

ARTICLE IV.

PROFESSOR MOORE'S COMMENTARY ON THE
BOOK OF JUDGES.¹

THIS is one of the series issued by Charles Scribner's Sons, under the editorship of Drs. Briggs, Driver, and Plummer. It is mechanically well executed, and the proof-reading appears to be noticeably thorough. It has the merit of great condensation, by the use of abbreviations instead of complete titles of works referred to, and by the abundant use of smaller type for the minuter critical notes and remarks. It includes brief grammatical observations on nearly ninety points, and incidentally discusses, more or less, some forty-eight passages outside of Judges, one-third of them in the book of Joshua. It shows extensive scholarship in certain lines, and aims to give a summary of different opinions, many of which are more matters of curiosity than of importance. The views and methods with which the author is most in sympathy are those of the very advanced German school, and he rather summarily disposes of expositions like those of the Speaker's Commentary, Cassel (in Lange), and Keil, as well as of most authorities, e. g. Sayce (pp. 24, 26, 85) and Conder (pp. 47, 212), that are not in accord with his views. At the same time, he admits that Bachmann's unfinished commentary, though "his standpoint is that of Hengstenberg, and he is a staunch opponent of modern criticism of every shade and school," yet "in range and accuracy of scholarship and exhaustive thoroughness of treatment stands without a rival,"—a somewhat noteworthy fact.

¹Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges. By Dr. George Foot Moore, Professor of Hebrew in Andover Theological Seminary.

As to the date of Judges, the author assigns the introductory account, i.-ii. 5, to an editor later than ii. 6-xvii. 31, which last was not written before the beginning of the sixth century B. C., and very likely "some decades later," although partly derived from two older sources, one belonging to the first half of the ninth century, the other (E E²) to the end of the eighth or first half of the seventh; while xvii.-xxi. contains two old "stories" (Micah and the Gibeon outrage), the latter very old, but overlaid with later "versions" or "strata," the "secondary version" being the product of the fourth century B. C.

This, however, is but a general statement of the case; for we encounter in the sequel a multitude of interpolations, glosses, displacements, redactions, harmonizings, changes by "the editor," "a later editor," "a later writer," "addition of a scribe," "more than one source," etc., indefinitely. In addition to these conveniences, there is found in a note the following noteworthy statement: "J, E, J E, D, R, etc., represent not individual authors whose share in the work can be exactly assigned by the analysis, but stages of the process, in which more than one—perhaps many—successive hands participated, every transcription being to some extent a recension" (p. xxxiii). If any German has asked for an ampler field of circumgyration, his name does not occur to us; so that the stereotype list of letters J, E, J E, D, R, etc., might properly be enlarged by M.

As the basis for this confident assignment of dates to the several parts of Judges, we have the following remarkable statement: "The author's motive, the lesson he enforces, and the way in which he makes the history teach it, are *almost the only data at our command* [our italics] to ascertain the age in which he lived" (p. xvi). This statement is immediately followed by another equally remarkable [our italics again]: "Indefinite as such criteria may seem, they are, when the character is sufficiently marked, among *the most con-*

clusive, and in this case they enable us to determine *beyond reasonable doubt* the period and circle in which the book was written." So again concerning the age of the two alleged sources of chap. ii. 6-xvi. (i. e. fourteen chapters), we read that "almost the only criterion is their relation to their religious development," and "there *are no allusions to historical events* which might serve us as a clue" (p. xxvii). This, it will be seen, is the Kuenen-Wellhausen theory in full, that certain ideas and principles cannot have appeared before such and such a time.¹ 'In pursuance of this method occurs this statement: "That Jahweh's anger as well as his favor is moral, and that therefore his dealing with his people is to be understood on moral premises, was first distinctly taught in the eighth century" (p. xvii). This in the face of the record of Cain, the Flood, the history of Abraham, and the like. But these obstacles, of course, are easily overcome by bringing down the narrative of these events by similar methods. As part of the same theory we read that "Chemosh is the god of Moab just as Jahweh is the god of Israel" (p. 294), and other things to the same purport (pp. 88, 294, 358).

