

*DR. MOFFATT ON THE LITERATURE OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT.*

I. GENERAL.

DR. MOFFATT is a figure of considerable interest and importance in the world of New Testament scholarship. He has read very widely in the modern literature of the subject. He has some remarkable literary gifts. He possesses an exceptional faculty for detecting analogies between different classes of literature, in cases where the analogies are hidden by the concomitants and surroundings. His series of articles called *Opera Foris* in the *EXPOSITOR* contained many noteworthy and often really brilliant illustrations of this kind, which attested the wide range of his reading, his true and broad sympathy, and his wonderful power of combination. His *Historical New Testament* might fairly be described as the work of a very clever young student, with an astonishing power of assimilating and reproducing in new combinations the opinions or "results" of older scholars. That is a stage which the young scholar has to go through. It is best to go through it quickly, and not to publish anything until it has been safely traversed. That book, however, was at least pardonable as the work of a young man transported with the enthusiasm of reading, who had not as yet had the leisure to do much real thinking, because the acquisitive process had for the time absorbed his energy and starved and withered the independence of his intellect.

The *Historical New Testament* possessed at any rate the interest that belongs to an early stage in the growth of a personality, which was capable of becoming independent and even great, provided that circumstances proved favourable to its development. For my own part I had the opinion, and

several times expressed it to others, that the writer of that book would within twenty years do some really good work, and would then partly smile at, and partly regret, his youthful enthusiasm for the ingenious vagaries of forgotten theorists, after his powers had grown stronger and his judgment had matured through experience of life. On one occasion later, when I read in the *British Weekly* a really beautiful leader to which his signature was attached, I claimed credit for having detected under the surface of that early book signs of the fine true quality and the sympathetic feeling which were clearly shown in that subsequent article in a weekly newspaper.

The present work, however, has gone back to the standard of the *Historical New Testament*. I can detect no broadening of the outlook, no deepening of the sympathy, little sign of growing independence of thought. The book is antiquated, as if it belonged to the nineteenth century. I do not mean that the author has failed to pay attention to more recent studies on the subject. Quite the contrary. Dr. Moffatt has allowed little or nothing in recent work to escape him. He has been reading the last products of scholarship with the same carefulness and voracity as before, when he wrote the *Historical New Testament*. But his method is much the same as formerly. He takes up the more recent theories with the same earnestness and—I will not say enthusiasm, but rather the same perfectly confident assumption that the right way of study lies in sifting and weighing these theories and thus discovering “here a little and there a little,” which is correct and valuable, and also with the same antecedent conviction that truth is to be found somewhere amid the mass of writing. This method he would doubtless defend on the ground that it is moving with the times and keeping in the van of modern research; but, if the initial principle is wrong, it is as useless

when applied to the critics, whether "orthodox" or "progressive," of the period 1900-1910 as when applied to those of the preceding fifty years.

To us the result appears to be that Dr. Moffatt has grown more learned, but that his individuality is as deeply buried as ever; and it is more difficult to force one's way out into spiritual independence after ten more years spent in tabulating the results and opinions of other men. He is fit for far higher work than this; but the time is shortened.

In literary criticism it is not uncommon to assume that, because a book shows great learning and ingenuity and ability, therefore there must be a certain amount of truth and value in it; and Dr. Moffatt seeks for this residuum of truth after riddling out all the rubbish; but that is not good scientific method. Many a writer starts his investigation on a false principle, and deduces a series of perfectly logical and wonderfully ingenious conclusions, which share in the weakness of the initial assumption; the sole value of the book, then, is to demonstrate the falsity of the first principle. There are many works of modern literary criticism which assume the whole contents and issues in the opening pages.

Specific examples one shrinks from giving; it is an invidious thing to do; but I shall give only one, which I take from a friend of my own, an excellent scholar, who did some excellent work, the late Dr. W. G. Rutherford, so that no one can charge me with censorious motives. Dr. Moffatt quotes a sentence on p. 36 note from Dr. Rutherford's edition of *The Fourth Book of Thucydides*, p. xxxi.: "Nothing could have prevented the importation into the text of an author of a great deal of what was properly comment." That principle was quite fashionable for a time among recent scholars. It sounds very plausible: one readily sees the process by which the gloss written on the margin

of a page of a manuscript was mistaken by a subsequent copyist for a part of the text that had been forgotten by the writer of the manuscript; the copyist, making this mistake, puts the gloss into the text of his copy at the point to which it seems to belong. Start with Dr. Rutherford's principle that this *must* have frequently happened; sit in your study month after month and year after year working at your author; add the magnificent ingenuity and erudition of that great scholar. The result is—his edition of *Thucydides Book IV*, the main value of which, and of some other modern works on similar lines, simply is to prove that the initial principle is false. The general agreement of recent scholars has condemned the principle; and the discoveries in Egypt of many fragments of very early manuscripts on papyrus have gone far in the way of justifying the manuscript text.

