

ARTICLE II.

A LAYMAN'S VIEW OF THE CRITICAL THEORY.

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II.

It is proverbial that the Occident cannot understand the Orient. Human nature is the same the world over; but viewpoint differs so widely that the same environment actually produces diametrically opposite results in persons of different races. It has even been claimed that a Chinaman has been known to hang himself in his neighbor's well to satisfy a grudge, because he thought that his spirit would thus be set free and he could then hound the offender to a speedy destruction. Whether any truth is to be looked for in this statement or not, is, in this connection, a matter of comparatively little importance; for, whatever the facts may be, the story illustrates a fundamental difference in the character of the Oriental and Occidental minds, and it does so admirably.

To all intents and purposes, the Jew is an oriental. He is a Semite and he has a Semite's peculiarities. His eastern proclivities persist even in a western environment, and it often requires a residence of several generations with a free occidental people to eradicate certain distinctive characteristics that cling to his personality as a mark of heredity. Among these is a curious conservatism which makes him devotedly faithful to various forms and ceremonies long after he has ceased to attach any real importance to them in his

daily life. He will observe his own Sabbath carefully until sundown, but he is not above securing a gentile partner to keep the business in active operation on that day. In some places the practical result has been a seven-day business week instead of a six-day one. But if the Jew really loved his Sabbath, he would not wish to have it broken even by a gentile. Its sacredness, therefore, must be external rather than internal, where such practices are in vogue; and conservatism, or possibly superstition, furnishes, in all probability, the dominant motive for his conduct.

The same characteristic is also shown in another way; for it is plainly back of the persistence with which Rabbis cling to the outward forms of Jewish worship even after they have surrendered themselves to a thoroughgoing rationalism. It matters little that their idea of God has undergone such a change that he is no longer a person and survives in their thought merely as a governing principle or ethical force; for the old forms are retained, outwardly at least, and they continue to be observed with a punctiliousness worthy of a deeper and a truer conviction. Religious ideas change with the lapse of years; but religious forms and formulas, especially among orientals, tend to persist without alteration down through the ages.

Conservatism is, in reality, a distinctively oriental trait. It is found in all parts of the East among all sorts and kinds of people. The civilization of sixty centuries, continuing almost unchanged in the Chinese Empire, bears witness to this fact, and the experience of Englishmen in India affords the strongest possible proof of its vitality. Man is proverbially a paradox, and in matters of religion and politics the most excitable races are often the most conservative. The Irish are an excitable race; but they are also so conservative

that they continue to speak the English of Shakespeare's day as they learned it. Their "brogue" is not wholly the product of the introduction of English words into Celtic mouths, although that was one of the factors that produced the Irish dialect, for it is now known that the language spoken by the men who conquered Ireland during Elizabeth's reign strongly resembled the English found at the present time in some parts of Erin. It is a tongue lying between what is now regarded as pure English and the broad "brogue" of the so-called "bog-trotter."

This conservatism, with all its peculiarities and apparent contradictions, is a force of vital importance in the history of men, and it is a force that cannot be neglected in religion, in politics, in education, in reform movements, or in any other department of human endeavor. To overlook it is to be blind to the truth; for it has played a leading part in many a world drama, and it is destined to continue for weal or for woe so long as time endures. It is ingrained in some natures, it is engrafted in others, and it shows itself now and then in the most unexpected ways and the most improbable places. The stability of human relationships depends upon its continuance as a force in national life; but it must be balanced by other forces, or progress becomes impossible.

The wonderful stability of the Chinese Empire was the direct product of this force, which manifested itself through the perpetuation of certain teachings almost universally attributed to Confucius, although most of them were merely edited by him and thus rendered easily accessible. These compiled poems, traditions, precepts, and admonitions ultimately became the Chinese Scriptures, and they were committed to memory as the fundamental and essential things in a boy's education. The Yi King or Book of Changes, the

Shih King or Book of Odes, the Shû King or Book of Traditions, and the Lî Ki or Book of Ceremonies, in particular, were thus rendered sacred; and they were handed down as such from generation to generation.

Confucius himself was born in troublous times and he died, 475 B.C., "in retirement, a neglected and disappointed man." His writings, however, were cherished by the faithful; and, when the emperor Che Hwang-ti, in 221 B.C., ordered all books except those on medicine, divination, and husbandry, to be burned, he was not faithfully obeyed, although it meant death to be caught with a copy, excepting the Yi King, of any of the "Classics" in one's possession. The next emperor, Kaou-te, continued the embargo; but his successor removed it and sought to restore the destroyed works. In this he was most fortunate; for copies reappeared from strange hiding places, and, although all discussion of the writings had been forbidden under pain of death, men were found who knew portions of them by heart.