The detailed arguments in support of the alleged dates are, of course, matters of opinion, largely expressed as conjectures and expectations. It is a noteworthy illustration of much of the reasoning, that in admitting that the "stories" in chap. ii. 6-xvi. must have been taken from older sources, the main reasons assigned for the concluding "therefore" (p. xix) are, that some of them have little or no relation to the purpose of the book, and others of them relate things which must have been offensive to the authors. Having settled the question on this kind of logic, the commentary adds, that "such life-like and truthful pictures of a state of society that had passed away centuries before" could not have been transmitted by

¹ The author is precluded from all appeal to linguistic considerations by his multitude of late additions, editings, and glosses.

oral traditions—a much better evidence, and of much wider application than is recognized.

In the discussion of the dates it is curious to observe how a series of precarious suggestions becomes at length, by a reversal of the law of probabilities, a firm conclusion. Thus on pages xx–xxiv we have the following preliminaries:¹ it is quite conceivable; it may very well be; it is easier to understand how; differences which though slight are unmistakable; two explanations may be given; the elements do not seem to be; we should expect to find; which does not appear to be; it is not a remote conjecture; may perhaps be taken as evidence; has obviously not passed through the hands; the simplest hypothesis is; seems to have contained; not improbably also; would have their natural place; such as an author would naturally choose; nor is it at all probable; the conclusion which we desire; great probability; may originally have been; the author may have recognized their importance. The conclusion thus reached by Professor Moore is, that “the age of the older book of Judges is *fixed* within these limits; it may with considerable *confidence* be ascribed to the seventh century.” In a similar style the discussion of other parts of the book proceeds (pp. xxiv–xxx) with such terms as “seems,” “best reason to believe,” “antecedently more probable,” “naturally,” “probably,” “in all probability,” “may have been,” “appear to be,” “it has been conjectured,” “it is quite possible,” “is a natural conjecture,” “seem to point,” “seems to be,” “seems to belong,” “may have been added” (pp. xxiv–xxx). But there is little hesitation in the conclusion drawn from all these conjectures. The cob-house is a stronghold.

Perhaps the best and fairest way of indicating the spirit and method with which this commentary deals with the text, the author, and the theme is to follow it through the first

¹ We cite *verbatim*, though not encumbering the page with quotation-marks.

twenty-two verses, occasionally calling attention by italics of our own. It may be remarked that the individual narratives are almost invariably designated as "stories" and "tales." In some twelve pages of the Introduction (xix-xxxii) the former term occurs twenty-six times, the latter seven times. Now for the commentary.

Chap. i. verse 1. "The original connection of 1 b is lost. It *must have been* preceded at least by an account of the passage of the Jordan and the taking of Jericho, *perhaps* also by a preliminary division of the land," etc. "Inquired of Jahweh—consulted the *oracle* of Jahweh." Verse 2. "The *oracle* designates Judah. . . . Whether this precedence of Judah, like the part assigned to Judah in J's story of Joseph and his brethren, is to be attributed to the Judahite origin of the narrative . . . *cannot well be decided.*" Verse 3. "Whether such a partition of the land actually took place is *a question for historical criticism*: the language of these verses leaves no doubt that *the author so represented it.*" Verse 4. "The verse is superfluous. By the side of verses 5-7 it occasions serious difficulty. . . . It is very clumsy. . . . Probably the narrator having abridged his source by omitting the beginning of the story of Adoni-bezek, filled its place with these general phrases borrowed from the context." Verse 5. "There is good reason to suspect that the beginning of the story of Adoni-bezek has been omitted by the editor." Two pages are devoted to the discussion of the question whether the Adoni-bezek of the text was not originally Adoni-zedek, and, against both the Hebrew and the Septuagint, the commentary adopts the view that it was so, and was changed from the original. It gives the following reason for it: "The motive for such a change need not have been purely harmonistic; this may be one of the not infrequent perversions of proper names *by a contemptuous and silly wit* such as perhaps turned חמנת חרם into חמנת סרם, Josh. xxiv. 30." But what special silliness or attempted wit there would be even in

