These last are to a considerable degree so general as to include the principles of all intelligent modern expositors, or so generalized as not to present in clear light the full characteristics of this particular school. Earnest eulogiums on the study of the Bible as literature, on the scholarly examination of its phraseology, with the added aid of the cognate tongues, on the reproduction of all the environments, and on the help of archæological explorations, belong to all modern schools alike. Edward Robinson, Moses Stuart, and Bela B. Edwards were quite as ardent in these matters in the first part of this century as any scholars in the last part, although of course the external aids were less.

This indefiniteness is also attended, as we shall see, with incautiousness of statement, which appears early and

reappears too constantly. The general enthusiasm exceeds the special carefulness. To mention a few minor instances that meet us early in the discussion: We question that "there is as much reason for studying these literary characteristics as for studying the life of Jesus," especially when we also consider how little real weight is accorded to the older Scriptures by these writers, and even by Professor Curtiss. We doubt even that "a very large part of the Old Testament is a sealed book to the ordinary reader with reference to the original intent of the writers," notwithstanding the qualification, when we think of the great host of clear minds and hearts that have devoutly studied those pages through the centuries gone by. When we read, also, that in this study "an infinite advance has been made in the last fifty years," "infinite" seems to us a large word for so slight a gain. And when it is alleged that "the principles of Driver's Hebrew tenses applied by the interpreter to the Old Testament give him a new book," the affirmation seems to be vastly larger than the proof. For our author cites but three instances, pleasant to know but not very damaging not to know, namely, they show in Gen. xxix, 2 "what the shepherds were *wont* to do in watering their flocks at Haran"; that in 2 Sam. xv. 30-32 David in fleeing up the ascent of Olivet "went where he was *wont* to worship"; and that in Isa. vi. 4 the smoke not merely filled the temple, but was "*gradually* filling" it. One naturally expects rather more striking instances of "the new beauties that meet him at every step through a knowledge of the Hebrew Grammar furnished him by the higher critics."

It is, however, more broadly stated, that "there is no part of the Old Testament on which it [the higher criticism] does not shed new light," in fact "a flood of light," as we read elsewhere. Of this again three illustrations are given: (1) It "shows that prophecy was something far

more than actual history foretold, it was in fact an education for future history,"—this last point being virtually the same thing that Mark Hopkins said more than fifty years ago, and that too while still teaching that prophecy did sometimes contain "actual history foretold"; (2) it "unfolds a progressive revelation in the Old Testament,"—a fact which, though not to the same extent, intelligent readers, so far as we are aware, have not questioned, as e.g. in regard to the progressive revelation of the great Messiah; (3) Messianic prophecy is, "according to this scheme, not a revelation of the person of Christ, but rather of a Messianic ideal,"—which, according to the standpoint of Christ himself and his apostles, would seem to be not so much a progress as a regress, since Jesus said, "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the prophets *concerning me.*" While we cheerfully acknowledge our obligations to the great learning and fine scholarship of such a commentator as Dillmann,—who, however, dissents from some of the more revolutionary views,—we confess to being sometimes a little wearied with the excessive amount of attention devoted to the mechanics of the partitions; and if the "flood of light" cast upon the text is intended to include the finding of higher motives and standards, or greater practical incentives to the Christian life, or to a more earnest spirit of devotion, one would be glad to read the names of some of these great luminaries.

As we shall have occasion to call attention in the discussion to other much more important instances of excessive or even unauthorized claims, as well as of statements in detail outrunning the ostensible propositions, we defer the subject for the present, in order to draw nearer to the propositions and main argument of Professor Curtiss.

He places himself avowedly under the general leadership of "Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen," affirming that "many others have labored on the problem, but these have

exerted the most commanding influence," and their result "may be regarded as fixed." Now the one result which this triple alliance is supposed to have "fixed" is the total change of front as to the relative date of the first chapter of Genesis and its correlated portions of the Pentateuch. Up to that time, some thirty years ago, the critical scholarship of Germany accepted the opinion that this (Priests' Code, so-called) was the oldest part of the Pentateuch. Graf, just before his death in 1869, had reached and announced the conclusion that it was the latest, as late as the exile. The theory was received with little favor till first Kuenen, and then Wellhausen, came to its support, and it is now dominant. This sudden reversal and precipitous lapse through the space of four or five centuries pointedly suggests the thought how precarious are the "fixed" results obtained on the question of dates, when this whole school of critics can take such a prodigious leap or plunge, literally heels over head; and also how uncertain and dim are the internal criteria for a decision when a movement headed by Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen could so easily demolish the view held by such men as Hitzig, De Wette, and Knobel; and when Dillmann, a broader, abler scholar than any of the first three, declined to the last fully to accept their position. Professor Curtiss, however, calls the venerable Delitzsch to the rescue, as having, "in the presence of Albert, king of Saxony, avowed himself an adherent of the school of Graf." We raise no questions concerning the avowal, though cited at third hand, and somewhat indefinite. But we are somewhat startled to read in the Preface contributed by Delitzsch to Professor Curtiss's own book on the "Levitical Priests," over the signature of the venerable exegete when he was very nearly sixty-five years of age, and when all Graf's writings and Kuenen's "Religion of Israel" had been seven years before the public, and Wellhausen had been publishing for nearly two years, the

following intense statement: "We hold it as absolutely inconceivable that the Elohist portions concerning the tabernacle and its furniture should be a historic fiction of the post-exilic age,"—it being the final position of Graf, that both the legislation and the accompanying narratives were "exilian or post-exilian." Now, that, without any new facts internal or external, Delitzsch should a few years later adopt the view which, in the full knowledge of it and in the full maturity of his powers and scholarship, he had pronounced "absolutely inconceivable," would seem to be a phenomenon so unaccountable, if not itself "inconceivable," as to make it of little special value to either side.¹

As preliminary to his discussion, Professor Curtiss describes the higher critic and what "he must be": A grammarian, a broad linguist, geographer, explorer, archæologist, historian, cosmopolitan, a man so exact as to be open to the charge of being finical, and a man of imagination. The first two qualities, grammatical and linguistic scholarship, may be freely conceded to this class of writers, and a large degree of imagination; but the other qualifications have seemed to be rather conspicuously wanting. Dr. Curtiss conducts his discussion almost solely and insistently

¹ We may also call attention at this point to the views of Delitzsch as expressed in the last edition of his great work, the "Commentary on Genesis," completed in his seventy-fifth year: "Genesis, that fundamental book in the Book of books. For there is no book of such fundamental importance for all true religion, and particularly for Christianity, as the first book of the Pentateuch" (vol. i. p. 56). "There is no nation of antiquity that possesses a historic work that can be compared with the book of Genesis. . . . The essential truth of what is here related and the truth of Christianity stand in the closest mutual relation" (p. 57). Contrast this with Wellhausen's characterization of the "Priests' Code" as a "developed form of the myths" (*History of Israel*, p. 318), "a late Jewish fancy" (p. 348), written "a thousand years after Moses" (p. 347); and with the standard estimate of the same narrative by the higher critics, and as distinctly intimated in the articles of Professor Curtiss, as we shall find. Still it appears that Delitzsch vacillated somewhat in his later years.

