

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO A NEW THEORY OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE PENTATEUCH (IV.)<sup>1</sup>

HAROLD M. WIENER, M.A., LL.B., OF LINCOLN'S INN  
BARRISTER-AT-LAW

### IX

MORE than once reference has been made in these articles to longer commentary as a factor in the formation of our present Pentateuch. It is now proposed to examine this in rather more detail. In principle there is no distinction between longer commentary and the writing of short, isolated glosses. Both are equally the result of editorial effort, — in many cases doubtless by the same persons. It is merely as a matter of convenience that this subject is treated separately. In practice there is an appreciable difference between filling out or explaining a word or a sentence and inserting a note containing new information; and though these two branches of editorial activity run into each other, and no scientific division is feasible, yet it is conducive to clearness to put together a certain amount of information relating to longer or more systematized efforts in a separate section.

That men should have written notes on the Bible in old times is in itself not at all strange or improbable. It would be surprising if they had failed to do so. There is, therefore, no *a priori* objection to the hypothesis that our Pentateuchs contain matter of this character. But Biblical studies have been victimized by so many rash and improbable theories during the last 170 years that it is desirable to insist on rigorous proof that such commenting is an indubitable fact. There must always be a number of border-line cases on which different minds may take divergent views, but it is necessary to show by evidence that there is matter in the Pentateuch which is indubitably due to this cause.

<sup>1</sup> The previous articles of this series appeared in the BS for Jan. and April, 1918, and April, 1919.

We may begin by pointing out that the LXX proves the presence of late additions in the MT. An instance may be taken which has already been noticed elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Driver (*ad loc.*) notes that Gen xxi 15 "clearly implies that Ishmael was being *carried* by his mother, although according to xvi 16, xxi 5, 8, he must have been at least 15 years old." When we consult the larger Cambridge Septuagint, however, we see that chronological notes, made after the separation of the original Hebrew used by the Greek translators, are responsible for the difficulty. In xvi 3, dp omit the words "after ten years of Abram's dwelling in the land of Canaan and." The originality of their text is proved by the grammatical solecism imported into the Greek text by this phrase, for the verse begins with the words "And Sarah *having taken*," and this participle could not be followed by "*and gave*." The same MSS omit the whole of xvi 16. In xvii 25, c,\* makes Ishmael *three*, not thirteen, years old. This, then, is a difficulty which owes its creation to the erroneous chronological theory of a late commentator. The original narrative contained nothing that conflicted with the palpable fact that Ishmael was a little child at the time of the flight.

A critical examination of Nu viii yields evidence that the original text of the LXX has undergone expansion.<sup>2</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> PS, p. 81; ISBE, p. 2302.

<sup>2</sup> The word *ἀπόδομα* never occurs elsewhere in the Greek OT, but we have it five times in this chapter (ver. 11, 13, 16, 19, 21). In the first of these it is omitted by bw Eth. The original LXX, therefore, had "And Aaron shall separate the Levites before the Lord from the children of Israel that they may be to do the service of the Lord" (or something less clumsy). Did the word "separate" (*ἀφοριεῖ*) represent "wave"? It may have done so, but more probably it did not. The Greek word is used as a rendering of several Hebrew verbs, and may have represented something less impossible than "wave." Next we find that in ver. 13, 15, and 21 the Greek uses the verb *ἀποδομι* where the Hebrew has "wave"; but often as the latter occurs in the Pentateuch there is no parallel to this. Then these two suspicious words are strangely used together in ver. 16 and 19 to express the giving of the Levites. Elsewhere (Nu xviii 6 and iii 9) the uncompounded

seems clear that a large part of this chapter consists of editorial additions. Probably its earliest form lacked 13b and 15b-22.

It should be observed that no documentary theory can explain these facts. It cannot be supposed, that, after the Hebrew original of the LXX had broken off from the Jerusalem text, a fresh compilation was made, incorporating excerpts from a parallel narrative.

Evidence of another kind is furnished by such a passage as Nu xxi 26 ff. We have here a quotation from a poem which relates to *an entirely different episode* from the subject-matter of the narrative. The mention of Sihon recalled this to a commentator's mind, and he added a note. Here, again, any documentary theory is impossible.

Archæological notes which cannot be from the same hand as their context provide further testimony. Just because they are notes, they cannot be attributed to a parallel source. A series of these occur in the early chapters of Deuteronomy. Take, for instance, ii 10-12: "The Emim dwelt therein aforetime, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim: these also are accounted Rephaim, as the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim. The Horites also dwelt in Seir aforetime, but the children of Esau succeeded them; and they destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the LORD gave unto them." No thoughtful and unprejudiced reader could suppose this to be by the same hand as the context.<sup>1</sup> The informing

verb and substantive are used. These facts show that much of ver. 13-22 is not original in the Greek. If we turn to the substance we find that it is impossible. The Levites simply could not have been waved by Aaron or Moses. Again, the great bulk of the matter consists of pointless repetitions, some of which cannot be credited to the author. For example, the repeated "given, given" (RV, "wholly given") occurs in iii 9, viii 16, and the single "given" in viii 19, xviii 6.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the emphatic remarks of Bertholet *ad loc.*: "10-12 bringen antiquarische Notizen über Edoms und Moabs frühere Bewohner, wobei es mit HÄnden zu greifen ist dass sie später eingefügt sind."