The one conspicuous thing about Confucius is this. He made no effort to be original. His sole object was to restore the old writings to influence and power. He succeeded, and China was thus preserved from all internal change. The foreigner became, accordingly, an embodiment of evil, and he was unable to make any impression upon the people for many decades or even centuries. The hold of Confucius had to be broken before present conditions were even possible.

The Li Ki was already old when Confucius found and revised it, and through it he made etiquette supreme. The Chinese who have learned the "Classics" are said to be the most "cultured" people on earth. The "proper thing" is always known, and it is always observed. "Bad form" is therefore extremely rare, as those who have come in touch

with the official class can testify. But etiquette is not sincerity, and in this matter China has much to learn. Her business integrity often puts to the blush nations that are regarded as being more enlightened; but business dishonesty spells ostracism, and ostracism spells starvation. To such an extent is it a part of the Chinese religion to follow implicitly the teachings of "the Master," which he, however, did not originate but only restored to power and authority. He did not seek to change but to preserve.

That this type of mind is oriental rather than merely Chinese, must be clear to anyone who investigates the literature, and in particular the sacred literature, of other eastern peoples; for he will find the same characteristics always present. Every teaching of Siddhārtha Gautama, the Buddha or "Enlightened-one," every incident of his life,—nay, every myth concerning him, no matter how strange, received the most careful attention at the hands of his followers, and every word of it speedily came to be regarded as sacred. As such it has all been preserved, and no one among the millions of his disciples ever ventures to tamper in any way with the documentary evidence. The split of the third century, B.C., has widened into the so-called Northern Buddhists, with their corrupt Sanskrit versions, and the corresponding Southern Buddhists, with their books in Pali; excrescences of various kinds have been added to each, until the two are more or less antagonistic; but no changes in the texts of either are ever dreamed of, and wherever variant readings appear in any of the manuscripts they are liable to become subjects of violent controversy. It has always been so in all such matters among oriental peoples, and so it always will be while life shall last.

Not even the Koran can be cited as offering any excep-

tion, although the Koran is comparatively modern and its sources can be determined with a fair degree of accuracy. Not a word of it can be altered by a Mohammedan, and if any member of that religious body attempted such a thing he would probably pay the penalty by forfeiting his life. The text is regarded as sacred, and it is so treated by every "true believer." All others are "infidels," or *giaours*, and the daily prayer of the devout Mohammedan is for their speedy destruction. Islam is therefore fully as conservative as China is, or has been, and its Scriptures are quite as inviolate as the *Li Ki* itself ever was. The Koran, indeed, is regarded as divine, and every word of it is supposed to have come from Allah himself.

Turning now to the Parsees, who are the modern representatives of the biblical magi, a similar condition is found. The *Zend-Avesta* and the other books of their sacred Scriptures are preserved with the utmost care. Parts of the *Zend-Avesta* have been lost in the wars and vicissitudes of the past; but with certain exceptions of this kind it is still what it was at the start, and such it will remain. Changes have been made impossible, so far as it was in the power of men to accomplish a thing of that kind, and the foundations of the religion of Zoroaster, or Zarathushtra, as he is known to scholars, have been preserved with the utmost care and diligence. Some things have apparently been lost through carelessness; but it is probable that they were of minor importance, and they do not vitiate the main argument.

Just what preceded the work of Zarathushtra, we do not know. Somewhere in the past, long before the present era, a beginning was made; but it is shrouded in obscurity. Ahura-Mazda, the god of the Parsees, is but another form of the Vedic deity *Varuna*; but Ahriman, the spirit of evil,

is apparently an Iranian creation. The two form the basis of the peculiar dualism found among the ancient Persians, according to which there is or has been a never ending struggle between good and evil. A belief in the ultimate triumph of the good parallels in a general way the Christian idea of a millennium; but no historical connection has been established between the two. Ahura-Mazda is ultimately to conquer Ahriman and cast him into the abyss, where he will be forever powerless. The modern names are Ormazd and Angra Mainyu. They correspond to God and Satan.

When these Iranian fire-worshippers emerge from the dimness that surrounds their origin, their sacred writings have already taken on a definite fixed form, and exactly the same thing is true of the Vedas, which are the Scriptures of ancient India. Veda means "knowledge"; but the writings themselves contained many things that were already not understood or were actually misunderstood by the priests who used them. An illustration will make the point clear. One of the hymns of the Rig-Veda, sometimes classed as a philosophical composition, contains verses such as these, which are taken from Kægi's "Rigveda" (pp. 88 f.):—

Who gives us breath, who gives us strength, whose bidding
All creatures must obey, the bright gods even;
Whose shade is death, whose shadow life immortal:
What god shall we adore with our oblations?

