

riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past tracing out! . . . For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things. To Him be the glory for ever. Amen." ¹

JAMES ORR.

HAS DR. SKINNER VINDICATED THE GRAF-WELLHAUSEN THEORY?

IN the September number of the EXPOSITOR Professor A. R. Gordon makes certain references to my work in the course of an article entitled Skinner's *Genesis*. Those references could not have been made if certain material facts had been known to Dr. Gordon and present to his mind, and accordingly I desire by the courtesy of the Editor to state those facts as briefly as possible. In doing so I shall be careful not to attempt anything like a second review of Dr. Skinner's book or a reply to any of Dr. Gordon's other points, because I have answered Dr. Skinner at considerable length in an article that I have sent to the October number of the *Bibliotheca Sacra* and need not here repeat myself. This article, therefore, is limited simply to my own defence to Dr. Gordon's criticisms.

In January 1909—and I may say at once that the dates are of some importance—I published in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* an article dealing with Astruc's celebrated clue. In addition to other facts I pointed out that the Versions, and notably the Septuagint, did not always agree with the Massoretic text of the Divine appellations in the book of Genesis. Certain features in the discussion were most material to the argument. First, instead of contenting myself with a single text of the Septuagint, I employed the materials given in Field,

¹ Rom. xi. 33, 35.

Lagarde and the larger Cambridge Septuagint. This enormously increases the number of variants, and in many cases we are able to say definitely from our Hexaplar information that the new variants represent the text of the Septuagint as found by Origen. To take four simple instances. We learn from Field that in Genesis ii. 4, 5, 7, 8, Origen found 'God' only in his text and added *Κύριος*. In ver. 4 A has both words while Lucian¹ keeps the original Septuagintal text. In ver. 5 these two authorities change places, in ver. 7 they both read 'God' only, in ver. 8 both follow Origen in reading both words. Now it is obvious that in all four cases there are Septuagintal variants which are entitled to consideration, though a scholar who used Swete only or Lagarde only would suppose that there were only two such variants (verses 5 and 7 or 4 and 7 according to the text he used).

Secondly, I anticipated that the objection might be taken that the Septuagintal variants were purely internal to the Greek Version and did not represent a different Hebrew text. Accordingly I produced evidence in a number of passages to show that Septuagintal variants had support either from extant Hebrew variants or from Hexaplar notes which left no room for doubt (e.g. the testimony of Aquila, who, as is well known, was most scrupulous in this matter), or from the Samaritan Pentateuch. This evidence clearly proves the existence of a large number of variants that go back to the Hebrew.

Thirdly, I expected that another objection might be raised. It might be claimed that the Massoretic text was in all cases superior to the Septuagint and its ancestors. I therefore produced a number of passages in which for one reason or

¹ I use this term to denote Lagarde's text without prejudice to the questions raised by recent discussions. That text certainly represents a recension with readings of intrinsic value, whether or not they be the readings of Lucian.

another internal evidence proved a Septuagintal variant to be superior to the Massoretic reading.

One other point only of the long discussion in that article need be noticed here. In Genesis x. 19 we read the words "as thou goest toward Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim." Such language could only be used when there were in existence places so named. If I asked to be directed to some part of London nobody would to-day inform me that it was on the way to Tyburn. Similarly nobody would have defined boundaries by reference to places that never had existed or had been destroyed and submerged some thousand years before his time. As the places mentioned were destroyed in the time of Abraham, the notice must have been originally composed during or before his lifetime. In the Oxford Hexateuch it is assigned to a late stratum of J, i.e. to a writer who is supposed to have lived some thousand years after the latest date at which it can have been composed, and it is regarded as being later than xiii. 10, though the author of that passage lived when those places had already been destroyed.

It will be seen that these facts are very material to the analysis and dating of the Pentateuch. Once it is shown that the division into sources has been effected on the basis of an incorrect text and has led to results that are not correct to within a thousand years, a considerable breach has been made in the critical position.