statement as to the Moabite name and the remark about the Israelite conquest are entirely out of harmony with the circumstances of the speech. This commentator continues in ver. 20-23, which are characterized by similar marks referring to his earlier note in the words "that *also* is accounted," etc.<sup>1</sup> Here, be it noted, we clearly have *systematic* commentary. Similarly with Dt iii 9, 11, 13b.<sup>2</sup>

Now before it can legitimately be assumed that any particular passage is commentary, one condition must be satisfied. It must appear that it is of such a character as might reasonably have been added by a commentator having regard to the known habits of commentators in general and the psychology of Jewish commentators in particular. There may, of course, be passages of which it is impossible to feel any certainty as to whether they are due to a commentator or an original author, for the author might sometimes give information of a kind which a commentator would be likely to supply if necessary. Therefore not every passage which answers this test is necessarily commentary; but no passage can be commentary which does not answer this test. And as a matter of fact it is frequently the case that passages which appear to me to be commentary were unknown to the LXX or else are regarded by the documentary theorists as due to a late stratum of one of their sources. As a rule, then, we may say, that, to be regarded as commentary, a passage must satisfy the test given; and, in addition, there should be some other indication that it is not due to the original author. Such evidence may be supplied by the testimony of textual witnesses or by material or stylistic indications. A good example of this is provided by chronological notices. It is obvious that such might be due to an original author. On the other hand, we are all familiar with schemes printed in margins and elsewhere which are due to editors. Whether, therefore, a particular chronological notice comes from the hand of an author or a commentator is a ques-

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Bertholet *ad loc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

tion of fact to be decided after a consideration of all the relevant data.

We often find extensive commentary of critical importance. Genesis xxv 1-4 is certainly not original in its present position. It appears to be the addition of a commentator, who here inserted information about tribes supposed to be descended from Abraham. It is probable that much of the difficulty caused by the seeming alternation between individual and tribal conceptions of characters in Genesis should be attributed to commentary. It will be remarked that a position at the end of Abraham's life is most natural for a note of this kind. Carpenter regards these verses as secondary in relation to his J. Of the section on the generations of Ishmael, only xxv 18 appears to contain matter due to an early author; but I agree with Skinner in thinking it impossible to determine its original setting. The preceding matter (ver. 12-17) seems to me

<sup>1</sup>The MSS bw omit xxv 12-18. On investigation I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that no critical importance can be assigned to this. The Cambridge editors quote the readings of *b*, another member of the same group, for this section; and its variants show a type of text which does not encourage the view that the passage has been inserted, either in *b* or in its archetype, from a later Greek translation than the original LXX. In ver. 13 it displaces "and Massam" (Mibsam) (after Ishmael 2°) in a way that shows this phrase to have been a late insertion in one of its ancestors; and *dp f* omit the "and," thereby testifying to the fact that the phrase is not original. Again, in 16 it joins Arm Eth (*vid.*), and to some extent *x*, in presenting "villages" and "encampments" in a different order from the other Septuagintal authorities. But Eth gives an early type of text. Consequently we cannot regard this as late. It would seem, therefore, that we cannot infer, from the omission of *bw*, that this section was unknown to the archetype of the group. In one other passage in Genesis the Cambridge editors claim that *b* and *w* agree in a long omission, viz. *x* 2-32 (their nations); but, according to Holmes, *b* omits the whole of 32, skipping from the words "after the flood" at the end of ver. 1 to the same words at the end of 32 through homoeography. The same source of error (the recurring "these are the generations of") would explain *b*'s omission of xxv 12-18. Certainly Gen *x* contains some of the earliest material

to be probably commentary.<sup>1</sup> A similar remark applies to the information about the generations of Esau in xxxvi.

The list of the sons of Jacob in xxxv 22-26 is obviously due to a commentator; for Benjamin was not born in Padan-aram, and this discrepancy excludes the hypothesis of composition by the author of the narrative. Genesis xli 8-27 is in like case. It is true that the textual witnesses relieve some of the difficulties. Thus "children of Israel" in ver. 8 is omitted by K 109 and o, but the chief perplexities remain. For example, Benjamin, who is a little lad in xli 20, could not at this time have been the father of a number of sons (xli 21). As Driver remarks, "The number 70 (ver. 27) was traditional (Dt x 22); and the present list, it seems, represents an attempt, or combination of attempts . . . to fill it out with names" (Genesis, p. 365). Exodus i 5 speaks of 70 souls, and so does in the Pentateuch; and when we find it lacking in one or more Greek MSS, we cannot argue that it was unknown to the translators. Either this is a case of omission through homoeography or else b and w are to be regarded as copies (or transcripts of a copy) made with the deliberate intention of leaving out certain passages that were not required for the reader's purpose. That the omissions of w cannot always possess critical importance, but are sometimes traceable to defects or accidents in transmission, may be seen from so clear an instance as Ruth iii 16-iv 12, which is wanting in this MS, but obviously constitutes an integral part of the book. Two other long sections are lacking in its Genesis: xxv 1-5 and xxxvi 9-43. Of these the latter is the more serious, for its comrade b, while presenting the section, also writes xxxvii 1 immediately after xxxvi 8. This seems to show that the intervening matter was entirely lacking in one of its ancestors. The form of b's text in xxxvi 9 ff. throws little light on the subject. It is conspicuous chiefly for a number of intra-Greek errors in which b stands alone. The criteria here are inadequate for a decision. It should, however, be noted that in ver. 8b w reads "this (is) Esau, the father of Edom," which looks like a deliberate accommodation to 43b. On the whole, it would be unsafe to draw any critical conclusions from the omissions of w. The verses it omits in xxxvi were of course known to the Chronicler (1 Ch 1); but, as the Egyptian Hebrew, which was the ancestor of the LXX, may have separated from the Palestinian Hebrew long before Chronicles was composed, his testimony is not decisive.