Who made the heavens bright, the earth enduring,
Who fixed the firmament, the heaven of heavens;
Who measured out the air's extended spaces:
What god shall we adore with our oblations? X. 121, 2, 5.

Although some poet or Rishi (*Rsi*, seer) is here plainly trying to get behind the polytheism of his day in a hopeless quest for a monotheistic or possibly, a pantheistic basis for

his belief, the true character of the stanzas has been so completely lost sight of that the hymn is actually regarded as a song of praise to the god Who!

Not a word of the hymn has been changed for centuries. Every letter of it has been sacred. And yet its meaning has been forgotten. It survives as a sort of monument to what may perhaps be regarded as the scanty remains of a primitive monotheism, and it bears a silent but most effective testimony to the conservatism of the Hindu mind. But so does the entire Veda. It was formerly a crime to teach any part of the Ric (Rig-Veda) from a manuscript or a printed page, although it resembles our own Book of Psalms in its form of composition and is almost as long as the Iliad and Odyssey combined. It was transmitted orally, and the pupil had to learn portions of it daily from his Guru. To this day, in India, the *çrotriya* priests know every letter and every accent of every hymn by heart and so transmit it. The very word *çrotriya* means "(one who has) learned by hearing," and these men are the "doctors of the law," so to speak.

This is but half the story, however, as will presently appear. When the hymns were collected, they were already becoming obscure in places and somewhat uncertain in minor details, and the text was accordingly committed to writing in several different forms. It is a peculiarity of Sanskrit that the words of a line, in poetry, are written continuously, as if they were one. In this way, phonetic changes, which were constantly being produced between words, sometimes united them very closely; and, in the general process, letters also were apt to be altered in form and appearance. A practiced eye or ear would be likely to recognize two *a*'s in a single long *a*, where such a combination was made by joining two words together, or an initial *a*, where no letter at all

was written and the vowel was left to be implied by the final consonant of the preceding word; but mistakes were possible, and the phraseology of some of the hymns was dropping out of use. This condition was therefore met and met effectually.

The first manuscript to be prepared evidently contained the "Connected-text" or *Sanhitā-pāṭha*. The next would naturally supply the "Word-text" or *Pada-pāṭha*, in which each word is now found written by itself, in its true form. This would seem to have been sufficient; but it was not so regarded. A "Step-text" or *Krama-pāṭha* was added, in which the words were arranged in an order corresponding to the letters, *ab bc cd de*, etc., so that the end of each word was shown in combination and by itself. Then there was a "Woven-text" or *Jatā-pāṭha*, with the arrangement, *ab ba ab, bc cb bc, cd dc cd*, etc. In addition to this, another form appeared, called the "Lump-text" or *Ghana-pāṭha*, having the combinations, *ab ba abc cba abc, bc cb bcd dcb bc, bc cb bcd dcb bcd*, etc. At least two of these are entirely needless; but there were others besides, made for the purpose of rendering changes in the sacred text utterly impossible.

In spite of all the care thus exercised, it is evident that many of the hymns have not altogether escaped alteration since the time of their composition; for inaccuracies in arrangement and even in subject matter have been repeatedly pointed out. It is therefore certain, first, that at the date of compilation errors had already made their appearance, and, second, that they were embodied in the hymns in consequence of an inability to determine the exact truth. Fragments of partially forgotten hymns seem also to have been inserted where they appeared to be appropriate, and the evidence goes to show that no effort was spared not only to pre-

serve every particle of hymn material then extant but also to preserve it exactly as it had been handed down through the centuries. This was merely another bit of oriental conservatism; but it is deeply significant.

Other things have been handed down by tradition, until they were finally committed to writing, and care has been taken to keep them accurate; but nothing else has received such minute and such painstaking attention. It is now fairly clear that the Iliad and the Odyssey were so transmitted for a long time, and the Indian epics, the Mahā-bhārata and the Rāmāyana, are said to be recited even now in that remarkable country. Bards spend from three to six months in a village entertaining the people with the former, and they know it by heart, although it is approximately seven or eight times as long as the Iliad and Odyssey combined. Occidental scholars hardly know what memory means in this connection. They are not trained to do so. Among orientals, however, such things are merely a commonplace. It is therefore not safe to judge them by occidental standards.