on the basis of the literary and internal characteristics of the books. He alludes in one passage to the discoveries in Egypt, Palestine, Assyria, and Babylonia, which he considers "of the utmost importance to the interpreter," without showing how they help the higher critic as such. But he takes occasion to deny emphatically that they aid the traditional view. Yet adjacent to the denial is the remark, that "the discovery of the accounts on the clay tablets of Babylonian literature parallel with those of the first chapters in Genesis"—a statement quite too sweeping—"is epoch-making," without perceiving that they *do* sustain the denied antiquity of the biblical accounts, and in a general way, and particularly as to the flood narrative, bring a sort of confirmation. In another passage he refers to the Babylonian account of the Deluge as "parallel with those of the Yahwist and the priestly writer" of the Scriptures, but without recognizing that it actually conflicts with the critical division, inasmuch as it contains elements in this one account which the critics assign to two. Kuenen's volume on the Hexateuch conducts the argument wholly on the contents of the books of Scripture, and in all its condensed amount of material there is not an allusion which we have discovered to outside indications. The same lack is observable in Driver's "Introduction," where he discusses the Hexateuch, except as he protests, in a note, that neither "topographical exploration nor the testimony of inscriptions supplies a refutation of critical conclusions." Cheyne admits¹ that Wellhausen never fairly considered Assyriological material in his estimates. In his large volume, "The History of Israel," we find (unless our search has been at fault) no use of the outside sources specified by Dr. Curtiss, except three references to Smith's Assyrian Eponym Canon and one to the Moabite stone,—unless we add his general reference (p. 440) to "the

¹ Contemporary Review, July, 1895.

God-forsaken dreariness of certain Egyptologists." Professor Cheyne himself, who thus criticises his master, has issued a volume of five hundred pages on the Psalter, in which, among all the vast amount of allusions in the text and notes, one looks in vain for any alleged important outside support for his reconstruction of dates and occasions. There are a few allusions to these modern investigations, but sometimes to combat them; as when he charges Petrie (p. 10) with having "much exaggerated the antiquity" of certain Græco-Aramaic names, on the same page pronounces a statement of Josephus a "fiction," and even ventures to deny the probability that Gen. xiv. 1-17 is pre-exilic, though (he says) "supported in some incidental[!] points by Assyriology" (p. 42). He also pronounces Halévy's conclusions to be "vitiated by his determination to exalt the Babylonians." In Cornill's "Einleitung" (1891) it is surprising to find the author raising the question of the age of the use of writing among the Hebrews, and able to go no further than the negative conclusion, that "it would be entirely groundless to deny the knowledge of writing to Moses," and in his next page (p. 15) leaving a somewhat doubtful impression, although it has long been settled beyond dispute that writing existed in Chaldea long before Abraham's departure, and in Egypt ages before Moses' birth, and three hundred and twenty letters, written from a dozen places in Palestine and its vicinity to Egypt before the Exodus, had been found four years before the date of Cornill's book. And what, we may ask, is the significance or the basis of this affirmation of Dr. Curtiss: "*Undoubtedly* the priests handed down their rules by tradition centuries before they were reduced to writing"? Could a more improbable thing be stated as a certainty than that the learned and leisured class of the nation failed to use for "centuries," for fixing their complicated system, the art of writing which had existed in the homes

of their ancestors far longer than it has been used by the English-speaking race?

These instances are cited to show, that, like many other assumptions, the claim for all high qualities and wide range for the critics of this school is not sustained by facts. They actually expend their labors in plastic processes upon the text, and supposed inferences from the contents of the sacred books themselves. Indeed the Scriptures are frequently treated with less deference than is commonly accorded to secular histories. For while the testimony of the latter is usually accepted, unless it can be positively disproved, the definite and constant statements of the former our friends the critics, including even Professor Curtiss, do not hesitate to rule out or to deny by the wholesale.

We must also take firm exception to the assertion, that "the principles of higher criticism employed in the study of the Bible are simply those used in the literary examination of any other book." The days of conjectural reconstruction or of considerable emendation in literature without external basis have long gone by. It is a hundred years, and more, since the great Porson, with all his learning and sagacity as well as audacity, refused to re-edit Æschylus without the use of the Medicean manuscript at Florence. Jowett in his Plato protests against the attempt of Schaarschmidt and other German critics to reject nearly half of Plato's writings on the ground of "the variety in doctrine and style." White's discussion of the genuineness of Shakespeare's King Henry VI. (second and third parts), while not overlooking the internal traits, turns decisively on the external evidence, positive and negative; and in his general introduction to the entire collection, he declares; that "no edition is worthy of confidence, or indeed to be called an edition, the text of which has not been compared, word for word, with that of the folio of 1623

and the precedent quarto copies." Indeed, where in all literature is there such a travesty of the laws of editing and criticism, as, for example, is to be seen in Dr. Cheyne's polychrome edition of Isaiah? But while Jowett joins Grote in pronouncing futile the effort of some Germans to arrange into a harmonious whole the dialogues of Plato—it being "unsupported by evidence"—Professor Curtiss affirms broadly, that in "the literature, the history, and the accounts of religion as set forth in the Old Testament *almost everything* needs rearrangement," this "rearrangement" including, as is almost immediately explained, the rejection of large and fundamental portions of "the accounts" as "purely subjective."

Reaching the more direct course of the argument, the case is opened thus: "The student finds the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah are not arranged chronologically. If this be so, what must he conclude regarding the other parts of the Old Testament?" Answer: Nothing at all. When the record itself states that one of Isaiah's prophecies was made in the year that King Uzziah died, another in the days of Ahaz, another in Hezekiah's reign, and adds detached predictions concerning Babylon, Damascus, Tyre, and so on, by what logic must the student conclude that, where there is no hint of such distant intervals of composition, but a continuous narrative of continuous events, he may at pleasure disintegrate "the other parts of the Old Testament"? And not only so, but deny the truth of the accounts, as this whole system of the higher critics does concerning the law-giving and many other things? One might take this inquiry as a pleasantry, did it not stand as a preliminary justification of the process about to be described and defended.

And now for the process or method in its concrete form and selected test-case. The test vindication for the dissection of the Pentateuch is found in 1 Chron. xvi. 1-43.