Deuteronomy. As usual, the commentator has misunderstood, for this is not a list of *souls* at all. The women are almost completely omitted. But, in fact, the expression "seventy" is not arithmetical. It is a token number,<sup>1</sup> and the Deuteronomy passage merely means "with a handful." Fortunately, even in the old days Biblical editors usually misunderstood their texts, and their mistakes give us clues which often enable us to separate their work. The passage is to be regarded as commentary, pure and simple, based on a misreading of the "seventy souls" and inserted at the appropriate point.

Exodus vi 13-30 is another case. We have several indications. The resumption of the earlier narrative (10-12 by 28-30) is as if the commentator said, "Now we will go on at the point where we broke off."<sup>2</sup> The impossible chronology is another sign of an editor. The passage rests on a misunderstanding of the fourth generation of Gen xv, which, of course, makes no reasonable sense unless dated from the beginning of the oppression.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, the method of starting a full chronology, running down to the point where the *dramatis personæ* appear, and then breaking off, evidences the commentator.

A more difficult case is presented by Gen v. As we have seen (BS, April, 1918, pp. 258 f.), there is reason to believe that an earlier chronology which did not recognize the flood has been differently adapted in various texts to fit in with that event. Perhaps, therefore, some elements of the chapter are due to a commentator. Where all must be guesswork we must content ourselves with pointing out that while the theory of a separate parallel document which did not recognize the flood is impossible, there is no improbability in the hypothesis that the phenomena of the chapter are due to causes similar to those which have given us the itinerary of Nu xxxiii (see BS, April, 1919, pp.

<sup>1</sup> BS, Oct. 1917, p. 600.

<sup>2</sup> For parallels, see BS, July, 1919, p. 360. A somewhat similar instance appears in Gen ii, where ver. 15 resumes 8 after the insertion of 10-14, presumably by a commentator. See also *infra*, p. 319.

<sup>3</sup> BS, July, 1916, pp. 476 ff.

193-204), supplemented by information of a kind that a commentator might contribute.<sup>1</sup>

The Samaritan Pentateuch evidences a form of editorial activity which may, in some passages, go back to the archetype, and so have affected all our copies. I mean the more extensive filling out from parallels. We have already seen that in the case of the supplements from Deuteronomy there is one instance in which the MT has been affected (BS, Jan. 1918, pp. 90 f.). But the Samaritans carried the principle much further. Thus in Gen xxx 36 they add a passage from xxxi 11-13 (with trifling variations). In xlii 16 they insert the words, "And they said, The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, he would die" (from xliiv 22). In the narrative of the plagues these fillings-out are very numerous.

It is impossible to say how far this process may have been carried in the archetype. There are passages where it may be suspected that the original text has been expanded through this cause, but there can be no certainty

<sup>1</sup>The chronology of Gen xi shows some features which differentiate it from Gen v:—

(a) Terah's age (70) at the birth of Abram, Nahor, and Haran (ver. 26) is a token number. Further, unless these three were triplets, which will hardly be seriously maintained, the number in its original context did not denote Terah's age at the birth of the children. It suggests the possibility of a much earlier stage in the history of the text in which but one number was given for each patriarch, instead of two, as at present.

(b) The ages of the patriarchs in the MT at the times of the birth of their eldest sons are noticeably moderate: Arpachshad, 35; Shelah, 30; Eber, 34; Peleg, 30; Reu, 32; Serug, 30; Nahor, 29.

(c) Except for Nahor, the residual numbers in each instance consist of two digits only, e.g. 403, 430, which may possibly point to late expansion by the processes we have observed operating on the numbers of the Israelites (EPC, pp. 155-169; BS, April, 1919, pp. 205-209).

(d) The Samaritan shows signs of further editing. For the Massoretic  $\eta$  in ver. 14 it substitutes  $\eta\eta$ , and it regularly inserts a third clause, giving the summation of the years of the patriarch's life. Its numbers are also different. It appears to represent the latest stage of editing in this genealogy.



where evidence is lacking. In Gen xlvi, however, we find an example where textual variations lead me to believe that this factor has come into play, though to some extent at least the trouble is post-archetypal. Verse 3 repeats xli 33 f. and may well be due to this cause. Similarly both the MT and the LXX appear to contain insertions based on ver. 11, though in different positions. To make this clear I set out first what I hold to have been approximately the original text of 5 f.: "And Pharaoh said to Joseph, Let them dwell in the land of Goshen:<sup>1</sup> and if thou knowest any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle." An editor noticed the wording of ver. 11, "And Joseph placed his father and his brethren and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, *as Pharaoh had commanded.*" He looked back to see if this command was stated to have been given word for word by Pharaoh. Finding this was not so, he proceeded to insert it with the necessary supporting notice of the arrival of Jacob and his sons. This was taken into the text with more or less modification in different ways, of which MT and B give different examples, thus:—

## MT, 5b, 6a

Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: the land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell.