It is a familiar fact that Christ accused the Jews of destroying the effectiveness of the Old Testament by means of their tradition (Matt. xv. 6, Mk. vii. 13); but it is not so well known that he referred to portions of the Talmud, which had then been in existence in definite form possibly about one hundred years, although a much greater age is claimed for it. It was well called "tradition"; for the Mishnah was the "Oral Law," and it was not allowed to be committed to writing. It came into being through the teachings of the *Tannaim* or "Doctors" in the time of the Maccabees apparently (B.C. 175-40); but it was not codified until approximately A.D. 190. It applied and adapted the "Written Law" or Pentateuch. To it was added the Gemara or "Commen-

tary," of which there are two recensions, the Palestinian and the Babylonian. Both belong to our era. The latter is the one usually included in the name Talmud.

Neither version of the Talmud, according to the evidence, was committed to writing before the year 500 or possibly 550 A. D., although the larger one, the Babylonian, now requires almost three thousand pages in folio volumes for its presentation in printed form. It was therefore preserved by tradition alone, until the strain upon the human memory had reached the breaking point. For approximately six hundred years, then, this growing and expanding medley of doctrinal opinion and general learning was transmitted by word of mouth, and whatever was done in the way of codification was done for the purpose of keeping the original free from error and from verbal changes. It is still the chief text book in rabbinical schools, and much of it is committed to memory along with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. The amount that Jewish boys can quote verbatim is little short of marvelous from our standpoint but not from theirs.

Their training is mostly along one line. The western youth is educated along many lines, and his verbal memory is, for the most part, almost entirely neglected. He has text books and note books without limit. Prospective Rabbis have one or two text books, and their note book is their brain. This peculiarity seems to be a common oriental one, and it should not be lost sight of. It constantly is lost sight of even by scholars, although it has apparently always been an oriental trait to commit everything to memory verbatim. The fact is significant. It explains many things, especially the constant inaccuracies in quotation to be found in all ancient documents, since exact verbal memories are rare and variations in minor

details are therefore inevitable where the text is not consulted and everything depends upon the recollection.

Why the meaning of this is not more fully recognized, is a puzzle. What could be more preposterous, for example, than the quiet assumption, on the part of modern scholars, that ancient ones,—nay, that fishermen in Galilee and kindred folk did their literary work in modern and approved German fashion? That this is implied, or taken for granted, must be clear from the theories constantly put forth by men who are regarded as authorities. Take the doctrines now taught concerning the sources (*Quellen*) of the four gospels and see what it involves. Does it fit into the known facts of oriental methods of work? Here, again, the occidental mind fails to comprehend the oriental one, and it is led into sad blunders in consequence.

All persons with a strong verbal memory, either natural or acquired, tend to repeat verbatim whatever statement has fixed itself in their minds by focusing their attention, and some of them find it difficult or even painful to do otherwise. Indeed, for some such persons a change of phraseology may at times be well nigh impossible, as actual experience has shown; for the phenomenon has been personally observed by the writer in the case of at least three different individuals. What, then, becomes of the assumption that the gospels had written sources or possibly a single written source?

What actually happened was most likely this. The more important sayings of Christ, together with the principal events of his life, began, at once, to be repeated by his disciples in their gatherings, and they immediately tended to take on a definite and stable linguistic form. A tradition was thus begun at the very start. Less important matters were not so well formulated, and they therefore differed more in the

phraseology used. When it became possible to do so, the stories were repeated among those not classed as members of the apostolic church; and in time a demand from other lands called for a written text. When this became imperative, the synoptic gospels were prepared, but they were written independently, each author drawing on the common traditional representations that had been formulated by the church. These were supplemented either from their own personal knowledge or from that of others whom they consulted. When John became familiar with what had been done, he wrote his gospel to round out the story, epitomizing, as far as seemed wise, what had already been said by the others. This, at least, is what the facts seem to indicate. Modern habits are anachronisms in this field, but they are constantly postulated by inference if not by intention.

It must now be clear that twentieth century methods of procedure, such as are in use among the scholars of the West, are no criterion whatever by which to test those employed in another era by scholars of the East, and that the first thing to be done is to get an oriental viewpoint. This is simply imperative, if any reliable results are to be obtained in the study of ancient documents, especially of such documents as those embodied in the Pentateuch. To assume that this work can be the outcome of the parasitical methods now in vogue in many quarters, is to be guilty of a most remarkable lack of historical, not to say literary, perspective. To do so ignores, in a manner that has long excited my own wonder, the plain characteristics of all oriental peoples, including even those of the modern Jews. Excitable and capricious they may be, and, in some things, unstable or fickle; but when it comes to the fundamentals of their national life they are as adamant. The same thing holds good of their attitude toward their sacred writings. The text

is fixed and inflexible. Whatever is done in the way of destroying it must be done by methods of interpretation that undermine its force. In this, talmudic methods still prevail as they have for centuries.