It is quite true that those glosses might have crept through a series of errors into the text, and also that they did in a few cases creep in; but, as a whole, that did not often happen, and glosses generally were recognised as such and vanished from subsequent copies. The scare raised by Dr. Rutherford and by others before him was not more reasonable than the alarm of a merchant, to whom the thought suddenly occurred that all his clerks might be frequently making mistakes in entering figures in account books. Mistakes of that kind are quite possible, and are in some cases made by clerks; but, on the whole, it is safe to say that they need not be taken into account.

It is therefore not right to quote an exploded *dictum* of Dr. Rutherford's as if it were quite trustworthy. Dr. Moffatt's pages 37–38 giving examples of glosses and interpolations contain some that are not correctly stated, and many that are not really analogous to the phenomena which he seeks to establish for the text of the New Testament.

II. LITERARY ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE BOOK.

If I attempt to justify my inability to praise this book in the way that I should like, and in the way that, as I have already mentioned, I at one time anticipated, I do so with much reluctance and diffidence, yielding only to the urgent pressure put on me by the Editor of this journal and to the wish expressed by several other friends. To put my reason in a sentence, I should say that the author never reaches the historical point of view ; he never shows any comprehension of the way in which great events work themselves out. It may be said, of course, that he is writing an *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, and not a study of early Christian history ; but in a surpassing degree the literature of the New Testament is the expression of the life of the Church, and can never be rightly understood if it is regarded simply as literature. Dr. Moffatt knows that well, and shows his knowledge by constantly referring the literature to the development of the Church, as he conceives it ;¹ but he looks at history with a certain literary quality of mind, and not with the understanding and sympathy of practical knowledge. His many brilliant literary gifts, and especially his wonderful gift of seeing literary analogies, tend to warp his historical judgment, and require sometimes to be sternly controlled by him.

The author brings his wide reading in modern literature to bear on the illustration of his subject by profuse quotations and elaborate comparisons or similes. Sometimes these "purple patches" lighten up rather quaintly the laborious collection of opinions and references. On p. 594, "The Homeric hymns, it has been said, are neither hymns

¹ He will not dissent from this opinion that right study of the literature of the New Testament is impossible without keeping the eye constantly turned towards historical method : as he says in the *Historical New Testament*, p. 56 : "True criticism of the New Testament is like science, it becomes 'a precious visitant' only when it has been trained in the methods of historical evolution."

nor Homer's. The so-called 'first epistle of John' is neither an epistle nor is it John's, if by John is meant the son of Zebedee." Then a few lines down the page, "Lord Hailes once pointed out to Boswell his additions to a legal paper originally drawn up by Dr. Johnson. The editor of 'First John' had, in all likelihood, some share in the editorial process through which the Fourth Gospel reached its final form." There would have been more point in the allusion to Lord Hailes, if, like him, the editor of "First John" had pointed out to some one the additions that he made to the Gospel; but these unfortunately remain uncertain. The allusion to the Homeric hymns is a piece of smart writing, but savours too much of flippant journalism. There is no real analogy, nothing but the forced and purely verbal analogy of an epigrammatic balance.

Much better in taste, and much more apt and illuminative as an illustration, is the comparison on p. 148 between *Romans* and Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.¹ In both cases what was begun as a letter grew beyond the character of a letter, and yet retained the outward form of one.

Not so illuminative, but still quite pertinent and in good taste, is the quotation from Theocritus and the elaborate application of it on p. 597. It is purely ornamental, it is only a "purple patch"; but it is ingenious, clever, and interesting.

On page 171 we have a very favourable specimen of Dr. Moffatt's comparisons. As Baur and Manen judged of Philippians, "so did Johnson judge of Gray." This well brings out by a brief touch the utter incompatibility of Baur and Manen to sympathise with, and therefore to judge, Paul. But why not extend the comparison? It is just because

¹ This illustration, which is a good one, helping to make the author's view more distinct and at the same time constituting a justifiable argument in favour of his view, because it shows by analogy that the process supposed can really occur, was used already in the Author's *Historical New Testament* (as I observe later).

Dr. Moffatt quotes such a portentous number of unsympathising and therefore incapable and unprofitable Baur and Manens, that I blame his book. Moreover, he in the comparison subtly suggests that in all these cases one great man judges another. In truth Manen or Baur on Paul is a mole attempting to estimate the size of a colossus or the strength of a lion, or the swiftness of an eagle.