## B

[After the words "rulers over my cattle:"] And Jacob and his sons came into Egypt to Joseph. And Pharaoh the king of Egypt heard. And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: lo, the land of Egypt is before thee: in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to dwell.

<sup>1</sup>K 104 omits the words "Let them dwell in the land of Goshen." This may have come about as a result of the insertion of the additional matter.

It may be said generally that the more I read the Pentateuch, the more the impression grows upon me that a number of unevennesses are probably due to editorial efforts of this kind rather than to any interweaving of parallel narratives. At the same time our materials are usually quite insufficient to give us any chance of being able to reverse the process. In view of the insignificance of the effect of all these matters on the meaning of the narrative, this is not of much consequence.

A slightly different method of editing, based on the same circle of ideas, seems to occur in Nu xiii 21b: "And they spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, to the entering in [or Libo; see W. M. Christie, *ISBE*, s. v. "Hamath"] of Hamath." They had been sent to spy out the land of Canaan (xiii 17a). Now, according to xxxiv, "Your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin" (3), and the north border is to be marked out unto the entering in of Hamath (8). It would seem, therefore, that in this verse we have a note giving the inference of an editor who understood the command to spy out the land as referring to the whole land in its ideal limits, and, as was usual with the scholars of his age, regarded it as certain that every divine command had been exhaustively carried out to the very letter by the persons concerned.

x

A survey of the chief chronological difficulties of the patriarchal period throws considerable light on the history of the transmission of the Pentateuch. Glossing, systematic commentary, a fragmentary and disordered library, assimilation of resulting unevennesses of the text, are together responsible for a curious maze of perplexities. The chronological system of the MT must answer for much; but when the early witnesses are examined it appears that that scheme is itself not all of the same origin. For some portions we have no variant, others are seen to be post-Septuagintal, for a third group of passages we find dif-

ferences of reading which seem to show that divergent views of the chronology were held a good deal later.<sup>1</sup>

A comparison of the texts of Jacob's speech in Gen xlvii 9, given by the Massoretes and Philo respectively, affords a simple example of glossing which has affected the chronology:—

MT

The days of the years of my sojournings are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojournings.

- Philo

The days of the years of my life which I sojourn have been few and evil: they have not attained unto the days of my fathers which they sojourned.

The MS f omits everything after "evil," perhaps rightly. In any case Philo's text shows that the difficulty caused by the combination of the one hundred and thirty years with the "few" days is solely due to glossing.

A more complicated instance, relating to Ishmael's age, has been examined above (p. 306).

The burials of Abraham and Isaac by their respective sons are due to the same cause. The statement of the MT in xxv 9 that Ishmael was a party to Abraham's burial has always been a source of perplexity, for he had been sent away long before; but HP 128 omits "Isaac and Ishmael his sons," and the whole of ver. 10 is wanting in HP 31. Verse 8, when freed of every word which is omitted by any Septuagintal authority, would read, "And he gave up the ghost and died, in a good old age, full of days." Probably, even with these alterations, ver. 8 f. may be a little fuller than when they left the hand of the author. Jerome (*Liber Hebraicarum Questionum in Genesin ad loc.*) certainly seems to have lacked the expression "gave up the ghost"; and we may take it that here, as elsewhere, a simple state-

<sup>1</sup> I purposely leave the Book of Jubilees out of consideration, because its artificial chronology renders its testimony of little value for this investigation.

ment has been expanded by the process of enlarging Torah. Verse 7, on the other hand, is probably not original at all, but it must be reserved for examination with the other chronological notices of this part of Genesis.

Similarly, in xxxv 29, HP 84 reads "Jacob and Esau," instead of "Esau and Jacob," and HP 16 has "brethren" for "sons." From these facts we may argue to an earlier form of the verse, in which (as in xxv 9) "they [indefinite, no names being given] buried him." To this, different readers added divergent glosses, "his brethren" and "his sons" "Esau and Jacob." It looks as if the share of the sons in burying these two patriarchs was due to glossators acting on the demands of Jewish piety.

Before proceeding with the consideration of the chronological scheme, we must give careful attention to the phenomena of xxxv 27. The RV has: "And Jacob came unto Isaac his father to Mamre, to Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac sojourned." This is full of difficulties. Isaac did not dwell at Hebron, so far as we know. When Jacob set out on his flight to Laban, his starting-point was Beer-sheba (xxviii 10). Isaac was at that time already on his deathbed. Putting aside the chronological scheme, we must still allow a long period of time for the service of twenty years with Laban and the subsequent lapse of time at Succoth and elsewhere which is postulated by the narrative of Gen xxxiv, where Dinah and her brothers are obviously of much greater age than they could have been when they left Laban's home. So then Isaac would have remained on his deathbed for a period of much more than twenty years and would have been transported in that condition from Beer-sheba to Hebron. Then, too, the verse is extraordinarily tautologous. K 84, however, omits "Mamre"; K 104, "the same is Hebron," which is usually regarded as a gloss; and K 18, "and Isaac." But even when these words are removed, the other difficulties remain. How could Jacob find his father who had been on his deathbed many years before? And at Hebron, where Isaac had never dwelt?