But what bearing do all these things have on the critical theory, which is the real object aimed at in this series of papers? A very important one; for all orientals, without exception, appear to preserve every particle of their religious writings with the most painstaking care and devotion. Were the Hebrews an exception to this rule? Were they less careful to preserve the exact form of the original documents? Do their descendants indicate in any way that they were? Do they not, on the contrary, show the same persistent conservatism with regard to their religious rites and especially with regard to the written "Word"?

Most orthodox Jews have aspirations for a son who knows the Talmud, which involves a knowledge of the Old Testament as its basis; for he imagines that the possession of such a son will insure him a place in heaven. Does that imply that their sacred writings are now lightly held? Does that imply that they ever were lightly held? Does it go to show that the "Law" was merely a patchwork, made up of selections from ancient documents plus the necessary foundation supplied by an accommodating redactor?

That there was a "Law" of some kind even in the days of the judges has been shown beyond question by Rupprecht, as has been made clear above, lvi. 639 ff. That it was also sacred is made plain by internal evidence found in the book of Joshua. That it involved other productions more ancient than itself is certain not only on general grounds but also on its own authority; but that it was made up in any such way as the critical theory postulates, no man who knows the pecu-

liarities of the oriental mind can possibly believe. Imagine a redactor, and a "pious" one at that, poring over copies of the ancient law, sacred and secular, compiling a mixture of the two to suit his own ideas of the fitness of things, mixing in information brought from Babylon which he had acquired during the captivity, then, with a prescience truly divine, adding exactly the right amount of antique words and elements to make the finished product fit with precision into the discoveries of an age some twenty-four centuries later, while patching together, incidentally, single sentences from two different contradictory sources and doing it so neatly as to make a united whole that explains the two different statements and removes the contradiction, and, finally, foisting the completed work upon his own day and generation as the word of God! This does not overdo the situation. It barely does it justice, if, indeed, it is not too mild.

What would happen to a man who tried that now with the Jewish Scriptures? What would have been likely to happen to a man who tried it in the early days of the return from the captivity? Furthermore, who was there on the spot that either could or would do such a thing? And what was his object? Was it to help his countrymen to a better life? Do men who forge literary documents usually show any great degree of anxiety for the morals of other men of their time? And if any such do, what shall be said of their own character?

Is a hypocrite a lovely creature to contemplate? But what else could a person be who wittingly did a thing like that involved in the critical theory and then, in order to give his forgery more weight, palmed it off as the work of the great law-giver? What would he himself gain thereby? And if a number of men were associated in such a conspiracy, would that make it any more respectable? Would it make the secret any

more secure? If the thing was really done, how did they manage to conceal it so effectually? Is it conceivable that a redaction of that kind could take place in such a connection? Was the oriental mind capable of it, with its natural lack of initiative and its superstitious conservatism? And if any such performance was possible, could it also be possible that its accomplishment would escape all notice until our day?

It is true that ancient documents were sometimes rewritten. The *Hitopadeṣa* (*Hita-upadeṣa*) or "Salutary-instruction" of the Hindus is in part a modern version of the *Pañca-tantra* or "Five-threads" of an earlier day; but the fact is freely admitted. In like manner, the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* or "Story-stream-ocean" is avowedly based on the *Bṛhat-kathā* or "Great-story" of a more ancient time. It is well named; for, although at the present day it is less than a fourth as long as the *Mahā-bhārata*, it contains a tale expressly stating that the other six stories, with which it originally formed a group of seven, were destroyed by their compiler in a fit of despair. In all this there is small comfort for the critical school of Pentateuchal investigation, however much they may desire to make use of it.

The *Mānava-dharma-śāstra* or "Mānavan-law-book," might seem, however, to lend them some aid; for it appears to be a compendium based on earlier books but differing from them, although it does not profess to have originated in any such way. It has been regarded as merely a non-sectarian version of the ceremonial law, compiled, for purposes of instruction, from certain *Sūtras* or "Rules" attached to the Vedic literature. In other words, it has been assumed that this text was a school-book prepared for general use among all Aryans. But even then it must have been in a measure an independent work rather than a mixture of di-

verse elements such as the critical theory would require; for it would have to be a sort of summary of the ceremonial law without the minute variations of the different schools or sects.