changing "king of righteousness or justice" into "king of lightning," or what Israelite to the latest generations would have tried either contemptuous or silly wit in connection with a mention of the burial-place of the great leader Joshua (Josh. xxiv. 30), we are left to conjecture. Here we are also informed that Josh. xvii. 15 contains "a gloss." Verse 7. The seventy kings is "an obvious exaggeration," which even Kuenen is not permitted to relieve by questioning its genuineness, nor Kittel by suggesting a possible change of seven to seventy, nor Bachmann by the explanation, "at different times." And while it is notorious that numbers are most difficult of correct transmission, the commentary steadily insists on all the high numbers of Judges in order to impugn and occasionally to ridicule this narrative.

In verse 8, of the transaction there narrated we read, "there is no trace in history," and "the verse has no historical value." It is confronted with chap. i. 21 and Josh. xv. 63; and an explanation accepted by such diverse scholars as Theodoret, Ewald, Keil, Bertheau, Reuss, Bachmann, is ruled out, because "if such had been the author's meaning he would have made it plain"—a very odd reason to be given by a professional exegete in an "Exegetical Commentary." In this same connection the commentator volunteers several pieces of information on his own authority: that the editor of Judges has, as in other places in the chapter, changed "could not" to "did not," and "Judah" to "Benjamin"; that "verse 8, which flatly contradicts verse 21, cannot be genuine," but "was probably inserted by an editor who perhaps interpreted verse 7 as *most interpreters do*"; and that "1 Sam. xvii. 54 is a gross anachronism." In regard to verse 9, "Budde conjectures, with considerable probability, that the verse was inserted here by the editor in place of verses 19, 21 when the latter verses were removed to their present position." Verse 10 needs to be "reconstructed by the aid of the parallel in Joshua. The editor ascribes Caleb's conquest to Judah, and

makes it a victory over the Canaanites, when the older narrative spoke only of Anakim. To accomplish this he removed verse 20 from the beginning of this story to the end of the account of the conquests of Judah and inserted the words enclosed [by Professor Moore] in brackets." The statement of the text concerning the former name of Hebron (Kirjath-arba) is "perhaps an archæological gloss"; and this leads to remarks (outside of the text) on Joshua xiv. 15 and xxi. 11, that a later editor or scribe here made two "miscorrections"—charges which we mention without discussion. In verse 11 "Judah" was originally "Caleb." In regard to the name Kirjath-sepher, meaning (by accord of the Massoretic, Septuagint, and Latin texts and the Targum) "Book-town," we are surprised to read that any supposed "library" there "depends solely on a *possible* Hebrew etymology of a proper name *not of Hebrew origin*"; where the word "possible" is a very minimized way of putting it, and the closing words beg an important question as to the early language of Palestine.

In verse 16, "the text has suffered badly, and the restoration is at more than one point doubtful," and three emendations are proposed. In verse 17, the commentary admits that the writer here, as well as that of Deut. xxi. 3, declares the name Hormah to have been given to Zephath because it was "devoted" or visited with the "herem," but declares that "the etymology is *scarcely historical*"; the name more probably signified inviolable, sacred. The identification of Zephath with the modern Sebaita (by Rowlands, Wilson, Tuch, Palmer, and others) is rejected on the ground that "it is highly improbable that the old Canaanite name Zephath should have survived to our time, while the name Hormah of the Old Testament has entirely perished"—as though there were not scores of Canaanite names still surviving (as proved by the Egyptian records), and the native name far more likely to survive than a memorial name given by non-