As stated in the BS for April, 1918, p. 249, a Bohairic MS reads "to Esau his brother." This must be taken in conjunction with the remarkable divergencies of the Septuagintal authorities as to the name of the place. The gloss "Mamre" (omitted by K 84) has found its way into all, but Kiriath-arba is clearly a substitution for the Hebrew that lay before the translators. None of our authorities represent it. Eth has "to the city Mamre which is in the field"; dp n, "to the city Mamre in the field"; f, "to the city Mamre, to the field"; i<sup>b</sup> r, "to the city Mamre, to the place of the field"; A and other authorities, "to Mamre, to the city of the field." Other variants may be omitted, except that of egj, "to Mamre, to the city *του Ευαιου*," i.e. not "of the Hivite," which would here be impossible, but "of the Avvite" (cp. Dt ii 23; Josh xiii 3 f.). That is a reading of the highest importance, as we shall see. Not one of these readings fits Kiriath-arba. Further, the repeated "to" of many authorities shows "to Mamre" to be an insertion. When that is removed, what is the reading to which the word "field" (*πεδιον*) points? It occurs in forty-three other passages of the Pentateuch. In thirty-eight of these it represents the Hebrew שָׂדֵה (field or territory): in a thirty-ninth (Gen iv 8, "let us go into the field") it almost certainly translates the same word, but there is a lacuna in the MT. The overwhelming probability is that it renders that word here. Probably, then, f's "to the field" is right as far as it goes. The differences in the position of "city" make it likely that this word has only come in through accommodation to the Kiriath (city) of the later Hebrew. "Field" alone will, however, not have been the original reading. We have seen that the Bohairic introduces "Esau his brother." Now in Gen xxxii 3, "Jacob sent messengers to Esau his brother, unto the land of Seir, the *field* of Edom"; in xxxiii 14 he had promised to come to him "unto Seir"; and in 16 Esau had departed thither. And here comes in the remarkable reading "of the Avvite." There is nothing either in the Hebrew or in the Greek to suggest it. But Dt ii 22 f.

shows that the Avvites were in this neighborhood at the period in question. "The children of Esau, which dwell in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day: and *the Avvim which dwelt in villages as far as Gaza,*" etc. It seems to be clear that Avvite once stood in the text. Probably the original LXX had "And Jacob came to Esau his brother, to the field [territory] of the Avvite." Later the text was cut about and commented, with the results we know. Whether Edom is original in xxxii 3 or has replaced the name of an earlier people cannot be decided on our present evidence.<sup>1</sup>

If this view be sound, two points must be noticed. We are not to think of this coming to Esau as having been accomplished "according to the pace of the cattle, and according to the pace of the children" (xxxiii 14). At Succoth the original Greek text seems to have told of Jacob's making booths for himself and his cattle. That implies a long stay, not mere avoidance of one day's over-driving. Spinoza, again, attacked the Pentateuch on the ground that Dinah could scarcely have been seven, and Simeon and Levi twelve and eleven, respectively, at the time of the occurrences of Gen xxxiv. An attentive reading, however, makes it plain that in that chapter the *dramatis personæ* are much older than in xxxiii 14.<sup>2</sup> The fact seems to be that when Jacob reached Canaan his first feeling was one of alarm at finding himself within Esau's range of action. He accordingly took steps to meet this danger. As soon as he found that his brother cherished no hostile purpose, his obvious desire was to get rid of him and his men as soon as possible. Once this was done

<sup>1</sup> There would be nothing improbable in such a substitution, which would entirely accord with the editorial methods that are known to have been practiced on the Hebrew Bible. See, e.g., Judges ii 1, where Bochim has been substituted for Bethel, in accordance with ver. 5.

<sup>2</sup> The words "when he came to Paddan-aram" in xxxiii 18 are omitted by K 1 and seem to be a gloss. I suspect the same phrase in xxxv 9, but have found no evidence.

he appears to have been in no hurry to rejoin him. On that view, the meeting of xxxv 27 is many years later than the parting of xxxiii. Another alternative is conceivable, though far less likely. The Shechem incident may belong to a later period of the patriarch's life. It is within the bounds of possibility that some sections of his biography have been lost in transmission, and that others have consequently been displaced. But we have no evidence of this, and it is not the function of scholarship to indulge in unfounded conjectures. Here we have a superficial difficulty which, when viewed in the light of Jacob's craftiness, appears to lack substance. Further than that our facts do not permit us to go.

Secondly, it may be thought that the statements of xxxvi 6 ff. do not quite harmonize with Esau's location in the field of Edom in xxxii f. and Jacob's subsequent meeting with him there. The discrepancy is more formal than real, and could cause no difficulty to an Oriental. Hence there seems to be no sufficient ground for doubting that these verses (in their earliest un glossed form) can be assigned to the author who first embodied this portion of the narrative in book form.