Here we read (as closely rendered in the R. V.), "Then on that day did David first ordain to give thanks unto the Lord by the hand of Asaph and his brethren." Now, as Professor Curtiss correctly remarks, three verses preceding the one here quoted are the same as 2 Sam. vi. 17-19 (except a slight omission), and the psalm used by Asaph contains fifteen verses identical with those of Psalm cv., eleven verses constituting Psalm xcvi., one verse of Psalm cvii., and a slightly modified form of the doxology of the fourth book of the Psalms; and it is followed by a statement identical with one also in the chapter c: Kings already referred to (ver. 19, 20). When, however, Professor Curtiss remarks, that the Chronicler "puts a psalm into the mouth of David," he commits the singular error of mistaking Asaph's hand for David's mouth. The Chronicler does not say that David composed or even furnished the psalm; for aught that appears, he may have left the matter wholly to Asaph, who was a composer (2 Chron. xxix. 30), the form of expression perhaps rather favoring this supposition. But, waiving this unfounded remark, we find in this passage, as indicated in reference Bibles and commentaries, a composition made up largely from other *known* compositions, although Hitzig held that the other compositions were made up from this—which is not now the common view. Without entering on the discussion of these psalms,¹

¹ Professor Curtiss says unhesitatingly, "three psalms composed centuries after David's death." This point cannot be discussed here. We will but quote his curiously circuitous concession, made in another connection: "It does not seem probable that there are enough historical indications so that there can be any great certainty as to the time when many psalms were composed." Though commonly reckoned as late psalms, the ninety-sixth contains no historical allusions whatever, the one hundred and fifth none later than the exodus. The one hundred and seventh has two verses (2, 3) which speak of "gathering the ransomed of Jehovah out of the nations," but of which Perowne, in his Commentary, holds, that they do not contain a historical allusion, but "are perfectly general in character, describing the goodness of God in

but assuming with Professor Curtiss the common view, let us examine the argument which he would construct on this basis for the decomposition of the Pentateuch.

With this passage of the Chronicler before him, he turns to the account of the Deluge, and proceeds: "Turning now to the Pentateuch. . . . *applying this method* [our italics] to the Deluge, we have three parallel accounts, one by the Yahwist, a second by the priestly writer, the third found in *Babylonian literature*. . . . In separating the documents of the Yahwist and the priestly writer, there is a rending asunder of verses which has occasioned much sarcastic comment, but examples may be found in Chronicles as already indicated."

Let us look at this reasoning. "Applying this method." It is not this method at all, but a process radically different, in two fundamental respects: (1) The Chronicler himself *informs us* that in his narratives he used material from at least twelve different sources (and apparently more), which are specified by him, including, among others, "the book of the kings of Israel and Judah," actually quoted in this passage of his. On the contrary, the Pentateuch gives not the slightest hint of any of the writers that the critics invent,—J, E, P, D, R, and their doublets and triplets. (2) The Chronicler gives quotations from writings actually *known by him and us* in their separate form. The critics in no case can produce any such separate documents, they simply create them. The two cases being exact opposites in the two fundamental respects, the argument has no basis at all. It is also noteworthy that the Babylonian account which is termed "parallel" with the Scripture, as though to strengthen the theory of a compiled narrative,

delivering" men; making, however, an alternative suggestion, that these two verses with the first were a liturgical addition to the psalm—a view which the critics are in no position to contest. *These verses are not found in the psalm before us.*

drops quietly out of the discussion, and becomes a wooden gun,—although it actually tells against the dissection, as far as it can, by containing matters which are divided up between the two writers. Professor Curtiss alludes summarily to other similar instances. But this being his selected and unfolded instance, it is needless to deal with others. So much for the general and fundamental basis of the reconstruction, which appears to be baseless. Now for the attempt to justify the particular disintegrations made. Its basis is repeatedly given in the assertion, that it is “the practice of the Old Testament writers, when they have invented one turn of expression to convey an idea, not to invent a new one for the same idea, but to use it over and over again.” Hence, wherever in a continuous narrative a different expression or set of expressions appears, there must be a different writer, and, as the narrative is continuous and includes different phraseologies, it must be a compilation of independent parallel documents. Two important conclusions, and in reality the whole scheme of this school, hang on this unhesitating assertion. It should be well proved.

What evidence is offered? The way is prepared by Professor Curtiss in the claim of a similar practice as “a universal custom of antiquity in its sacred books, as in the Vedas, the Egyptian Book of the Dead, etc., to combine parallel accounts, after the example of a gospel harmony, with as little change as possible.”¹ Here a universal practice is hypothecated on two alleged examples and an “etc.”

¹ Professor Curtiss indeed states it with an “if,” namely, “if the historian finds it the universal custom,” etc. But as this is one of a series of four or more “ifs,” each advancing known *assertions* of the critics, the meaning here is unmistakable. It is beyond our purpose and space to deal with the other assumptions, though they are not new. One of them has even been answered by Dr. Briggs himself, when he says, “We cannot deny to Moses the conception of a future kingdom in Israel”; under the circumstances in which he had been, and was placed, “it was natural to think of kings for Israel.”

We cannot contend with the "etc." But we emphatically protest that we can find no authority for the statement, as made, concerning the two specified instances. As to the Vedas it is generally understood that they have been interpolated and enlarged from ancient days down; but the assertion that they are compilations of "parallel accounts, after the example [manner?] of a gospel harmony," we understand to be directly in conflict with the highest living authority. Max Müller, in the Introduction and Preface to his great translation of "The Vedic Hymns" (1891), declares not only that there is no independent authority or "independent source," but that he gives up the hope of finding an "independent text"; and not only so, but there are "few independent readings," and indeed we "can hardly speak of independent readings in the usual sense of that word" (Part I., pp. xxxi, xliii). In like manner, also, the assumption concerning the Book of the Dead, so far as can be learned from such Egyptologists as Birch, Renouf, and Naville, lacks foundation. The book is indeed a collection of distinct and not closely connected chapters, and is found in a large number of copies, as well as a multitude of fragments inscribed on coffins and other small spaces. And while, of the earlier manuscripts, "no two contain exactly the same chapters or follow the same order" (Renouf); and while, owing to the exceeding carelessness of scribes, the various copies exhibit great corruptions and frequent different readings; and the more ancient texts had received glosses and later additions, these Egyptologists do not recognize any combination of "*parallel*" documents or sources, but only different readings ("recensions" once or twice) of the one text; and all that Renouf or Birch aimed or expected to do was to restore that one text.¹ In other words, the copies of the Book of the Dead

¹The citations are from Renouf, Hibbert Lectures, Birch's translation of the Book of the Dead in Bunsen's Egypt, Vol. v., and Naville as quoted in Davis' Book of the Dead, with Pierret's translation.

are apparently but distinct manuscripts of the same fundamental text, like the Vatican and the Sinaitic of the New Testament, and not at all independent "parallel" sources like the supposed J and E of the higher critics, "combined after the example of a harmony." And thus the "universal custom of antiquity" disappears.

The effort to show the limitation of the Hebrew writers to one set of phrases is introduced thus: "We find that the antediluvians are born and die after the same fashion (Gen. v.), and that we have substantially the same blanks for every epitaph of the kings of Israel and Judah." Just so we have substantially the same announcements of deaths and marriages now in all the newspapers of the country, and in some old cemeteries the same forms of inscription on all the headstones. Were these all written by one writer?