Again on p. 204, in the extremely hypothetical sketch of the "fortunes of Q," we are told that "it suffered a sea-change, when it was employed by Matthew." Shakespeare is dragged in here, without any special appropriateness, unless Dr. Moffatt's intention is to suggest very delicately that Q is a thing "that doth fade." The writing here is smart, the veiled allusion to a familiar passage of *The Tempest* is clever and lights up the rather arid page, and I quote it as typical, as probably likely to please the reader and to carry on his interest in the book, and certainly not as a blemish, since it does not injuriously affect the train of reasoning, while it has literary quality.

In Dr. Moffatt's former book this kind of illustration by quotations from literature was much more sparingly used, and always, so far as I have observed, for the purpose of making his meaning clearer. The habit has grown upon him, however, until he has come to use his quotations sometimes almost as an ornament, and to let his judgment sometimes be influenced by a purely fanciful analogy which he has employed; and I allude to this subject only for the sake of leading on from the good or the harmless examples to those which seem to me to be injurious.¹

¹ These literary and purely ornamental illustrations even obtain sometimes a place in the Index A of Subjects and References, where they take up space that might be usefully employed. It seems odd to find Shakespeare mentioned three times, Jane Austen once, Byron twice, and so on, in the Index, while Georgios Hamartolos does not occur in any of the Indices, though he is referred to in the text as an authority of consequence, in fact as the chief support of the Author's belief in the very early death of St. John, a critical point in his whole opinions.

It is not my intention to enumerate these examples of Dr. Moffatt's custom as if they were faults. They are mentioned as instances of the Author's character; and from them we may gather what is a tendency of his mind, and estimate his "personal equation." They are an interesting feature; and they are indicative of the literary rather than the historical temperament. That is what seems to me the fundamental truth. Our Author shows in a fashion extremely interesting to the student of human nature the course which the literary temperament may follow when it is allowed to run riot in historical investigation. It is in danger of essaying the problem in a misleading fashion. This I shall try to exemplify by taking some others of those ornate passages, in which the misleading influence that the habit may exercise is more conspicuous.

III. LITERATURE AND HISTORY : A DIFFERENCE OF METHOD.

On p. 8 Dr. Moffatt, in discussing "The Method of New Testament Introduction," illustrates the correct procedure for the historian in surveying the literature of a period by the following analogy. "In a note to the first chapter of *The Fair Maid of Perth*, discussing the magnificent view of the Tay valley which may be gained from the Wicks of Baiglie, Scott quotes what a local guide said, on reaching a bold projecting rock on Craig Vinean, 'Ah, sirs, this is the decisive point.' One of the first objects of the literary historian, in attempting the survey of any period, is to secure the decisive point from which he may command the lie of the country, and see it as fully as possible in its natural proportions. Such a vantage ground lies usually at some distance from the particular literature. That is one reason why the decisive point of elevation from which to scan the primitive Christian literature is to be found in the traditions which begin to rise by the second half of the second century."

I confess that I was aghast when I read these sentences.

It would be hard to find a falser way of looking at the historical problem, and yet it is so ingenious and plausible, that the unwary reader may for the moment be tempted on with it. There is no analogy, except a verbal one, between the contemplation of scenery from a high point, and the survey of a period in literature. In order to contemplate a scene, it is necessary to reach a point from which the eye can see it; hence one contemplates it best from a higher point at a little distance. In order to survey a literature, one gets into the most intimate sympathy with it. There is the most profound difference; and yet Dr. Moffatt cannot see the difference. He labours to emphasise the analogy by verbal touches. The "decisive point" for the Christian literature is where "the traditions begin to rise," just as the "decisive point" for that part of the Tay valley is where the "bold projecting rock on Craig Vivean rises"; but this is purely verbal trifling. If one is going to study the Elizabethan period of literature, one does not "secure the decisive point" in the period of Queen Anne or George I. One saturates oneself with the Elizabethan work, and grows into sympathy with it by close communion. The second half of the second century was a period quite as alien to the Apostolic period as that of A.D. 1702-1730 was to the Elizabethan period. One cannot ascend a "decisive point" in a later period. Nor can one judge the older period better, or survey it more comprehensively, or appreciate it more sympathetically, by attempting to place oneself amid a later and uncomprehending group of writers. The whole idea is a verbal conceit.

It is true that one often feels, in appraising the work of some contemporary author, that it is necessary to wait and to look back on him from some point in the future, before one can determine with confidence his rank in the literature of the world. One is too near him to judge rightly his comparative rank. But this is because one is afraid lest

familiarity may warp the judgment when the comparison is with writers from whom one is further removed ; and it gives no reason to think that in trying to understand and sympathise with the literature of a remote period one should look at it from " a vantage point " in a later and utterly uncomprehending time.