In Gen xxxv 15 we find some important variants. "And [egj Arm Chr omit "Jacob"] called the name of the place [n Eth omit "where God spake with him"] Bethel." Removing the accretions, we see that this is a repetition of the Greek reading in ver. 7, where MT has "and called the place El-Beth-el." In the LXX both passages are, word for word, the same, as J. Dahse has rightly pointed out in his important discussion (*Textkritische Materialien zur Hexateuchfrage*, vol. i. pp. 144 ff.). This repetition is a phenomenon with which we are familiar in other places, where, for some reason, an insertion has been made in the text.<sup>1</sup> A presumption thus arises that the intervening verses should not stand here. When we examine them it is confirmed. Verse 8 tells of the death of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse. That is obviously out of place, for how

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 311.

could she have been in Jacob's company or indeed in the land of the living at all? In xxxiv we have met with adult grandchildren of the child she nursed, so that the chronology is impossible. In ver. 9, the MT has "again," but K 69 Eth Sah omit this word. We have seen that xxxv 10 is a glossator's addition (BS, April, 1918, pp. 252 f.; see Dahse, *loc. cit.*), and ver. 14 resembles xxviii 18 so closely as to make it likely that it too has been added here. That leaves us with ver. 8 (Deborah) and (probably) 9, 11-13 in a shorter form. On the library theory these present no difficulty. They are simply fragments of the damaged library which have been inserted at the wrong place. Deborah's death should either stand in xxiv (? between ver. 61 and 62), with, possibly, some other matter relating to the journey which has been lost, or else refers to some visit of Isaac to Bethel. As to the theophany of 11-13, no locality is mentioned, and we cannot say where it should be placed.<sup>1</sup> Here the testimony of Gen xlvi 3 is important. According to the MT, this vision was at Luz, but d and Cyr (in one quotation) omit, A misplaces, and Sah-ed reads "in a vision." That is to say, the original text placed it in the land of Canaan, but not necessarily at Luz; and a glossator is responsible for the present location.

The rest of the chronological difficulties depend in one form or other upon the chronological scheme, and it remains to inquire into its origin and character. No final solution enabling us to restore the original text and trace all the stages of the growth of every difficulty is possible on the materials I have examined; but they suffice, when

<sup>1</sup>Our text of Gen xxxii 23-32 is probably incomplete. Hosea xii 5, "He wept and besought mercy of him," refers to something not narrated. In view of the other evidences of damage to the books of Moses, there is no ground for assuming that Hosea's reference is based on anything but an undamaged text of Genesis. Note that the prophet speaks of "the field of 'Aram" (xii 13; cp. "the field of Edom," Gen xxxii 3), apparently a translation of the Paddan-aram of Genesis, which the documentary theorists take for a mark of *critic* date.



taken in conjunction with the known characteristics of the Jewish mind, to indicate generally what has happened.

There are two classes of numbers in the chronology: those to which variants are extant, and those on which all our witnesses agree. Some variants clearly arose after the LXX was made. Thus n\* seems to have had a scheme by which Abram was one hundred years older in xvi 16, xvii 1, 24, and 1 makes him eighty, and Eth eighty-five, in the first-named verse. When these are eliminated the chief differences are:—

	MT	Variant.
Gen <b>xxi</b> 5	Abraham 100 years old	105 c,
<b>xxiii</b> 1	Sarah 127	117 l according to HP, but not BM
<b>xxv</b> 7	Abraham 175	170 E, 145 Eth <sup>f</sup> 135 Eth <sup>p</sup>
17	Ishmael 137	130 HP 31, Eth <sup>p</sup> , 160 m, 127 Boh
<b>xxxv</b> 28	Isaac 180	150 dp, 170 K 150
<b>xxxvii</b> 2	Joseph 17	16 Vulg <sup>1</sup>
<b>xlvi</b> 1	Jacob 147	148 Eth <sup>fp</sup> 146 Lat

On this list one great fact stands out. The main variations are in the totals of the patriarchs. These appear to have been finally fixed at a later date than the other numbers. Probably the notices of their ages were originally due to a commentator. Genesis xxxv 28 f. is obviously inappropriate after the narrative of the meeting with Esau, and cannot be part of the original text; and xxv 8 f. will be from the same hand. These passages are examples of one of the forms of commentary discussed in the last section.

There remain the numbers that are undisputed so far as our textual witnesses go. These still involve impossibilities; but, in view of all we have learnt about Biblical numbers in the last few years, it is not difficult to frame a theory which will explain them satisfactorily.

It may be thought that some numbers, like forty and sixty, are old, but were not originally arithmetical.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> See Vercellone's long note *ad loc.*

<sup>2</sup> See BS, Oct. 1917, pp. 589 f.

other obvious element is supplied by textual inference from Gen xv 16 and Ex vii 40.<sup>1</sup> The Genesis expression about the fourth generation was interpreted as meaning the fourth generation from the entry into Egypt,—not, as was originally intended, from the beginning of the oppression. Hence the reasoning: If the fourth generation from the entry was 430 years, then, inasmuch as the entry was in the second generation from the promise, the period that elapsed must have been one half of 430 years = 215 years. Anybody who understands the mentality of the old Jewish commentators will at once see that to them such reasoning would have been unanswerable. The only doubtful points are how the 75 years of Gen xii 4 and the ages of Abraham and Sarah in xvii were originally reached. The last two may possibly have been original constituents of the narrative, used rhetorically without any true arithmetical knowledge of the real ages, or they may be the result of some early corruption or editorial calculation which we cannot now trace. The 75 years of xii 4 will not be original. Probably the number has arisen through accidental corruption, e.g. through the combination of two such readings as 70 and 50 for Abraham's age. But it may be the result of some calculation. Jacob's 130 years in xlvii 28 are due to the scheme for making 215 years, and the seventeen years he dwelt in Egypt are likely to go back to an original seven years.