The effort is also made to establish this proposition by examining consecutive passages which contain diverse forms of expression. But how is the evidence obtained that this limitation to one set of phrases was the universal practice of even the Hebrews? There are no other ancient Hebrew compositions by which to show it. There are no actual separate copies of the documents alleged to be thus combined. The evidence is made chiefly by the scissors, by forcible dealings,—disintegrations, excisions, transpositions, omissions, and insertions wrought upon a continuous text, often reducing it to small fragments in the process. It was the remark of the German Rupprecht in 1896, concerning this school, "With inexcusable arbitrariness they make the text to order as they want it."

Take the test example of Professor Curtiss, the narrative of the Flood. It is a sober, continuous account, self-consistent in all its minute details, and thoroughly consistent with all the latest scientific researches of whatever kind. He speaks quite too sparingly of only "separating

the documents of the Yahwist and the priestly writer," since no writer of this school contents himself with so little. For convenience to the English reader take the distribution given by Dr. B. W. Bacon in 1892, agreeing mainly with that of Kautzsch and Socin. The narrative extends from Gen. vi. 5 to viii. 22. This consecutive narrative is divided into twenty-nine portions, larger or smaller, some of them consisting of a single verse, one of three words; although the main parts are assigned to J and P, but these separated into some sixteen fragments. Three transpositions are proposed, and two hiatuses indicated. Further to meet the exigencies, the "redactor," "late supplementary redactions" (once the "gloss") are freely employed. As it was necessary that the word Jehovah (Yahweh) should not be found in P, who is Elohist, so in the midst of eleven verses (vii. 11-21) almost wholly ascribed to him (P), the phrase "Jehovah shut him in" is bodily assigned to J. It also became needful to show two diverse styles; and so, when two varied expressions for male and female are twice found in J, once (ver. 3) closely following the different phrase of verse 2 ("man and his wife"), the scissors immediately clip out the second phrase from verses 3 and 9, and assign them to the convenient "harmonist, the redactor." In like manner, to make the style conform, four other phrases, extending from four to a dozen words (vi. 7; vii. 9, 22, 23), are summarily remanded to the "later" writer or writers. To strengthen the case still further, it was desirable to find collisions between the two main portions. Accordingly the direction that the animals enter the ark by pairs is arrayed over against the direction to take the clean beasts by sevens, the one assigned to J, the other to P; and further yet, the mention of the time is so divided up as to make it appear that J assigned sixty-one or at most sixty-eight days to the duration of the Flood, and P a lunar year and ten days. This last move is made

in order to accomplish three ends: to show two accounts, to create a conflict between them, and to sustain an alleged trait of P, namely, exactness and minuteness of numbers. To such methods all things are made possible. It is, however, a noteworthy fact, as already mentioned, that the Babylonian account, to which appeal is made as "parallel," grotesque, garrulous, and polytheistic as it is, contains points common to both J and P.

The foregoing being selected by the author as a specimen case, it would be needless to analyze other instances. The process is repeated whenever it becomes necessary. Yet we read the calm assurance, resting on such a basis as this, as though from personal knowledge, as follows: "Now the ancient Israelite, when called upon (!) to compose a history, presented his materials without digesting them. If he used three books as sources, he did not dream of uniting them in his own mind before he put them down on skin or papyrus; he strung them together as far as possible word for word. If he found two accounts of a favorite (!) hero, he would mechanically combine them, even if they did not really harmonize." While there are unsolved questions concerning the history of the Pentateuch, yet, whether this sweeping charge is a description or a caricature of the narratives in Exodus and Genesis, all intelligent readers can judge, in fact have judged throughout all generations. And it is the more remarkable, inasmuch as, after all efforts to divide, such critics as Kautzsch and Driver refute themselves when they find themselves compelled to print whole pages of J and E as absolutely inseparable, JE.

In endeavoring to set aside the traditional view of the early origin of the Pentateuch, Professor Curtiss's view of the nature and extent of the evidence on which it rests is singularly limited. He appears to regard it as confined to the Talmud and an appeal to the words of Christ and his

apostles. He first directs his attention to the utterance of the Talmud as entirely "untrustworthy," and declares that "this finding is of the utmost importance," as though it were a recent *find*. As matter of fact, the tradition of the Talmud as to the books of Moses has for a long time figured very little in the case. We have been unable to find any reference to it in such conservative works as Hengstenberg's "Authenticity of the Pentateuch," written sixty years ago, Haevernick's "Introduction to the Pentateuch," of nearly the same date, or in Macdonald's "Introduction to the Old Testament," of forty-seven years ago. Bleek, conservative but judicial, in his "Introduction," sixty-six years old, merely alludes to it in a sentence expressing no opinion. The importance of the "finding" is poorly sustained. Still less sustained is it that "it removes all other traditions contained in the fathers or the New Testament founded on this tradition"—if he means to intimate either that the New Testament utterances were founded on it, or to imply that these utterances were of the same value only as those of the fathers. The former of these incautious suggestions would either carry the Jerusalem Talmud (which is cited) much beyond the earliest date assigned to its written form, or bring down the New Testament to a very late date,—quite as late as that of Baur, now exploded.

There is some danger of our author's being understood to assign no higher authority to the New Testament than to the fathers. For the fathers are wholly ignored after being mentioned, and a long discussion is devoted to refuting any inference from the practice of the New Testament writers "and our Lord himself." On this point he hints the question whether Christ "knew the facts of Pentateuch criticism"—an unknown factor; affirms (after Driver) that "no one ever came to him with" the question as to the authorship or authenticity,—which is *probably* true; maintains that "he used popular language,"—which was

never questioned; and implies, without directly asserting, that he represented "the actual belief of the times."

Now we have always hesitated to make the usage of Christ and his apostles on this matter a main reliance, both as sharing the expressed sentiment against bringing the sacred ark into the battle-field, and also as recognizing the limitation of our knowledge of the Saviour's voluntary limitations. Without pressing this point, we may say that it would seem a very serious detraction from his matchless *human* wisdom that, whether interrogated or not, he should suffer himself to be understood as committing himself to a view so gravely and irreverently erroneous as the ascription to Moses, as God's authorized mouthpiece, of the inventions and fictions of a body of priests eight hundred years or more later. We may also add that there is great difficulty in toning down his declarations to the level of mere popular phraseology and contemporary notions. Such authorities as Bishop Ellicott and Professor Stanley Leathes maintain that it cannot be fairly done; and Rupprecht has devoted the whole first volume of his elaborate work¹ to refute the position. He cites twenty-eight passages of the Gospels containing "Christ's testimony for the Pentateuch as divine authority," including specifically its five several books, and "for the authorship of Moses himself" seven, namely, Matt. xix. 4-8; Mark x. 4-9; Luke xx. 37; xvi. 29, 31; xxiv. 25; John v. 46-47; vii. 22-23 (two are duplicates). There certainly is the gravest difficulty in disposing of such express declarations concerning the personal authorship of Moses as when Christ says, "If ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how can ye believe my words?" Jülicher and his class would of course cut the knot by denying that he ever said it; but we have not descended to that level. Waiving, however, the ap-

¹ Des Räthsels Lösung, 1895.

peal in this form, the references in the New Testament to the Old constitute one—though but one—important branch of the evidence to show how thoroughly the recognition of the authenticity and substantial Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was embodied in the whole history, life, literature, and institutions of the Jewish nation. The New Testament is saturated with the recognition. And it is noteworthy that the Epistle to the Hebrews is built up on the historicity and Divine authority of the so-called Priests' Code, which the higher criticism pronounces to be a late fiction. Such being the case, it is needless to refer to the entirely independent testimonies of Philo and Josephus to show how thoroughly was this great fact rooted in the Hebrew nation at that time, and through the past.