The truth is that Dr. Moffatt is trying to snatch some justification for his false historical method from any side ; and, to his literary way of judging, this very clever verbal analogy presented itself as a real analogy and a powerful argument. It is his method throughout this book to put himself among " the traditions which begin to rise by the second half of the second century," and to regard the New Testament as similar, and as most easily seen and understood through the analogy. He is everywhere trying to do what he plans out for himself in these sentences which have just been quoted, and the result is—this book, utterly unsympathetic, absolutely external, and wholly unappreciative of the finest side of the literature that it treats.

IV. THE FIRST AND THE LATE SECOND CENTURY.

An extreme example of Dr. Moffatt's want of sensitiveness to the real nature of the New Testament literature may be quoted from p. 315 f., where he speaks " of the perplexing differences between the Christian literature of the first and that of the second century. The latter reveals a series of striking personalities, while the New Testament literature, which is practically synonymous with the literature of the Church during the first century, has only one writer whose personality is well marked, i.e. the Apostle Paul. Luke, the historian, is known to us mainly from his writings, and these, from their very nature, are objective rather than subjective. The John of Asia Minor, whom we can detect behind the Johannine literature, must have been a commanding figure, but we cannot feel him breathe and move

as we can feel Paul. On the other hand, the second century and its literature reveal strong and versatile personalities from Ignatius to Irenaeus, from Polycarp to Tertullian, from Marcion and even Papias and Hegesippus to Justin, Tatian and Clement of Alexandria."

What do we know about the personality of Papias or Hegesippus or of their life? Nothing at all. What do we know of their works? Nothing but two or three fragments and a lot of riddles. They are not human beings to us. We know not one single action of their lives, and absolutely nothing about their character; and we can only speculate about the nature of their influence on contemporary society and even about the method and quality of their literary work. Yet these are the names which Dr. Moffatt transforms into personalities, and for whom he throws overboard Peter and James and John and Andrew and Philip and the rest.

V. THE PERSONALITY OF PAPIAS AND POLYCARP.

There are, I must confess, in the figure of Papias no riddles for Dr. Moffatt. Papias is his pet child. For Papias he has constructed out of his own fancy a character, and almost a personality, without any basis in ancient record, purely on the ground of his unhesitating penetration to the soul of those allusions which to most of us are riddles. He sees him, with Marcion and Hegesippus, stand forth as "strong and versatile personalities" in the brilliant light of the later second century, where we can only see them like shadows of "men as trees walking" in the dimness of that obscure period. It is just because Dr. Moffatt has pondered over that misty figure until he has re-invested Papias with his own conceptions of history that he loves and admires him so much. But that ought to be reserved for his own private meditations. The portrait of Papias ought to hang in his study, not to adorn his book. It belongs to himself, not to the world.

Polycarp is a gracious, attractive and even dignified figure, as we see him amid the darkling twilight ; but “ versatile ” is the least applicable epithet that could have been selected for him. We know him in his personality very well : he is a real human being for us : so far Dr. Moffatt is right. He enjoyed the unbounded veneration of the Asian Christians, and he deserved it. He was regarded by the pagans as “ the father of the Christians,” and as the most dangerous enemy of the old gods. But “ versatile ” ! Hear what Lightfoot, his devoted admirer, says of him. “ Polycarp’s mind was essentially unoriginative. It had, so far as we can discover, no creative power. His epistle is largely made up of quotations and imitations. . . . He himself never rises above mere commonplace. A steadfast stubborn adherence to the lessons of his youth and early manhood—an unrelaxing, unwavering hold of ‘ the word that was delivered to him from the beginning ’—this, so far as we can read the man from his own utterances or from the notices of others, was the characteristic of Polycarp.”¹ A noble and dignified figure in his life, a pathetic and still more dignified figure in his death. But what is he or any of the others in Dr. Moffatt’s list in comparison with John or Peter or even James, as they stand before us in the literature of the New Testament ?