residents. An interpolation in Num. xxi. 1 is also suggested as probable. Of verses 18, 19 we read that "the two verses flatly contradict each other." And now "nothing remains but to pronounce verse 19 an editorial addition of the same stamp as verse 8 and of equally unhistorical character." Also "it is probable that the author wrote that the Israelites 'could not drive out the Jebusites'; the verb *יָלַד* was cancelled by R or a scribe on dogmatic grounds." On verse 20 it is said, "'Sons of Anak' (A. V., R. V.) gives the erroneous impression that Anak is the name of the father of these giants—an error which is shared by early Jewish scribes and translators. . . . The article [prefixed to Anak] categorically prohibits taking *אֲנָכִי* as a proper noun." Professor Moore forgets such a case as Ai, which has the article prefixed more than a dozen times (statedly) in Gen. xii., xiii.; Josh. vii., viii.; "the long-necked" might as well become a proper name as "the heap." Also we read that the genealogy [of Arba] Josh. xv. 13, xxi. 11, is the result of a series of blunders. In verse 21 two changes are advocated: "The author doubtless wrote Judah, which was changed by a later hand to Benjamin. . . . Instead of 'did not expel' doubtless the original reading was 'could not expel.'" We are also informed that in chapter v. the probable order of verses was 7, 19, 21 or 7, 21, 19.

We have followed these consecutive verses, a little tediously perhaps, that we might not be thought to misstate the methods and tone of the commentary. It will be observed that throughout the book most of the corrections are made not on the basis of any known divergent text, but without such authority—a process long since ruled out of New Testament criticism. Frequently the changes are alleged to be required by other passages either in Judges or Joshua; but this forced method of harmonizing far exceeds in boldness and extent any of the harmonizing comments of which Professor Moore speaks with so little respect. With this specimen in

view, attention can now be called to some characteristics of the commentary.

It is marked by the utmost freedom in dealing with the text. Judges is in many respects a difficult book for a commentator; and the versions, as well as intrinsic difficulties, indicate errors in transmission. But this does not warrant a wholesale reconstruction, often with no manuscript authority whatever, in order to sustain a theory. But this process of manufacturing a new text is carried on with a weariness of reiteration. Thus, to give a few additional and subsequent specimens, in chap. v. 5 the words "even yon Sinai" (R. V.) are peremptorily pronounced "a gloss," with the addition, "precisely so in Ps. lxxviii. 8" (p. 141). The first verse of chapter iii. is separated into three clauses, assigned to different hands (pp. 76-77), the last being "either an editorial addition derived from 2 b or a gloss intruded into the text in the wrong place"; "not improbably the addition of a scribe" (p. 193); "probably added here by an editor or a scribe" (p. 194); "perhaps an exaggerating addition" (p. 197); "the clause is superfluous, has very likely been borrowed" (p. 199); "the verses belong perhaps to a secondary stratum" (*ibid.*); "the text cannot be right" (*ibid.*); "the contradiction between v. 5 and v. 6" (p. 202); "cannot be part of the original text, the entire verse is the addition of a redactor" (p. 213); "harmonious addition of a redactor" (p. 215); "a later writer," "the hand of the editor" (p. 231); "an editorial exaggeration such as we have noted in a number of other places" (p. 232); "obviously a gloss" (*ibid.*); "the clauses are an editorial addition" (p. 233); "the final editor R p restored chapter ix. which R a had omitted" (p. 235); "may have been inserted by the latest editor" (p. 277); "inserted by the last editor or a still later hand" (p. 297). On page 445 we read that "the story shows in every trait the hand of a post-exilic author. . . . The numerous repetitions may be due in part to the bungling of the author, in part to

glosses by still later hands." On the next page (446) four glosses or additions are suggested, the last of which is that to the word "camp" in the text "the words 'to the assembly' may have been added by a scribe to whom *camp* did not sound sufficiently ecclesiastical." But we refrain. It is a tradition that Professor Moses Stuart used to describe certain expositors as making the Scriptures a nose of wax. What would he have said now?