Among some orientals, specialization tends to run mad. It is often one of the extremely trying things, to the versatile occidental resident, that individual servants perform so few tasks, in the oriental country to which he may chance to have been assigned, and he is apt to be annoyed at finding that a complete retinue is needed in the management of a household. The Hindus carried this specialization even into their religion; but this was a necessity, in a way, because no one man could possibly memorize all that was involved in the various "schools" of Vedic philosophy. The Mānavans had a "school," and they probably had Sūtras or "Rules"; but no trace of them has been found as yet. It is supposed, however, that these served as a basis for the present law-book, the Mānava-dharma-çāstra, whose title may mean the "Law-book-of-Manu" as well as that "of the Mānavans." As Manu was the greatest of their ancient sages, there may seem to be some sort of a parallelism between this book and the Pentateuch; but at best this is mere conjecture.

It is entirely within the bounds of possibility that a sūtra was lost in some fashion and that an endeavor to supply the lack thus occasioned resulted in the present çāstra. But the compilers may have intentionally confined themselves to well established practices on which all were agreed, and they may have purposely excluded minutiae, such as the sects were apt to indulge in, though preserving whatever seemed to them to be at all vital. The change of name from sūtra to çāstra would then meet every possible objection on the score that the book was an innovation. The real object seems to have been the

preparation of a convenient compendium, in which the essentials of the ceremonial law could be found; and, when this is once recognized, the parallelism ceases. The critics, therefore, can find little consolation in the premises.

Conservatism was not affected in the process; for the things that were old and avowedly sacred were retained, while those that were merely excrescences of later and gradual growth were rejected. The process did not differ greatly from what might result if an effort were made to lead a modern denomination back to the New Testament by excluding its peculiar and non-essential isms.

Scholars are often anything but practical. They rarely look at matters from the practical side. No better evidence of this need be asked for than that found in the rendering of 2 Kings vi. 6, which has reference to Elisha and the axe-head. What the Hebrew actually means is this: "And he sheared a pole and caused it to go in thither, and made the iron to flow." If the original English translators had been farmers, they probably would have understood this; but they were not farmers, and, being scholars, the translators have not yet understood it, although the very next verse suggests the true meaning. It reads: "And he said, Take it up to thee. So he put out his hand, and took it" (R.V.). Why did not Elisha take it, if the ordinary interpretation is correct?

The truth is that he cut a sapling, stripped it of its branches, thrust it into the muddy water, found the axehead, worked it along the bottom until he was able to get it on the pole, and then brought it to the surface where the other man could reach it from the bank. The whole trouble has been that no one has looked beyond the outward appearance of things, which is exactly what is the main difficulty with

many advocates of the critical theory. They are caught by an external plausibility that is fallacious.

It was the prophet's practical common-sense and wonderful patience that appealed to the narrator, not a wholly unnecessary and improbable miracle; for God never makes use of any such thing as that. It is not in keeping with his character. There is always a clear reason for a genuine miracle; but one may search in vain for a valid excuse in this instance. A similar miracle is involved in the critical theory; for this theory runs counter to Hebrew characteristics, to human experience, to tradition, to probability, to oriental conservatism, to Jewish superstition, to religion, to testimony ancient and modern, and to the nature of the document itself. What possible justification can it have?

The testimony of the Samaritan Pentateuch must also be added to this indictment; for it now exists in a manuscript that is believed to be almost as old as the Christian era, and, although its original must go back to a much earlier date, presumably about the time of the rupture between the Jews and the Samaritans, the present manuscript differs very little from the Massoretic text. The Samaritans themselves claim that the original was made twelve years after the crossing of the Jordan; but that may be regarded as not proved. The language is practically identical with the Hebrew; but the alphabet used is said to be much older. The Samaritan worship dates back to 432 B.C., and in its details it is essentially the old Jewish one as it appears in the Pentateuch. It originated in the refusal of certain of the priests to obey Nehemiah's decree and divorce their foreign wives. One of them established the faith at Nâblus at the foot of Mt. Gerizim, and it has continued without interruption until the present time, as this Quarterly has shown, lx. 601 ff.

This means that since about the year 432 B.C. the Samaritan Pentateuch has existed in its present shape. It was therefore the "Law" at that date. But in that case there was no adequate opportunity for the postulated labors of the redactor or the redactors, as will shortly appear. Now, during all the centuries since 432 B.C., no comparison of texts has been possible, because the mutual hostility of the Jews and the Samaritans has effectually prevented it. And yet the two agree in all their essential points except certain details covering the rival claims of the two sects. The Samaritan text was highly respected by some of the early church fathers, as shown by their quotations from it, and this fact is also significant, as has been indicated, *l.c.*, 618.