Of course, when Dr. Moffatt has ejected most of the New Testament out of the realm of authenticity, then “ the literature of the New Testament ” becomes scanty and the period to which it belongs is left in mist. There remains, according to him, only Paul (who, however, loses Ephesians and 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus) ; and Paul, though considerably annotated and enlarged in parts, still throws, as Dr. Moffatt admits, a bright light on the period between 50 and 60 or 62 A.D. ; but after Paul the darkness sets in, and Luke and Mark fail to lighten it. Mark has been edited

¹ Lightfoot, *Ignatius and Polycarp*, i. p. 458.

until he is no longer recognisable ; Luke is far from thoroughly trustworthy ; and hence, I suppose, Dr. Moffatt fails to find any individuality or personality in Peter, who to us old-fashioned people is such a vivid, powerful, real and human figure. One who set any store by the testimony of Luke in the Acts and in the Gospel could never find Peter or John so faint and unsatisfying. But it is quite natural that Dr. Moffatt should emerge from his study of Ephesians, the Pastorals, the Catholic Epistles of James, Peter and John, the Revelation, and the Fourth Gospel, "with a sense of baffled curiosity, which almost deepens into despair at some points." He has smashed up to his own complete and undoubting satisfaction the greatest epoch of literature, and he finds that there remains in it only the lay figure of a man of the province Asia named John, "whose breathing he cannot hear and whose motion he cannot see."

But those men of the later second century ! they are Dr. Moffatt's heroes. He knows them : he feels really interested in them : he finds none of the difficulties which we find in comprehending them. Take one example of the way that he handles the evidence about them.

W. M. RAMSAY.

(To be continued.)

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT.

THE day of atonement was celebrated on the 10th of Tishri and was one of the most impressive feasts of the Israelitic calendar, by reason of the severe earnest of its rites and the deep humiliation of Israelitic believers before their Creator. It is the only day on which fasting is obligatory during all the twenty-four hours of the day. On other fast days it was forbidden to eat or drink from sunrise until sunset, but on this day it was not allowed to eat or drink from sunset until sunset.

The regulations of the Law are found in Leviticus xvi. This chapter is generally assigned by critical scholars to the post-exilic period and is supposed to belong to the so-called Priestly Code. In other parts of the Pentateuch, that are not assigned to this Code, the day of atonement is not mentioned. Therefore it is supposed that this day does not belong to the old pre-exilic feasts, but is a later invention of the priests, in order to quicken the people's sense of sin. It is the keystone of the whole system, the last consequence of the principle, "Ye shall be [ceremonially] holy, for I am holy" (*Enc. Bibl.* i. 385).

According to the school of Wellhausen the exilic and post-exilic priests described sin chiefly as an offence against the ceremonial regulations of the Law. These regulations being very complicated it was necessary to open various ways for atoning for sins. Therefore, the sin offerings were classed with the offerings and sacrifices of the pre-exilic Law. Everybody, who was aware of his shortcomings, might atone for himself by a sacrifice. "The sin-offerings throughout the year, however, left many unknown or 'secret' sins. This was the reason for the institution of the Day of Atonement—that the Israelites might annually make a complete atonement for all sin, and that the sanctuary might be cleansed" (*ibid.*). This theory regards the Day of Atonement as the result of a development of religious thought, and therefore agrees with the evolutionistic tendencies of present historical research. But we cannot study the religious ideas connected with this day without discovering many facts, which show that this theory meets great difficulties, and is not satisfactory at all. It was the fault of higher criticism that it did not pay sufficient attention to the archaeological side of the question.

The Hebrew word for Day of Atonement is *Yom hakippurim*. This term not only means "day of atonement,"

but also "day of atonement-offerings." This name does not only refer to the sacrifices of the high-priest in the temple as mentioned in Leviticus xvi., but also to the many private sacrifices the Jews used to kill on this day. The Old Testament does not mention these private sacrifices, but the Rabbinical literature informs us about the custom of "beating Kapporeth," that is, of sacrificing a white cock. They used to swing it thrice round the head, proclaiming it to be an offering for atonement. Then they laid their right hand on the cock's head and killed it. Before sacrificing the cock a confession of sins was recited. For the religious life of the Jews these offerings were even more important than those that were sacrificed in the temple of Jerusalem, as only a very few of all the Jews in various lands could incidentally attend the service in the temple. If they could do so, it was perhaps only once in their lifetime, but the 10th of Tishri was to be observed every year, and the sins had to be atoned for.

According to the common belief, the 10th of Tishri is the last day of the "period of decision." The Hebrew New Year's Day is celebrated on the 1st of the seventh month Tishri. On this day God begins to consider the destiny of mankind in the coming year. The final decision is taken on the 10th of Tishri. Therefore, this day is of the utmost importance for the Israelite. If no atonement is made for his sins he can only expect to be struck by the wrath of the Lord in the year to come. The Jews used to make many vows. In all kind of circumstances a vow was supposed to be helpful. But not always the vows were fulfilled. Therefore they revoked on the eve of the Day of atonement all vows they might have made during the past year, without fulfilling them, in order not to begin the New Year burdened by the sin of unfulfilled vows. Until the present day the name of this eve is "Kol Nidre," that is "[the revoking of] all vows."