Not only is the weighty force of these facts overlooked in the supposed "removal of the basis" of traditions, but there is no hint of the prodigious amount of evidence that runs back through all the literature and history of the nation till it passes beyond the definite range of all other history. This vast complexus of evidence, so much overlooked, underestimated, or arbitrarily rejected and denied, has been often set forth, long ago by Hengstenberg and others, but perhaps never more than in the second volume of Rupprecht's work (1896), in which he traces this great river of evidence through all the books of the Old Testament from Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi, and Chronicles to Joshua, in citations and references of which the very figures would fill many pages. And when Professor Curtiss affirms, that "neither in the history nor the prophets is there satisfactory evidence that the priestly code was in operation till after the exile," we cannot judge what evidence would be "satisfactory" to him. But the denial of very explicit evidence can be made only by denying, with Wellhausen and Kuenen, the express, repeated statements of various narratives on this point. And to deny valid evi-

dence in the oldest prophets, Amos and Hosea, would seem not only to ignore such a showing as is found in Robinson's "Religion of Israel," but to refrain from a careful reading of those prophets themselves.

We have alluded to the disregard of the growing vindication of these old narratives by modern research, which, so far as it has a bearing, is somewhat steadily coming to their support. With some qualifications, orientalist and explorers in various lines are coming to the rescue. The testimony of such men as Ebers, Lenormant, Hommel, Sayce, Petrie, Naville, Tristram, Besant, Conder, Brugsch, is not to be lightly treated. The process of support continues down to the last year's discovery of Menephta's reference to Israel, and the recent identification of all the four kings with whom Abraham fought. Indeed so high an authority as Poole reminded us, in 1879, that "foreign Egyptologists as independent scholars appear uniformly to treat its [the Pentateuch's] text as an authority to be cited side by side with the Egyptian monuments; and he mentions Lepsius, Brugsch, and Chabas. Poole himself declares, and shows in detail, that the narrative of the history of Joseph and the sojourn and the Exodus "was written while the memory of the events was fresh."

Similar correspondences are proved through the still earlier history, wherever outside traces can be found. In the sober, exact, and consistent history of the Deluge, eminent scholars have not hesitated to see the account of a witness and a participant. The patriarchal narratives are found to be not only so realistic, but so conformed to the known realities, that the German Stosch has ventured the opinion that the history of Abraham came from himself, and has not hesitated to speak of the autobiographies of Isaac, of Jacob, and of Joseph.¹ Rupprecht has incidentally called attention to the firm recognition by secular his-

¹ *The Origin of Genesis*, Berlin, 1897.

tarians of the historic truth of the narratives pronounced unhistoric by the higher critics, quoting from Heeren, Von Müller, Schlosser, Niebuhr, Ranke, Rotteck, Wachler, and others. Their historic sense recognized genuine history here.

When we add to all this the unavoidable admissions of Kuenen, Wellhausen, Driver, and others as to the actual agency of Moses in the Hebrew nation, together with the unquestionable fact that he impressed himself on that nation to an extent and for a length of time approached by no other historic personage, we have in all these things a vast accumulated and accumulating mass of evidence for the established or traditional view which has surprisingly escaped the notice of Professor Curtiss when he directs his entire refutation at the Talmud and "Christ and the New Testament writers."

Attention should be pointedly called to the direct issue of fact made by these critics with the most explicit, circumstantial, and constant statements of the Pentateuch narratives. The flat contradictions are so carefully shaded away and kept in the background in the articles before us, that the ordinary reader would not imagine their magnitude and their boldness. The author cautiously remarks, that, "as regards date and historicity, it cannot be said that there are certain results." But he immediately gives the stand which "the critics are inclined" to take, and without dissent: The date of the Deuteronomic code B.C. 621, Priests' Code, B.C. 500 (Kuenen, 444). Now as the narrative always asserts that these were given both in the time and by the agency of Moses, the collision is direct and complete, extending to a vast multitude of details.

Notwithstanding his cautiousness of statement, the author's position is on the same platform. He prepares, by distinguishing between the point of view of a theologian and of a historian, between a record of the religious life of

a people and a history of events; speaks of "the *discount* we may be compelled to put on these narratives," and remarks that "the time and manner may be quite different from that which we gather from a superficial [!] reading of the Old Testament," and more to the same effect. Still more: "The critic first determines what the representations of God and what these codes are, and then he tests them by the history as found in the historical and prophetic books, to see whether the representations in a given code are illustrated by them as in actual use." The complete statement should add: If he does not find them illustrated, he considers that to be positive disproof; if he finds them illustrated and positively affirmed, he discards or denies the affirmation.

The author's position distinctly emerges when he describes the method of the Chronicler, and, "turning to the Pentateuch," applies his description there. He says that the Chronicler combined a psalm out of materials which did not exist till centuries after David's death, "puts it into the mouth of David," carries him through "an elaborate temple service" which existed in his own time ("333 B.C."), but not in David's time, and "names over those who had charge of the music on this" fictitious occasion. Whereas, "the only material of value for history in this account is what he quoted from 2 Sam. vi. 17-20"—the four borrowed verses of truth and thirty-nine verses of fiction in the forty-three—or, in commercial phrase, he waters his stock many hundred per cent. The watering "is not objective history, but represents the subjectivity of the Chronicler" and "the condition of his own times." In this mode the history of the Pentateuch is dissolved at pleasure. Take one instance. The entire seventeenth chapter of Genesis, on account of the exigencies of the theory (not necessary to specify), is ascribed to P by Socin, Kautzsch, Wellhausen, Kuenen, Cornill, Strack, Driver, B. W. Ba-