As is well known, less than one hundred years intervened between the proclamation of Cyrus, which permitted the Jews to return, and the rupture between them and the Samaritans. It was a period of struggle, hardship, and unrest. Early in Ezra (iii. 2), the "law of Moses the man of God" is mentioned, and Ezra himself is called "a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord, the God of Israel, had given" (vii. 6, R.V.). In Nehemiah, the same thing appears, and a whole chapter (viii.) is given to the reception accorded by the people to "the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel" (1, R.V.). As this event is now placed at about 444 B.C., it must have occurred not more than ninety-four years after the proclamation of Cyrus. How, then, was it possible to produce a literary forgery in such troublous times, give it the name of Moses, envelop it in the sanctity that attends a sacred document of great age, and completely deceive not only the Jews themselves but also their spying Samaritan neighbors?

The latter believed that the Pentateuch was the word of

God, and it is clear that about twelve years after the above date they had it in essentially its present shape. How did that happen? Was it a mere accident? And what became of those other documents which the redactor was privileged to use? Did he destroy them? Was there but one copy, the removal of which would cover up his tracks? How did he manage to do the thing and get away with the spoil? Was he the only one who knew? And if there were others, what became of them?

The ancients had a habit of remembering things, and they did with ease what few moderns can do; for they were able to retain what they had heard, and repeat it in the same verbal form, a fact which has a bearing on certain points in Homer, since the bards of those days had that kind of a memory and, wherever the same thought was repeated, naturally tended to retain unchanged any line once formulated. That is all that many a so-called interpolation really amounts to in the Iliad and the Odyssey; for it is simply a normal and ordinary repetition due to the poet's verbal memory. He could not help reproducing the line, unless he consciously tried to avoid it.

But the Jews are proverbially keen at this sort of thing even now, and they must have been still more so in those days. How, then, with memories of that kind all about them, did the redactors manage the thing? Had every priest or Levite who knew enough to recognize what changes had been made, become a party to the fraud? And if not, what had happened to them? Had they ceased to exist during the captivity? And where were the "documents," postulated by the critics, during all that time? Were they stored in Jerusalem? Did the Jews have none in Babylonia? And was there no one who knew them, as the Rabbis now know the Pentateuch, which they

actually commit to memory? Do modern Jews stop cherishing their sacred writings in the midst of persecution or distress? Would they be human if they did so? Did they do so during the captivity? What are the probabilities in the case?

Again, what was the "law" that was found in the days of Josiah? Was it one of the "documents"? Was it Deuteronomy? It is spoken of as the "book of the covenant" (2 Kings xxiii. 2), and the natural conclusion is that it was the Pentateuch. The assumption that it was Deuteronomy is based on the other assumption that the Pentateuch is late. Is such a position sound, or is it merely an attempt to bolster up a pretentious but untenable theory, which is fast becoming desperate?

In the preceding paper, the variations in astronomical beliefs were outlined, and it was shown that Pythagoras privately taught his disciples what was essentially the true system. About seven hundred years later Ptolemy taught a wrong system; but it was accepted for about fourteen hundred years, or until Copernicus settled the whole matter. By a curious parallelism, tradition taught the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, Wellhausen and others taught that it was a forgery, a doctrine accepted without due consideration by many, and now Wiener is showing the utter inadequacy of the whole critical theory. The effort to ignore him will fail and fail miserably.

It seemed for a time as though the critics would destroy the fourth gospel; but they failed to do so, and it stands today as strongly entrenched as ever, although many desire to destroy it to save their own pet theories, as has been shown above, liii. 1 ff. Such men reserve the right to change their opinions, and they are sometimes so naïve as to say that they

wish their latest opinion to be taken as the truth, as has been previously mentioned, lii. 67. This in itself is quite sufficient to show how reliable they are as guides and just what should be done with their opinions.