From this custom it is obvious that we cannot separate the day of atonement from the New Year's Day, both days being the beginning and the end of a holy period. On the 1st of Tishri "the books were opened." The Lord of Lords was surrounded by the holy angels, and decided about life and death of men. According to the Talmud (Rosh hashshena 16 a. b.) there were three books. In the first book the names were written of all righteous men. In the second volume the names of the wicked men were written, who were all to die in the coming year. In the third volume the names were found of all those who were neither perfectly righteous nor perfectly bad. They had a chance until the 10th of Tishri. So it is easily understood that the period from 1st until 10th Tishri was devoted to fasting and self-humiliation, and that the last day of this period was the greatest fast-day of the whole year.

It is generally assumed that these ideas are of Babylonian origin, and it is supposed that they were borrowed by the exiles from the Babylonian religion. It is quite certain that the Babylonians too believed that the god Marduk held the tables of destiny and that the destiny of mankind was decided upon in the holy council that was held in the great temple of Babylon from 8th until 11th Nisan, the first month of the year. The various gods left their own shrines and went, in holy procession, to the council that was held in the chamber of destiny. But it is also certain that not only the Babylonians believed in the importance of the first days of the year for the destiny of mankind. Moreover, we find in the Israelitic literature of the pre-exilic period the same conception of the government of God as is supposed by the customs practised on the day of atonement.

In 1 Kings xxii. 19 we are told that the prophet Micah saw the Lord sitting on His throne and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left. He sent

out various spirits as his messengers and obviously is like a king, surrounded by his servants. The same conception we find in Isaiah vi. So there can be no doubt about the fact that the conception of God as found in the rabbinical literature is by no means post-exilic.

Furthermore, it is stated in Exodus xxxii. 32 (assigned by the school of Wellhausen to E) that the Lord writes down in a book the names of men. Moses says, "If thou wilt, forgive their sins; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever has sinned against me, him I will blot out of my book." Another pre-exilic text, mentioning this book in Isaiah iv. 3: "Every one that remains in Jerusalem shall be called holy, every one who is written down for life in Jerusalem." The same conception of the government of God we find in 1 Samuel xxv. 29, "The soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God"; and in Jeremiah xxii. 30, "Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, as man that shall not prosper in his days." From these texts it is obvious that Jahve is supposed to rule Israel by means of registers and books. In Ezekiel xiii. 9 the Lord says that "the false prophets shall not be written in the register of the house of Israel." So there is no reason for assuming that the reference to the Book of Life in Psalm lxix. 29, cxxxix. 16, is to be assigned to Babylonian influence.

The date of the day of atonement is the 10th of the seventh month (Tishri). This cannot be explained by the theory that the day of atonement originated in the theological system of the post-exilic priests. In the post-exilic period the year commenced in the spring, Nisan being the first month. We expect, therefore, that the date of the sacred days invented by the priests of this period will correspond to the post-exilic calendar, but instead of this we find the astonishing fact that New Year's Day and the day of atone-

ment are celebrated in the middle of the year. We can only understand this if we admit that the Israelitic New Year's Day was an old and popular feast, that could not be removed to Nisan, as this month became the first month of the year.

We do not know when the custom arose to begin the year at the equinox of the spring instead of at the equinox in the autumn. It is generally accepted that the change of the calendar dates from the Babylonian captivity. But it is highly probable that the Israelitic year began in the spring at least a century before the exile. In the book of Jeremiah all dates refer to a year beginning in the spring. In the Hebrew text of Jeremiah xxxvi. 22 the ninth month is a winter month, the king sitting then in the winter-house, a brasier burning before him. In the time of Zechariah Israelitic tradition knew that the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed in the fifth month. In old times the various months had special names. In the Book of Kings and Jeremiah and in the later calendar, however, the months are indicated by the ordinal numerals. The reference to the fifth month therefore implies that the year began in the spring. The only instances of old names of months are found in the narrative of the building of Solomon's temple and in some old laws (1 Kings vi. 1, 37, 38; viii. 2; Exod. xiii. 4; xxiii. 15; xxxiv. 18). They obviously belong to a remote period. It is easily understood that Deuteronomy used the old term "month Abib" in Deuteronomy xvi. as it pretended to date from the times of Moses. We have no certainty at all that the dates in the books of Kings and Jeremiah are post-exilic substitutes for other pre-exilic terms. It seems far more probable that the year commenced in the spring at the time of Jeremiah. The influence of Assyria was predominating over Western Asia since the ninth century B.C. The cult of the *seba hašsamaim*

proves that Israel has felt this influence. Therefore it is quite possible that the beginning of the year was shifted to the spring season a long time before the exile. In any case there can be no doubt about the celebration of the New Year's Day in the pre-exilic period.