But the commentary not only knows how the text probably or doubtless was originally, but what the author (or authors) should and "must" have written that he has not. The opening of chapter i. (as already mentioned) "must have been preceded by," etc. (p. 10); the author of vii. 2-8 must have narrated how Gideon called out at least his own tribe Manasseh (p. 196); chapter v. 36 must have been preceded in E by an account of the calling of Gideon (p. 197). Our commentary not only can decide what the author (or authors) should and must have written, but is able to correct his knowledge of his own language. We read that the name Gilgal "seems to be derived from ancient stone-circles, cromlechs," and "the etymology proposed in Joshua v. 9 is more ingenious than plausible" (p. 57); that the place named Bochim (weepers) is not otherwise known, "it is perhaps a far-fetched etymological explanation of a name Beka'im, 2 Sam. v. 23" (p. 60); concerning the spring which quenched Samson's thirst when he "called" and was therefore named En-hakkere, and which, as the commentator concedes, was interpreted by his author as "the spring of the caller," we are told that "in reality the caller is the Hebrew name of the partridge and the original significance of the name was doubtless 'partridge spring.'" Now as the verb קרא, "to call," occurs hundreds of times throughout the Old Testament, and as this form (the participle) occurs about twenty times, sometimes with the article, just as here, הקרא (Isa. vi. 24; Amos ix. 6), meaning "that calls" or "the caller"; inasmuch also as the native Hebrew

narrator, the Septuagint translators, the Latin, the English revisers, and, last of all, Kautsch's translation¹ (Kittel), all coincide; and inasmuch as קרא, "partridge," occurs but twice (1 Sam. xxvi. 20; Jer. xvii. 11) and is itself a derivative of the verb "to call" (Gesenius, Fuerst); and inasmuch as we are not informed what special connection a partridge or partridges, in that age or any age, had with any particular spring, most readers will probably prefer the rendering of the native Hebrew of several hundred years before Christ to that of the native American nineteen hundred years after Christ.

But such profuse emendations, corrections, and dislocations of the text are not, in our judgment, the most questionable qualities of the commentary. Among its most marked characteristics are (1) a somewhat steady disparagement of the truth of the narratives, and (2) a supercilious and disrespectful tone assumed toward the writer or writers. It makes too much the impression of a constant strife with the substance as well as the form of the book. As a general fact, the historic character of the book is disparaged throughout, partially or totally, not by implication merely but by direct statement.

We are glad to find some qualified exceptions. Deborah's Song is admitted to be contemporary with the events (p. 129), and its historical value hardly to be exaggerated (p. 132), though the corruption of the text is "extensive and deep-seated" (p. 129). It is applauded as a work of genius which is alleged to prove that poetry had long been cultivated among the Hebrews. But the commentary is careful to pronounce it the oldest monument of Hebrew literature, and the only contemporaneous monument of Hebrew history before the foundation of the kingdom. One part of its "historical value," apparently, is its supposed fitness to disprove the narrative of Joshua (p. 8). It is pleasant to find the admission (p. 128),

¹ Which Professor Moore says embodies in a sober and conservative spirit the results of modern critical scholarship (p. 1).

that the difficulties in its interpretation are "due to our defective knowledge of its very ancient poetical language, and affect particular words and phrases"; and we gladly recognize the admission elsewhere (e. g. pp. 163, 167, 178, 205) that there are Hebrew words of which the meaning is not known even to the commentator.