con; that is, to a supposed writer who lived, according to the theory, from thirteen hundred to fifteen hundred years after the event narrated. This of course makes of the story a pure invention, in which are contained the following unfounded statements: An interview granted by God to Abraham, a promise of God concerning his posterity and their future home, a covenant with him and a seal of that covenant, the promise of a child to Sarah, the change of the names of Abraham and Sarah, the circumcision of the household, a prayer of Abraham for Ishmael and a promise of God for Ishmael. This is what it means to assign the narrative to P. But this is but a small specimen of the extent to which the Pentateuch narrative is thus made spurious; such as, the burial of Sarah in Hebron, and all connected with it, the first passover and the Exodus, many of God's communications to Moses and Aaron, part of the plagues, much of the lawgiving and the connected events, and too much else to specify here. The things thus involved should be frankly set forth. Indeed it is difficult to ascertain what is left us of all the Old Testament earlier history—not to speak now of the later—after all this manipulation. For the two oldest recognized writers (J and E) are dated some four or five hundred years after the sojourn in Egypt; and though they are conceded to contain some nucleus of traditional truth, who can tell what, and how much or how little? It is useless to try to hide the issue and the consequences involved in this arbitrary scheme. Professor Curtiss explains or apologizes for the inventions of his Chronicler by saying, that "he had no thought of doing such a thing" as "deliberately attempting to falsify history." But he does it all the same; and the apology is, that he had lost, or never had the sense of, the difference between truth and falsehood. Dr. Curtiss appears to repudiate Wellhausen's phrase "a pious fraud"; but what else would be the account of Abraham's

interview with God? To show that we do not exaggerate the sweep of this movement, and how much may be covered by the diplomatic term "subjectivity" of the writers, take this deliverance of one of the most prominent English higher critics in the *Contemporary Review* for August, 1889 (vol. lvi. p. 228): "Do not permit the children after a certain age to suppose that you know, or that any one knows, or that the writer of Genesis professes to know, anything historically about the antediluvians or about the supposed ancestors of the Israelites," i.e. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The author of this remark (Dr. Cheyne) was invited to lecture to two or three theological institutions in America.

Let us look at some of the "conclusions." Inasmuch as it was announced that the object of the articles under discussion was simply to give "information," we naturally expect the information to be frank, full, and discriminating,—to show the actual status of the school. This it fails to do. We are told that "the Pentateuch or Hexateuch is made up of three main documents"; and that, while "the first division is subdivided into two other documents, and there are said to be various editions of each writer, these refinements, though possessing more or less probability, are not essential. But the division into three documents is of the utmost importance." Another allusion to "differences regarding details," and an assertion of "substantial agreement" dispose of this matter. This is not adequate information. What recognized higher critic restricts himself to anything like this schedule? The refinements so gently waived aside are strenuously held by them all. Dr. Briggs, who may be considered the leading and ablest representative of the school in this country, gives a "general agreement" quite different from this "substantial agreement." He presents as the acknowledged basis four principal writers and three redactors, making seven; and de-

clares it "necessary to distinguish" five other writers, making twelve in all.¹ Wellhausen and Cornill require many more than even this number. Other writers could be cited, were it needful. A similar reserve appears in regard to Isaiah. We are told that "by far the larger part of the prophecies are not from his own hand," and that "the most significant thing is not in such refinements of criticism as Dean Cheyne sets before us, but in the partition of Isaiah into two volumes." Here the word "volumes" is noteworthy, as it avoids conflict with Cheyne's refinements. These consist of the separation of the prophecies into more than one hundred and thirty fragments and fractions, represented by seven different colors for seven distinct authors, besides more than thirty "lacunae" in connected passages, and some two hundred rejections of passages, extending from single words to three verses each, as "later additions." All this but half tells the story; for the chapters and parts of chapters are severed, and transposed back and forth, in such wise that a true description, not supported by particulars, would be deemed a burlesque. Thus there are such consecutions as the following: chapters (or parts of them) 9, 17, 28, 1, 2, 23, 14, 10, 11, 12, 20; 28; 22, 18, 12, 36; 39, 15, 16, 21, 13, 14, 40. After searching for chapters 25, 26, and 27, one finds them at some distance after chapter 63, and distributed in this fashion: xxv. 6-8; xxvi. 20-21; xxvii. 1, 12-13, 7-11; xxvi. 1-19; xxv. 1-11; xxvii. 2-5. Such a process, by a writer put forward in England and America, illustrates the boundless liberty inherent in the system, and the limitless results which do not affect the standing of their open advocates. This "information" belongs to the churches. What is withheld is more than what is disclosed. Professor Curtiss, however, once drops the remark, that the Old Testament is the work of "a multitude of hands," not including

¹ Higher Criticism, pp. 68, 137.

Dean Cheyne. And let us pause for a moment for two inquiries concerning this analysis of Isaiah by Cheyne: (1) Could there be a more thorough *reductio ad absurdum* of the principles of the school than this grotesque practical exhibition of them by an acknowledged leader? (2) Could there be anything more preposterous than the semi-omniscience claimed in this rectification of Isaiah—unless it be the acceptance of the scheme by any other person? Cicero pronounced it greater folly to adopt a folly than to originate it.

The claim of a clearly marked difference of style in the constituents of the Hexateuch has been sufficiently disposed of. But it is also claimed by our author, that “these documents are distinguished by different theological conceptions, not homogeneous nor uniform”—that is, incompatible. This position is maintained in two ways: by overstraining certain human (anthropomorphic) modes of speech, and by the usual excisions of narratives and detrusions of dates. In the first of these modes we are told, that “the view of God as presented by the Yahwist is most human, and approaches, while it is infinitely superior, to the representation of God in classical antiquity.” Instances cited are such as God walking in the garden, going down to see the tower of Babel and the wickedness of Sodom, and the like. These expressions, characteristic of oriental and Hebrew realistic speech, may undoubtedly, by careful selection and exclusion, be accumulated on some supposed writer; but in a very marked degree they run through the Old Testament down to the latest prophet and psalm. God sits, rides, flies, comes down, has a voice, hands, arm, fingers even. This mode reappears, though in less degree, in the New Testament, where we read of God’s hand, right hand, mighty hand, arm, face; he looks, sees, hears, visits, remembers, swears, avenges. Surely no theory can rest on such modes of speech, which not only belonged to the

stated usage of the Old Testament, but can, in less degree, scarcely be eliminated from human speech. But the criticism is not new.

A further support is sought by sundering consecutive passages, and remanding the most spiritual passages to a late date. Thus the striking passage Ex. xxxiv. 6-8 is struck out from its connection, and assigned to a redactor, by Kittel, Wellhausen, Cornill, Baentsch, and Kautzsch. The first and great commandment (Deut. vi. 5) is brought down to a late period by placing the whole book of Deuteronomy (with Dr. Curtiss) as late as B.C. 621. It is easy to make two theologies thus. But it is not to be forgotten that the Decalogue itself, admitted into the oldest code, lays its demands on the spirit when it prohibits all coveting, and in its introduction calls for love.