If the results of this prolonged discussion of the chronological difficulties be summarized, it will be seen that in essence the factors at work were extremely simple. Genesis in library form contained no chronological discrepancies and few, if any, arithmetical numbers. Damage to the library and the wrong arrangement of what remained introduced some of our difficulties. Commentary, rewriting, glossing, together with the textual corruption, were responsible for the rest. As these processes were to some extent continuous over a long period of time, there are still traces of what has happened, sufficient in some cases to

<sup>1</sup> See BS, July, 1916, pp. 476 ff.

enable us to remove the difficulties, and in others to form a clear conception of their origin and growth.

## XI

The opening chapters of Numbers present difficulties which our materials do not enable us to solve. A conspicuous instance is afforded by vii 1-88. The initial date *precedes* the census, yet the porterage duties of the Levites are assumed. That, in itself, is perhaps not quite impossible, for the special position of Levi was foreshadowed much earlier (Ex xxxii 29), and it is reasonable to suppose that their service of porterage was part of the original scheme for the erection and use of a Tabernacle. But the tedious repetition of ver. 12-88 cannot be laid to the charge of an early writer. Nevertheless, the essential moderation of the conception of six pair-ox wagons suggests the presence of genuine historical material. In such a case as this, all that can be done is to put forward some possibility that is in general harmony with the conclusions reached in passages where the evidence is more adequate. We may reasonably suppose that this is one of those cases where the existence of fragmentary material in an unsuitable place necessitated rewriting. Possibly the assignment of the wagons to the Levites originally belonged to a later part of the narrative, and has been erroneously combined with other material; but where all must be conjecture there is nothing to be gained by lingering over the chapter.

Similar comments may be made on the form of the census in Nu i. These matters are really not of the first importance, but cannot be altogether overlooked, because of their bearing on other questions.

The problem of the Levites is exceedingly technical and difficult. I dealt with it in the study of Priests and Levites which appeared in the BS for 1910 and is reprinted with trifling changes in PS (pp. 231-286). Since then, Numbers has been issued in the larger Cambridge Sep-

tuagint, and some further additions can be made to our understanding of the subject.

In more than one branch of law there was development in the Mosaic age, just as there would be in any other formative period of equal length. New circumstances arise, and have to be dealt with by some legislative process; and for this purpose the decision of a court, making in effect new law to deal with the particular case which it has to decide, is just as much legislation as a formal statute of the legislative body. Changing circumstances may demand a new policy. For instance, in our own days the development of flying and the growth of labor problems (to take two examples) call for new laws. At any moment a point may arise in connection with one of these that is brought before the courts; and if there be no statute to regulate the matter, they must of necessity give a decision which will be making new law. On the other hand, the legislature of any country may foresee points that are likely to arise and enact a statute to deal with them. Moses, of course, combined functions which in a modern state are divided between the legislature and the highest judicial authority, and so we find him making law in both capacities; but that does not touch the root of the matter, as may be seen from examples. One of the mixed multitude, the son of an Israelitess and a gentile, cursed God. That raised at least two points. What was the penalty for blasphemy? What criminal law was applicable to a stranger? Here the questions arose in a trial, and accordingly we find a decision dealing with them (Lev xxiv 10-24). But the judgment goes considerably beyond the actual case raised by the facts, and partakes of the nature of a statute. Similarly when the daughters of Zelophehad make a claim the point is decided. But later apprehensions are entertained as to the probable operation of the judgment. A deputation waits on Moses, and fresh statute law is enacted to obviate undesirable consequences (Nu xxvii and xxxvi).

Now if all the narrative and legislation had come down

to us intact, in proper order, and without any sort of corruption, editing, or annotation, our difficulties would never have arisen. Unfortunately this is not so; and we have to try to restore the true text as successfully as we can, and to get it in the right order.<sup>1</sup>

There can be little doubt that three factors have been operative on a very extended scale in the case of the Levites: Development of the law, owing to new circumstances; derangements of the material (perhaps with the loss of some portions), owing to the vicissitudes of the transmission of the library; and glossing on a great scale. There was obviously some great addition to their functions after Korah's rebellion: "And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying, Behold, we perish" (Nu xvii 12). That was met by a fresh enactment, for in xviii 22 we find "And the children of Israel shall no *more* approach the tent of meeting." The phrase is textually above suspicion.<sup>2</sup> So it is clear that there was some modification of existing arrangements. That must be the first thing grasped. They started their specialized functions as sacred porters only. After Korah's rebellion some extension was introduced. This cardinal fact—viz. that the duties and privileges of the Levites were enacted in at least two installments on different occasions—has been greatly obscured in the course of transmission.