Obviously the way in which it is celebrated is a very old one. All over the world we find the custom of making noise on this day by yelling, ringing bells, etc. It is generally believed that the evil spirits are dangerous on this day. The gods are gathered in holy council for discussing the event of the coming year. Consequently there is a lack of control on this day and the evil spirits are ready to make use of this great opportunity. It is a common view that evil spirits may be frightened by noise of bells or other musical instruments and so we understand the Israelitic custom of blowing trumpets on the 1st of the seventh month. In Leviticus xxiii. 23 and Numbers xxix. 1 the day is said to be "a day of blowing of trumpets unto you," and we know from the rabbinical literature that every one used to blow trumpets on this day.

So the customs practised on this day show that New Year may be an old Israelitic feast. Notwithstanding this we do not find this day mentioned in the lists of feasts assigned by the Wellhausen school of critics to the pre-exilic period. Neither in Exodus xxiii. nor in Exodus xxxiv. nor in Deuteronomy is it mentioned.

This fact can be easily accounted for as Exodus xxxiii. and Deuteronomy xvi. enumerate the pilgrimage-festivals only, without mentioning other holy days, on which it was not obligatory "to appear before the Lord," as on Mazzoth, Pentecost and the feast of tabernacles. So, for instance, the new moon is not mentioned in Exodus xxiii. and Deuteronomy xvi. Nevertheless, it was a holy day according to numerous texts belonging to the pre-exilic literature (1 Sam. xx. 4 ;

2 Kings iv. 23 ; Amos viii. 5 ; Hos. ii. 13 ; Isaiah i. 13). This shows that we must be careful in reasoning from these lists to the post-exilic origin of those feasts that are not mentioned in them.

The name "New Year's Day" does not occur in the Pentateuch. In Leviticus xxiii. 23 and Numbers xxix. 1 the day is simply called "the 1st day of the seventh month." Nevertheless it must have been known as Rosh haššana (New Year) in the pre-exilic period, as Ezekiel xl. 1 uses this term. In this chapter the name of the first ten days appears to be "New Year," the hand of the Lord being upon Ezekiel in the Rosh haššana, on the tenth day of the month. The tenth day here is supposed to be included in the term Rosh haššana. In the Rabbinical literature the term Rosh haššana is also applied to the 1st day of the seventh month. It is to be noted that Ezekiel assumes that Rosh haššana has nothing to do with the beginning of the calendar-year, for the 1st day of the first month occurs Ezekiel xxix. 17 without any allusion to New Year.

From Ezekiel xl. 1 we understand that the day of atonement is mentioned in Leviticus xxiii. 26 ff. and Numbers xxix. 7 ff. directly after New Year's Day, these days being closely connected to one another. Until the present time there is great resemblance between the celebration of the two days in the Synagogue. On both days a trumpet is blown by an official, who is dressed in mourning dress, and no Hallel is to be sung, the Lord being supposed too busy with the books, and therefore not to be disturbed.

The ritual of the day of atonement, as found in Leviticus xvi., describes the day as a day of hallowing of the priests, the temple and the people. This is generally supposed to be the result of the theological opinions of the post-exilic priests, but as a matter of fact we find that in various religions the temples were hallowed once a year. Ezekiel made an

attempt to have the temple hallowed twice a year, on the 1st of the first month and on the 1st of the seventh month (Ezek. xlv. 18, 19, LXX). He would not have tried to introduce this novelty if no yearly hallowing of the temple was known. We understand his attempt if we assume that he wanted to apply the ceremonies of the old New Year also to the real beginning of the calendar-year in the spring-season. Therefore no serious objection can be made against the pre-exilic date of Leviticus xvi. 32-34, saying that the high priest shall make atonement once in the year for the temple and for the people.

It is also difficult to assume that the other parts of the ritual are post-exilic innovations. Leviticus xvi. 7 prescribes that Aaron shall take two goats and cast lots, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Israel. The latter goat is burdened with the sins of the people and is supposed to carry them away into the desert in the same way as the bird in Leviticus xiv. 4 carried away the leprosy into the open field. This way of removing evil influences by no means agrees with the religious ideas of the post-exilic priests, these being monotheists in the strict sense of the word. Ceremonies like those, however, are very common in primitive religion and are to be classed with the various magical practices by which illness and evil were expelled by the old Semitic priests. These practices, however, were regarded by the post-exilic priests to be inconsistent with pure religion. Therefore we are compelled to assume that the sending away of the he-goat was a very old custom, that could not be done away with by the priests of Jahve. Azazel in any case is a demon of the desert, who has nothing to do with the pure cult of Jahve as is supposed to have been introduced by P.