Another claim for the critics is the discovery of "evolution" in these codes, "worship in the Jehovistic code having been a very simple affair, closely connected with the usages of the Semitic peoples." That there was progress through the earlier revelation lies on the face of it. But Kuenen taught that Israel's Jehovah was originally but a tribal god, like the idols of the tribes of Palestine, and that in religion and civilization the Israelites were actually raised by absorbing some of their elements. Dr. Curtiss appears to adopt that theory. For he says that "God condescended to a low stage of religious knowledge, such as we find among the ancient Semites, and God had to deal with *his people* [our italics] as worshipers of a tribal god before they could conceive of Yahweh as the God of all the earth." But it was to "Yahweh" that Abraham said, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" hundreds of years before the time of "his people." Think of applying this term "idolaters and polytheists" (used in the same sentence) even to Noah, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob! Instead of finding the Old Testament "the record of the

religious life of Israel at the different periods of its history," what a mass of "religious" fictions does it become from beginning to end! And in regard to this matter of evolution, when we put together all the various intimations, we find ourselves somewhat more in doubt than we could wish, whether this favorable change in Israel was anything more than a natural human progress or not.

In this connection, attention is caught by the startling announcement that "the authority of the *moral* and civil law was set aside by Christ himself." Christ however said, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill," and proceeded to show, by illustrations in detail, that his office was to fill out all the fullness of its scope and application, adding that, till heaven and earth should pass away, it could not pass away. And when, in declaring the great commandments, he quotes, word for word, the two great commandments from the Pentateuch, declaring, "there is no other greater commandment than these," we leave the two conflicting authorities side by side. We bear in mind all that is said about the imprecatory psalms—and the answers,—and about the imperfections and sins of the Old Testament worthies; also the far greater fullness of the New Testament. But until the constant stress of Christ and his apostles can be set aside, it stands fast that the second is the development of the first.

The limits of space compel the omission of several matters contained in these articles which seem to call for inquiry, if not for denial. But let us look at the general and final estimate which is placed upon the Old Testament. Here we experience great difficulty of apprehension, not always as to the apparent meaning of individual sentences or of the terms employed, so much as to the meaning of an entire paragraph, and how much the phrase or word in the connection stands for. Thus the word

“revelation” occurs several times, and the terms “divine inspiration” and “divine power” are each once used of the prophet (and possibly more times). But that the revelation is described as consisting in anything more than the “evolution” or, at most, the general (or even special) guidance of the nation, we will not deny, but we are unable to find. Did God directly and authoritatively make known his will and commands in such wise as the Pentateuch and prophets declare? Would that the answer were a more distinct, Yes. And was the divine inspiration and divine power anything more than “the new and inspiring conceptions,” which we are told in the last paragraph “we receive” from the results of the higher critics? We are unable to say.

In meeting the question, Does the higher criticism preserve the authority of the Old Testament? Professor Curtiss clearly finds, after all his previous statements, a grave difficulty. He had early shown that, “as God used ‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin’ to set in motion forces” to free the slave, and Bunyan’s “Pilgrim’s Progress” for certain good ends, so “he could use any of the modes of writing *current in the times* as the medium of his revelation.” Alluding also to the speeches composed by Thucydides for his personages, and calling attention to the fact, that, “in an age when there were no reporters, much freedom was used in the reproduction of speeches, including not only the form but also *the matter itself*,” he declares that the Chronicler had done this very thing, and had gone a great deal further; for he had not only invented the manner and the matter of the utterance, but had also *invented the facts* in the case. He also announces in his last article that not only “has the Chronicler interpreted history and ancient institutions according to the religious standpoint of the writer,” but so have done “the author of Samuel, Judges, and Kings,” and the “Deuteronomic editor.” Thus all

the history being written after this sort, what can be done to save the Old Testament?

This: "The power of the Old Testament is chiefly as the record of a revelation preparing the way for Jesus Christ through law, history, and prophecy." But, as we have found, it did not make reference to Christ in his personality. The history is throughout, from the beginning, the invention of facts and utterances referred by the writers to former times from "the standpoint of the writer." And "law," *whose* law, God's or man's? It does not appear from the statement; was it simple "evolution"? As to prophecy, more presently.

In detail: There is a "sharp distinction between the Old Testament and the New," although there is one "fact higher criticism does not disprove," namely, "its representation of God's choice of Israel as a peculiar people, and his working among them to fit them for a special mission among the nations." But how? In the same connection we read that its "principles applied to the New Testament cannot undermine the divine authority of Christ's life and doctrine as contained in it," since "that life and doctrine were a fact before a New Testament book was written"—a suggestion carrying possible implications which we cannot stop to consider. In addition to the one thing that the higher criticism has not done to the Old Testament, there are several things which, according to Professor Curtiss, it has done.

I. *As to the history.*—"The history of religion in Israel is authoritative with reference to the order and succession of events *only as these are determined by the labors and investigations of the higher critics.*" But, as we have already seen definitely stated (in the case of the Chronicler and the other writers), they decide not only on the order and succession of the events, but on the *events* themselves. The authority of the critic on the religious history is thus supreme over the authority of the book.

2. *Worship.*—"The Old Testament has no authority for us in guiding our action with reference to worship." A favorable word is spoken for the Psalter elsewhere. But here occurs this remarkable statement: "The Church of Rome really derives its theory of the priesthood, finding its apex in the Pope, from the sacerdotal system of the Priests' Code as written down during the exile. In like manner the priestly robes and the splendor of the worship in the Roman Church may all be traced back to this code." This is great news. It has been hitherto understood that the "apex in the Pope" founded its claims on the succession to Peter, and the claims of the church on the New Testament. Thus Rev. Peter J. Smith of the Roman Catholic Church, and Professor of Church History and Canon Law, in his summary account for Johnson's Encyclopedia, defends the claims of his church by forty references to the New Testament, and not one to the Old. This is fairly good authority. And as to the splendor of worship being *all* traceable to the Priests' Code, Dr. Philip Schaff, who is good authority and not biased for Romanism, says in the same work, "there is scarcely a dogma or usage of modern Rome which may not be traced in embryo to the Greek and Latin fathers, from Ignatius and Cyprian down to John of Damascus." So that it is unnecessary to lay this burden on the Old Testament. Schaff is as distinct as other historians in regard to the Pope's alleged "succession to Peter."