This article attracted some interest. In the *Expository Times* for May, 1909, the Rev. A. P. Cox asked certain questions about it, pointing out that I had adduced "evidence to show . . . (2) that the versional variants rest on divergent Hebrew texts . . . and (3) that the variants are, in some cases at any rate, demonstrably superior to the readings of the Massoretic Text." Dr. Skinner replied in the same number. He said that the Septuagint differed from the

Massoretic text of Genesis in forty-nine instances, and he argued that the presumption was in favour of the Massoretic Text. Further he thought it reasonable to expect that Jewish scribes would observe the distinction between Elohim and the Tetragrammaton more carefully than the Greek copyists, and he attached significance to the fact that in the cases of difference there is an enormous preponderance of instances where the LXX. has 'God' as against the Massoretic Tetragrammaton, "the preference for the common word being as marked as it is intelligible." In spite of Mr. Cox's allusion to my article and of the direct reference to my evidence "that the versional variants rest on divergent Hebrew texts and are in some cases at any rate demonstrably superior to the readings of the Massoretic Text" Dr. Skinner passed over these very material points in complete silence, nor did he in any way refer to the additional variants I had obtained from the Hexapla and the other materials.

Two replies were made to Dr. Skinner. In the *Expository Times* for July, 1909, I published a note from which I extract the following, adding the necessary references to the reprint of the *Bibliotheca Sacra* article in the volume form.¹

"In Gen. xvi. 11 an explanation of the name Ishmael is given in which the Tetragrammaton is used. But the Lucianic LXX., the old Latin and one *Hebrew* MS. read *Elohim*.

"1. Dr. Skinner says it is reasonable to expect that Jewish scribes would be more careful in this matter than Greek copyists. But this instance shows that the variant is a *Hebrew* variant; for the mistakes of *Greek* copyists could not possibly influence a *Hebrew* MS. I therefore submit that little reliance can be placed on this argument. For numerous other examples, see [*Essays*, pp. 14-15, 36 f. = *Bibliotheca*

¹ *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, London, Elliot Stock; Oberlin, Bibliotheca Sacra Company.

Sacra] pp. 128–130, 150 ff. ; and for a further body of evidence drawn from the support of other Versions, see [*Essays*, pp. 15 f. = *Bibliotheca Sacra*] pp. 130 f. Once the fact that the Greek rests on Hebrew variants has been established in a number of cases, a presumption arises that it does so in other cases where no independent testimony is preserved ; and a case is made for further investigation.

“ 2. Dr. Skinner further thinks that significance attaches to the fact that in a great majority of instances the LXX. substitutes God for the Tetragrammaton of M.T. To this there seem to be two answers. (1) If we regard the Tetragrammaton as original in all cases of difference, this canon must make us suspect M.T. wherever any Version substitutes it for *Elohim* or some other word ; and I admit that in all such cases a question does arise. But in Genesis this, of course, means that the Tetragrammaton will have to be introduced into numerous passages of ‘ E ’ and ‘ P. ’ (2) In some cases where there are differences the *Elohim* of the Versions is demonstrably preferable to the Tetragrammaton of M.T. I instance Gen. xvi. 11,² where the name Ishmael requires *Elohim* in the explanation (cf. Israel, Peniel). The Tetragrammaton would require *Ishmayah* as the name. Here, again, other instances will be found on [pp. 16 ff. of the *Essays* = *Bib. Sac.*] pp 131 ff. Consequently we cannot hold that the variants are all due to a desire to avoid the Name of God. It would rather seem that some readings are due to a tendency of M.T. to substitute the Tetragrammaton for *Elohim*.

“ 3. Dr. Skinner says that the LXX. differs from M.T. in forty-nine cases. But in an enormous number of passages *some* Septuagintal authority, e.g. Lucian in Gen. xvi. 11—sometimes only a single cursive—differs from the ordinary LXX. reading. By comparing extant Hebrew variants which confirm some of the Septuagintal variants, I have shown

([*Essays*, p. 36 f.=*Bib. Sac.*] p. 150 f.) that importance attaches to these. Has Dr. Skinner included all such cases in his forty-nine ? ”

I was also careful to confront Dr. Skinner with Genesis x. 19, of which I have spoken above.