In this connection, a curious thing may be mentioned. A remarkable revival of interest in Bible study has recently made its appearance, and the critical school actually claim that the credit belongs to them, as Dr. William M. McPheeters has already ably shown in these pages, lxxv. 679 ff. They seem to be incapable of realizing the truth. The interest really is due to them, but not in the way that they imagine. It is due to them in this way: men are turning from their teachings in disgust and going back to the Bible, because they are coming to realize that it and it alone contains the help which they need. They have not all so formulated it, but they all show, in some way or other, that this is their true feeling, although some of them carefully avoid the whole subject of criticism. Thinkers everywhere are beginning to see this for themselves, as a noteworthy article in the current "Century" (Nov. 1912) plainly shows. It is entitled, "The Hungry Sheep." In it Professor William L. Phelps of Yale tells of the experience of a United States senator with three different ministers in various sections of the country. The people are hungry for the gospel, and the ministers trained by the critical school have "nothing to offer them but wind." What wonder is it, if they want the Bible and call for classes in which they can study it for themselves?

In the light of what has now been said, what place has the redactor of the critics in biblical economy? Does he justify himself? Is he a natural factor in the production of the Pentateuch or of any other part of the Bible for that matter? Has any sacred writing on earth been put into its present

shape in any such way? Have not all of them, on the contrary, been the result, without exception, of an earnest desire, on the part of faithful disciples, to preserve, in their exact form, every word of some religious teacher, or teachers, and to hand down unchanged all that has been put into writing concerning him and his practices, or concerning them and theirs?

The additions credited to the *Li Ki* when it was re-edited under the Han dynasty were evidently of that nature, as the present form of the book plainly indicates, and the same thing will be found to hold good everywhere, even including the absurd teachings of the modern Buddhists. The *Rig-Veda* shows the greatest care, with its multiple texts and needless repetitions; but the spirit is always the same, and conservatism is its chief characteristic. The Vedic ritual was thus handed down, and the *Brāhmanas* portray the ancient rites exactly as they were observed. Where, then, does the presuming and sanctimonious redactor come in? And what opportunity is there for his sacrilegious hands to do their work? How could he possibly manage to mutilate and yet patch into the semblance of a unit the sacred writings of a great, an excitable, a thoroughly conservative, and a most intelligent people? Did he do it?

The whole history of mankind goes to show that the only natural proceeding, for those who had the sacred documents of the Hebrews in charge, was this. First, to preserve with care every scrap of them, in the proper order, in the original form, without addition, without diminution, and without alteration; and, second, to transmit them in this condition to posterity. That was the task; but mistakes could not be avoided altogether, so long as men did the work, and errors did creep in. Notes, intended to keep the meaning clear,

were placed on the margin in some instances, and these ultimately became parts of the text in the well-known fashion. No escape from accidental interpolations and other mistakes such as these, in any human document handed down by manuscripts through many centuries, is possible; but any scribe who was responsible for a thing of that kind in the Pentateuch was merely the victim of circumstances, inasmuch as such errors were never intentional but always due to some fault of the eye, or to some misunderstanding, or to a hyper-conscientious effort to preserve every letter intact. Such a scribe was as far removed from a redactor, in the critical sense, as the Great Bear is from the Southern Cross.

A few differences of some importance in the Massoretic and Samaritan texts must be accounted for; but they are evidently due to a dispute concerning the true and original place for certain acts of worship, or else to some error in reading and copying the original. Interpolation may also be responsible in an instance or two, where the conflicting claims of Gerizim and Jerusalem come to the surface; but, as a rule, the actual differences found in the two texts involve but a letter or two, about which there might be some honest variation of opinion. If a change was made, it was based on the supposition that an error had crept into the text, precisely as it is at the present time.

Errors of some kind, then, there must be in the Pentateuch; but they should be postulated with the utmost care, since they were never intentional alterations such as a redactor would be guilty of. The changes made by a redactor are positive and conscious and intentional, and he so modifies original documents as to produce a result corresponding to his own personal views. This result may even resemble some of our own parasitic literature, which only the restraints of

a modern copyright law seem to prevent from assuming, in some instances, a shape almost exactly parallel to that claimed for the Pentateuch by the critical theory. Men occasionally appear to judge others by their own yardstick. What have the critics done here? The real scribes subordinated their own ideas to the sacredness of the text. They never tried to make it over.

This does not mean that they have never blundered. They have done so. They would hardly have been human if they had not. They have, at times, inserted material where it did not really belong, as was done in some of the hymns of the Rig-Veda; but, without exception in all probability, this has been the result of an honest though possibly a mistaken effort to preserve all the sacred writings with each several part in the place where it seemed to belong. The mistake was due to some imperfect understanding of the facts, or possibly to some natural prejudice, a thing which is a universal human weakness. It was not an intentional alteration of the original. Some fault in judgment, then, was the source of the change, where any was made; and this, with the honest desire to preserve every word of the sacred text intact, forms the key to the present condition of the Pentateuch, as the next paper will try to show.