3. *The moral law.*—We have already quoted the affirmation that "the moral and civil law was set aside by Christ himself," and have placed it side by side with Christ's own statement of the case. But the indictment does not pause there. "The Old Testament reflects an inferior system of ethics. Hence easy divorce, concubinage, polygamy, slavery, blood revenge, wholesale massacres"; and, in the next sentence but one, "those responsible for

the massacre of St. Bartholomew seek for their justification in the slaughter of the Canaanites," and "the Covenanters for their bloody work in the imprecatory psalms," a list which might be largely increased, among other things, by heresy-hunting, witch-burning, the tortures of the Inquisition, although these are covered by "every ecclesiastical cruelty and chicane imaginable." While it would take many pages to disentangle this singular concatenation, we venture to drop two or three hints. It is quite novel to charge Catherine de Medici with searching the Scriptures,—a woman of whom Froude says, "Religion in its good sense and in its bad sense was equally a word without meaning to her." The inquiry also arises, What large amount of "bloody work" was ever done by the Covenanters, and whether the supposed "justification" is not due to Scott's fictitious Balfour of Burley and Reverend Ephraim Macbriar as against Reverend Peter Poundtext? As to divorce and polygamy, it seems to be forgotten that they were in conflict with the original standard (Gen. ii. 23-24), that that standard was as high, in its brief simplicity, as the New Testament standard (Eph. v. 25-31), and moreover that the Saviour himself not only appealed to that standard as covering the whole case, but added that "he which made them at the beginning" fixed that standard. Matthew xix. 3-6 is worthy of attention. Nor is it worth while to say much about the "massacres" when, at the very time of writing, the Christianity of America was about to engage in a series of massacres in the cause of humanity, and with far less of inevitable necessity than were the Israelites. And when our author reckons this among the "usages of a barbarous age" "not in any sense divinely revealed," has he overlooked the express directions given by God to Moses and Joshua? Or will he deny them? The intelligent reader will not think it a fair statement to say that blood-revenge was legalized, nor even to despatch

the matter of slavery with a word. Some of these matters confessedly offer difficulties, but they call for discriminating discussion rather than an indiscriminate accumulation. The enemies of Christianity can do the latter sufficiently.

4. For some reason "the *legal system*" is mentioned as distinct, with the remark, that it "is not authoritative except as it contains eternal principles of morality." The remark is safe, if needless. In this connection, however, may be mentioned the claim, that the higher criticism has shown, from a study of kindred Semitic institutions, that "circumcision, the sacrificial system, the sacred times and festivals, etc., were but adaptations of institutions already existing." The claim, though not important, is hardly valid. Some of the knowledge is very old. Herodotus had informed the world (ii. 148) that the Colchians, Egyptians, and Ethiopians practiced circumcision from the earliest times, and that the Phoenicians and the Syrians of Palestine learned it from the Egyptians; and the Egyptologists long ago found it on the monuments. The poem of the Pentaur tells also of the sacrifice of three thousand bulls by Rameses II. What "sacred times and festivals, etc.," are in mind, does not appear. If it is intended to intimate, with Kuenen, that the "adaptation" was merely an *adoption* from heathenism, and not by direction of God, here again is a direct issue with the whole record.

5. A changed view, difficult to ascertain definitely, is asserted concerning *prophecy*. "The higher critic has discovered facts regarding the origin and scope of prophecy as always arising in the needs, conceptions, and ideals of a given age." And so, as already seen, there is no prediction of the personal Christ, no "direct revealing of the God-man of the Fourth Gospel," but only the conception of an "ideal." We have called attention to Christ's own statement of the case. On the broader question, whether there was any actual and supernatural prediction, as distinguished

from "anticipation," we are left in doubt. We read indeed of "glimpses of the future through divine foreknowledge," but followed immediately by the explanation just mentioned, that they always arose in the conceptions of a given age. Once it is said that "prophecy was *something* far more than actual history foretold," but the next words are, "it was *in fact* an education for future history," and again, "the prophetic representations were part of a great educational system through which God caused Israel to pass, beginning with the exodus," and including "the exile and the reestablishment of the exiles." Do these ambiguous utterances mean anything more than a general providential training of Israel by a long experience, an "evolution" from a barbarous and polytheistic state, thus evoking at each "given age" anticipations and glimpses of the future according to the conceptions and ideals which that age was capable of forming? We cannot tell.

6. Once more it is affirmed, "The ideals of the future as presented in the Old Testament are not authoritative for us. . . . There can be no question of such pictures of an earthly Messiah and an earthly kingdom. . . . The temporary and dispensational character of these representations is recognized by the higher critics," etc. But Matthew Henry, for example, nearly two hundred years ago, was hardly to be called a higher critic; and in his notes on Isaiah (ii., lxvi.) one may read that the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah was to be "the setting up of the Christian church and the planting of the Christian religion in the world," and the expressions about journeying to Jerusalem "are figurative." There are those still living who remember how Moses Stuart, sixty years ago, used jocosely to allude to the notion of literally riding up to Jerusalem from all nations in the latter days on "mules and swift beasts," or dromedaries. The claim for the critics is very large.

But we must pause. In looking back over all these matters, it is natural to inquire, What help do the higher critics bring to the Christian? and also, In what plight do they put the Scriptures of the Old Testament? "The ordinary reader," who is told that to him and his fellows for at least eighteen hundred years "a very large part of it is a sealed book with reference to the original intent," now learns that its history at every stage is discredited; that "many critics deny the stories of the patriarchs" (and their existence), but the denial is "simply not proven"; that its prophecy is quite shrunken away from the interpretation by Christ and his apostles—if superhuman prediction is actually recognized; that its moral law is set aside, its pictured future is an "earthly" expectation; that "the splendor of worship and the priestly robes in the Roman Church may *all* be traced back to this code" (the latest code), and that "the Church of Rome derives its theory of the priesthood, finding its apex in the Pope, from the sacerdotal system of the Priests' Code; that it reflects an inferior system of ethics, and "hence" all manner of civil and social wrongs, such as "slavery" and wholesale massacres; that the Psalter, though better adapted to the needs of the church in every age, and "its practical interpretation not far to seek," has been made to furnish "justification for bloody work," indeed that "almost every ecclesiastical cruelty and chicane imaginable have found authority in the usages of a barbarous age, as truthfully recorded in the Old Testament"; but, happily for us, "the history of religion in Israel with reference to the order and succession of events"—and of course all the other matters included in the foregoing claims—"is authoritative only as determined by the labors and investigations of the higher critics." What a dangerous book, and what a happy rescue! And what a marvel that a multitude of the good and great, from Polycarp and Justin Martyr down to Adoniram Jud-

son and Gladstone, have escaped the evil influences and thought well of the book! In view of this unflinching acquiescence of the past, it must be a painful inquiry of the critics as to the future, When will the men of devout hearts and balanced intellects accept all these results when fully comprehended?

We would be glad to sum up briefly in detail the singular mass of devices by which these results are attained. But we will only say in a word, that it is done by a series of not only unlimited but limitless manipulations of the volume, which, in its amazing extent and absolute lack of external support, is without a parallel in the history of literature, and, on the other hand, with a disregard, equally unparalleled, of the cumulative mass of evidence by which the genuineness and credibility of the Old Testament are established.

Professor Curtiss has done his best to commend to the churches the processes and results of the higher critics. But it is an endeavor easier for those who do not recognize in the Old Testament any superhuman element, and who do not accord it any special human respect. It is the difficulty and embarrassment of his position that has caused on the one hand so many incautious assumptions and assertions, so many wide issues and side issues, and on the other so much of cautious and ambiguous reserve. But we may venture, in conclusion, to inquire whether either the strength of the argument or the authority of the writer entitles him to make this pronouncement: "The results are perfectly remorseless, and in the main seem to be unanswerable. The men who deny their cogency are those who are so under the power of confessionism that they cannot or will not take an unprejudiced view of facts."