If this was so, the possibility at once presents itself that viii 4-26 is out of place and should stand after Korah's rebellion. In that case we should understand the purification and the going in to do the service of the tent of meeting, from which expression no intelligible meaning can be extracted if it refers to a period when the Levites were porters and nothing more. The discrepancy between the age of service (from 25 to 50) in ver. 23 ff. and the age

<sup>1</sup>A relatively simple instance of what has happened may be taken from the history of the Sabbath law. See BS, Oct. 1915, pp. 607 ff.

<sup>2</sup>In xviii 5, "there shall no more be wrath," the "more" is unfortunately lacking in Vulg and Bora, Boh Did.

(30 to 50) in chap. iv also disappears, for the last-named chapter refers to portage only, while chap. viii deals with the service in the tent of meeting. We may therefore accept this order and glance at some of the other factors that have been at work.

We have seen (*supra*, p. 306) how considerably portions of this chapter have been expanded. For viii 24-26 we are fortunate in having an early witness to the text. Philo's quotation of the passage may be given as follows in the most barely literal English: "For this, he says, is the provision about the Levites. From five and twenty years he shall go in to work in the tent of meeting, and from fifty years he shall desist from the service and shall not work more, but his brother shall serve; but he shall keep charges, but shall not do work."<sup>1</sup> This is doubtless the original. When it is substituted, the passage becomes not merely intelligible but lucid. These verses throw great light on the way in which the Hebrew gradually changed for the worse.

If we now turn to the earlier chapters that deal with the Levites we can, in the light of these observations, gain some idea of the process by which they have reached their present form. The substance of Nu iv consists of provisions for portage. The commentators have noticed some slight indications of late translation in the LXX (H. Holzinger, *Numeri* [1903], p. 11). These may point merely to late expansion by commentators. They are not sufficiently numerous or sufficiently weighty to justify an argument

<sup>1</sup>I cite from the text given by H. E. Ryle in *Philo and Holy Scripture* (1895). Comparing the MT, we note the following corruptions: Ver. 24, "and upwards" is a gloss; "to work in" has been glossed, and has deteriorated into the meaningless "to fight war in the work of"; ver. 25, "service" has suffered similar glossing; ver. 26, there has apparently been dittography of the first two letters of "brother," giving by a slight further corruption "and shall serve his brethren," for "his brother shall serve"; "in the tent of meeting" has been added by a glossator; "and he shall keep" has been corrupted into an infinitive. Whether ver. 26b was known to Philo does not appear.

against the chapter as a whole.<sup>1</sup> My own impression is that the chapter has grown from an original nucleus, which dealt only with portorage, etc., and contained no census.

In Nu i 49 ff. the Greek authorities suggest that a much shorter original has been expanded by glosses. That leaves the difficulties of Nu iii. Very much of that chapter appears to consist of commentators' additions, made on the basis of other passages. It is easy to understand that an original short description of the census and camp arrangements of the Levites may have led to annotations summarizing their position and duties as given elsewhere. Incidentally this had the effect of still further obscuring the important fact that after Korah's rebellion a fundamental change had been made in the arrangements for the service of the sanctuary. When we discard everything that appears elsewhere, we are left with the difficulties created

<sup>1</sup> There are, however, other indications of expansion and change in the text. The extraordinary phrase "everyone that cometh to the host to do work in the tent of meeting" (with slight variations, iv 23, 30, 35, 39, 43) is, to put it frankly, doubly distilled nonsense. The military word "host" is absurd, and the work of portorage is not work in the tent of meeting. It is a late addition to the Greek in each of these verses, as is shown by the fact that the phrase is regularly in the nominative, though the syntax requires the accusative. Such clauses as iv 4, "this is the service . . . in the tent of meeting" can scarcely be original of the duties of portorage to which they apply. They may be corrupt or due to later annotation. The expression "take the sum of" occurs in the Hebrew in ver. 2 and 22. In the earlier verse the Ethiopic has "separate the sons of Kohath." At the beginning of ver. 29 there is a lacuna. There should be a verb; but either it has been cancelled and not replaced, or else it has been lost by accident. The facts are insufficient to enable us to decide between these two alternatives. If the Ethiopic reading in ver. 2 is right, the chapter in its original form dealt with the allocation of the three sections of Levites to different portorage duties. In that case it has been altered, and the census at the end is a commentator's addition. One MS (m) does in fact omit ver. 33-49, but it has other long omissions of the kind which seem to point to lacunæ in its archetype. Consequently little stress can be laid on its reading here. This is a case where further evidence is badly needed.

by the numbers. Evidence has already been produced (EPC, pp. 155-169; BS, April, 1919, pp. 205-209) to show how these grew in transmission. Probably they suffered corruption, and the text has been editorially accommodated to agree with them in their corrupt state.

On our present materials it is not possible to go very much further towards the solution of the problems of the early chapters of Numbers. A little can be done by the investigation of unusual words in the Greek and the Hebrew, but this is very detailed and technical. And when we have accomplished everything possible in that direction we shall merely have established the existence of a few glosses and a few editorial corrections. The chief remaining difficulties appear to be due to rewriting of fragmentary materials, and there is no way of getting behind that. Nor is the subject-matter of sufficient importance, for the question of how exactly the camp order was narrated or what articles the Merarites were to carry is in itself of no consequence. It has been necessary to deal with these chapters to see what light they throw on the general history of the Pentateuch; but, apart from that, the minutiae would not repay the expenditure of time involved.