No answer was made to this note, but in the *Expository Times* for September, 1909, Professor N. J. Schlögl published an independent reply to Dr. Skinner. He had studied Genesis i. 1—Exodus iii. 12 with all the texts and arrived at the following figures, which should be contrasted with Dr. Skinner’s 49. The Tetragrammaton alone occurs 148 times in the Massoretic Text of this passage, and in 118 places there are variants—either Elohim alone or both words together: Elohim alone occurs in the Massoretic Text 179 times and there are variants in 59 of these cases: both words together occur 20 times in the Massoretic Text, and there are variants in 19 of these cases.

No word of reply has been published by Dr. Skinner or any other member of the school to these notes, although over a year has now elapsed since the last note was published.

Then came Dr. Skinner’s *Genesis*. The preface is dated April 1910, i.e. it was written at least seven months after the publication of Dr. Schlögl’s note, at least nine months after the publication of mine and fifteen months after the appearance of the *Bibliotheca Sacra* article. The book itself was of course written before the preface, but it contains references to the *Cambridge Biblical Essays* which appeared as late as October, 1909, and one reference to the *Expository Times* for November, 1909. No notice whatever is taken of the facts and arguments put forward by Professor Schlögl and myself in the *Expository Times*. The discussion proceeds on the basis that there are only forty-nine or fifty variants in Genesis, and that there is no evidence of Hebrew variants. Nor, again, does Dr. Skinner discuss the

passages where I had shown the inferiority of the Massoretic readings. Thus the variant in Genesis xvi. 11 is not even noted. It must be remembered that Dr. Skinner is professedly answering the *Bibliotheca Sacra* article in which I have taken all these points and that his attention had been publicly called to each of these three matters on two occasions in a controversy to which he was himself a party. As already pointed out, Mr. Cox and I had both insisted on the Hebrew evidence and the intrinsic superiority of some of the Septuagintal readings : recognising that his number forty-nine was quite erroneous, I had warned him by my question in the *Expository Times* and Dr. Schlögl had openly corrected him. There are other curious points in Dr. Skinner's treatment of this matter, but they will be found discussed in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. Here I am only concerned to show that he has said no word of reply to the matters with which he has been confronted. Nor, again, has he dealt with Genesis x. 19, and apparently assigns it to a date 1100 years too late. This is my answer to the criticism of Dr. Gordon on my work :

“ He [Dr. Skinner] is frank even to a fault, and appreciative of every honest effort to get nearer to the original . . . The general superiority of the Massoretic text he valiantly defends . . . against the strangely perverse attempt of “ the more recent opposition ” represented by Dahse and Wiener to prove the Massoretic text “ so unreliable that no analysis of documents can be based on its data.” In his most caustic vein he observes : “ Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction ; and however surprising it may seem to some, we can reconcile our minds to the belief that the M.T. does reproduce with substantial accuracy the characteristics of the original autographs.” . . . This carefully judicial habit of mind lends all the greater weight to Dr. Skinner's pronouncements on the “ higher critical ” question. Here he shows no hesitation. ‘ My own belief in the essential soundness of

the prevalent hypothesis,' he says in the Preface, 'has been confirmed by the renewed examination of the text of Genesis which my present undertaking required' . . . We have already quoted one of the sardonic sentences in which he disposes of Wiener's attempt to evade the problem by a frank abandonment of the reliability of the Hebrew."

It is obvious that to Dr. Gordon "the renewed examination of the text of Genesis which my present undertaking required" in a sentence written as late as April, 1910, meant an examination which took account of all the facts adduced by those whom Dr. Skinner purported to answer; but, as has been shown above, it has in reality meant nothing of the kind. In fairness to Dr. Gordon I desire to say that in my opinion the interpretation he has put upon Dr. Skinner's language was the only natural interpretation, and although it has involved some injustice to me the responsibility for this does not lie with him.