Leviticus xvi. 12, 13 contain another instance of primitive religious thought. Aaron shall not enter into the holy place

before the ark without making a cloud of incense that covers the ark. "He shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the Lord . . . and he shall put the incense upon the fire, that the cloud of incense may cover the ark, that he die not." These last words "that he die not" explains why the cloud of incense must cover the ark. According to the old belief one cannot see God without dying (Judges vi. 23, xiii. 22; Gen. xxxii. 30; Exod. xxxiii. 20). The cloud is to protect Aaron and to prevent him from seeing God. This implies the personal presence of God in the holy place and is, therefore, inconsistent with the supposed transcendental conception of God, ascribed by the critics to P.

Furthermore, it is highly improbable that Leviticus xvi. 12, 13 should have been written in the post-exilic period. In these verses reference is made to the ark. The Kapporeth, mentioned in verses 2, 13, 14, 15, is, according to Exodus xxv. 17 ff., a golden plate covering the ark. Now scholars concur in assuming that the second temple of Zerubbabel did not contain the ark. The holy place then was empty. We fail to understand how the priests of the temple of Jahve could make and promulgate a law in which the temple was said to contain the ark of which everybody knew that it did not even exist.

An objection of the school of Wellhausen against the pre-exilic date of Leviticus xvi. is the theory that no sin and guilt-offerings existed in the pre-exilic period. The sacrifices of Leviticus xvi. are sin-offerings and are consequently assigned to the fifth or fourth century B.C. As I tried to show in the EXPOSITOR of October, 1910, p. 323, we learn from 2 Kings xii. 7 that they are by no means an invention of the post-exilic priests. In the same article I argued that Leviticus i. 5, where also is dealt with the sin- and guilt-offerings, must be assigned to the pre-exilic period. I refer

to this article for the arguments supporting the thesis that the fundamental idea of atoning for sins by offerings was by no means unknown in the pre-exilic Jahvistic religion.

A more serious objection against a pre-exilic day of atonement may be derived from Ezekiel and Nehemiah viii.

How is it that Ezekiel does not mention this day if it existed already before the exile? The answer to this question is that the list of feasts in Ezekiel xlv. 9-25 does not prove anything for the date of the feasts not mentioned in it. For some reason unknown to us Ezekiel omitted in this chapter Pentecost. He deals with the duty of the prince in the various feasts, and mentions sabbaths, new moons, the first day of the first and of the seventh month, passover and the feast of tabernacles. Pentecost is not mentioned. Nevertheless it existed in the time before Ezekiel and was also celebrated after the Babylonian captivity. The only possible reason for this omission is that Ezekiel wished to drop this feast, perhaps for some heathenish customs connected with it. In the same way and for the same reason he may have omitted the day of atonement.

In Nehemiah viii. we find mentioned a joyous celebration on the first day of the seventh month, and a celebration of the feast of tabernacles on the fifteenth of that month, without any allusion to a day of atonement on the tenth day. But on the twenty-fourth day a general fast with confession of sins was held. On this ground scholars assume that the day of atonement was not yet known. But this conclusion is not justified, as Nehemiah viii. does not narrate about ordinary but about extraordinary circumstances. The promulgation of the law by Ezra was a new departure. The people wept and mourned on the first day after listening to the contents of the law, and it took several days before the law was read. We easily understand that in those circumstances the annual day of fasting and mourning was

postponed until the 24th. It may be that Ezra's law-book also intended to drop the day of atonement, and therefore did not mention it. We are not able to decide whether the day was postponed or whether it was not mentioned at all in the law promulgated by Ezra, as we do not possess the law-book he read before the people (see EXPOSITOR for October 1910, pp. 307-316). The general fast and confession of sins on the 24th shows in any case that the customs of the day of atonement were not unfamiliar to the Jews of this period. So neither Ezekiel nor Nehemiah viii. prove that the day of atonement was an innovation of the fourth century B.C.

If we study Leviticus xvi. not only from a critical but also from an archaeological point of view we are compelled to assume that the day of atonement originated in the old Israelitic belief that the Lord rules mankind and that He destines the fate of men according to His severe righteousness.

B. D. EERDMANS.

DR. LEPSIUS ON THE SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE OF THE REVELATION.¹

A. INTRODUCTION (*concluded*).

In the second place, we must always keep in consideration the "astrological" views of the ancients. The heavens, as I have tried to show, following and simplifying Dr. Lepsius, were a book of Divine truth always open before them, and a guide and clock and calendar given by God to show them what was useful for them. This book and this calendar they had to learn by study to understand. The information was there; but teaching was needed before one could read what was written in the sky. Some familiarity with astronomical facts was far more necessary and far more

¹ On p. 466, l. 3 from bottom of text: for "December" read "October."