One other matter that affects me is involved in Dr. Gordon's article. He speaks of "the three most recent champions, whose appearance has been hailed so widely as having given the final *coup de grâce* to criticism." This sentence glances at my *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, since the American publishers advertised it as "The *Coup de Grâce* to the Wellhausen Critics of the Pentateuch." In reply to Dr. Gordon I would point out that the volume consists of two parts: the first five chapters deal with the narrative portions of Exodus—Deuteronomy, and Astruc's clue is treated in that connexion: but the second part contains a discussion of the first three chapters of Wellhausen's *Prolegomena*, and this part is very largely responsible for the terms of the advertisement. Dr. Skinner does not even profess to reply to any portion of my discussion other than the first chapter. He is naturally and properly unconcerned with the rest of the first part which does not

touch Genesis directly. There is no reason to suppose that he had seen my last chapter when he wrote.¹ He never mentions it, and where he does cover the same ground he shows no acquaintance with my work. Thus he writes of the supposed Priestly document, "it is particularly noteworthy that the profane, as distinct from the sacrificial, slaughter of animals, which even the Deuteronomic law treats as an innovation, is here carried back to the covenant with Noah" (p. lx.). Yet I have pointed to the following (amongst other) instances of non-sacrificial slaughter in literature which these critics regard as pre-Deuteronomic : Gen. xviii. 7, xxvii. 9-14, xliii. 16, Exod. xxi. 37, Judges vi. 19 (the making ready of the kid), 1 Sam. xxv. 11, xxviii. 24, 1 Kings xix. 21.² Nor again does it fall within Dr. Skinner's scope to deal with the main charges which justify the terms of the advertisement. "Is it possible that in our own days a reconstruction of the history of Israel that rests on a neglect to examine the available evidence and an inability to distinguish between a mound and a house should have found world-wide acceptance? The ordinary higher critic and the ordinary conservative alike would answer in the negative. The critic would say that the question was too preposterous to require an answer; the conservative would regard it as suggesting an idea that from his point of view was too good to be true. Yet if either will be at the pains of carefully studying the sixth chapter of this volume together with the book it criticises, he will perhaps realise that the answer to the question must ultimately be in the affirmative. Here, again, I know from private communications that when pressed with the main arguments put forward in the present discussion higher critics have no reply; but, so far as I am aware, no public attempt has ever been made on their side to deal with

¹ It appeared first in October, 1909, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*.

² *Essays*, 175-178.

my points."¹ Dr. Gordon must not be understood to mean that Dr. Skinner has dealt with these matters.

It may be added that in spite of this very direct challenge no reviewer of the book—and the authors of signed notices include Professors Addis, Eerdmans, König and Toy—has hitherto met these charges. The emphasising of a well-known proverb by Drs. Skinner and Gordon has come very opportunely for my purpose. Truth *is* sometimes stranger than fiction.

HAROLD M. WIENER.

THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN TEACHING ON DIVORCE.

OWING to circumstances very far removed from the scientific study of historical theology the question of the earliest Christian teaching on divorce is at present a more than usually living question among those who are interested in the ethical teaching of the Christian church. There is therefore a special reason for an attempt to gather up the evidence of the New Testament, and of such literature of the earliest period as is important for influencing our judgment on the true interpretation of the Gospels.

The earliest teaching concerning divorce in the New Testament is to be found in 1 Corinthians vii. The chapter is too well known for it to be necessary to quote it at length. St. Paul is discussing the case of "mixed marriages," and lays down the rule that the Christian is not bound to leave a heathen husband or wife unless at the desire of the latter. "If the unbeliever separate, let him separate; the brother or sister (i.e. male or female Christian) is not enslaved in such a case." St. Paul does not say anything definite as to the question of re-marriage in this case, but it is extremely improbable that he would have countenanced

¹ *Op. cit.*, preface.