The events related of Ehud, also, are "not improbable; the ruse has altogether the air of reality" (p. 91). "What basis of fact the stories of Samson may have it is not easy to tell (p. 315); the historical character of the adventures of Samson may be given up without denying the possibility or even probability that the legend, which is very old, has its roots in the earth not in the sky" [?] (p. 365). Chapters xvii.-xxvii. "have a historical value hardly inferior to that of any in the book" (p. 370)—whatever that value may be. There are occasionally other similar concessions. But the somewhat steady representation of the book and its parts is that they are not historically true. The accounts are almost never narratives, but constantly "stories," sometimes "folk-stories" (pp. 254, 340). The theory of the commentary is, as repeatedly expressed (pp. 62-63, 90; Intr. xxiv), that the book is "a pragmatism, a religious pragmatism," stories constructed on certain "motives" (p. 62); "a pragmatism of which the aim was moral and religious rather than purely historical." And so the editor was "little concerned about historical accuracy" (p. 280). The subjugation of Canaan as related iii. 7 "is highly improbable, if not beyond the bounds of possibility" (p. 85). The commentary goes out of its way to assert that Num. xxv. 6-18, with its sequel xxxi., "has no historical worth" (p. 180). "The historical character of xx.-xxi. 14 will scarcely be seriously maintained" (p. 405). The record of battles, xx. 18-28, "is *not history*, is *not legend*, but the theocratic ideal of a scribe who had never handled a more dangerous weapon than a pen" (p. 431). We have "the fabulous marksmanship" of the Benjamites

(p. 430); two successive verses which "flatly contradict each other" (p. 37); two other successive verses doing the same thing (p. 202); and one composite verse (vii. 23) which "shows that the direction of the flight and pursuit was differently described in the two sources"—as though, even if a writer or editor could be guilty of such transparent follies, all the eyes of more than two thousand years could be blind to them. Perhaps the most extravagant of these charges is found on pages 8 and 9, where we read the remarkable allegations that the representation of the conquest of Canaan (in Judges i.) "contravenes that of the book of Joshua *at all essential points*," and even that "the song of Deborah alone is sufficient to prove this representation [in Joshua] *altogether false*." We will not comment on such intemperateness of speech; the commentary itself recognizes the fact of a conquest, which is assuredly the "essential point," and shows the narrative not *altogether* false but mainly true. This sweeping charge of falsehood is that Joshua represents the conquest as rapid and entire, whereas Judges shows it to be slow and incomplete even to much later times. We will only pause to say that in Josh. xi. 18 we read that "Joshua made war a long time with those kings," and that Dr. Driver says¹ that, by comparison of Josh. xiv. 10 with Deut. ii. 4, "it would seem that the war of conquest occupied about seven years"—a pretty long time—while we are also repeatedly informed in Joshua that the Israelites did not succeed in driving out the natives from various strongholds, but submitted to let them remain, and to live with them "to this day." Doubtless there are difficulties of detail, which it is the legitimate work of an exegete to examine candidly, and solve if practicable, but not to exaggerate, much less to create.

In seeming support of this theory of myths, legends, and folk-stories, we have numerous parallels adduced from pagan mythology, as though there were any ground or plausibility

¹ Introduction, p. 96.

for the notion of a real connection, e. g., Iphigenia (p. 305), Polydamas and Hercules (p. 331), Onesilus (pp. 332-333), the rape of the Sabines (p. 451), "the Greek idea ἀτη" (p. 253), and others; while the calling upon Jehovah is always "consulting the oracle" (pp. 11, 389, 433). Meanwhile the idea of a "moral or religious pragmatism," with which the commentary sets out, is ostentatiously repudiated in individual comments on the several "stories." Deborah's allusion to Sisera's mother is not "the note of woman's pity," but "the pitilessness of triumph, we need not say the exultation of gratified revenge" (p. 167). The Levite's speech to his dead concubine "makes the impression of indescribable brutality, but the *author had no such intention*" (p. 419). We are twice told (pp. 104, 96) that "on the morality of Ehud's deed (assassination) the narrator certainly wasted no reflections." We are told that the slaying of Sisera by Jael "has occasioned great searchings of heart among the apologists," and "that the inspired prophetess should extol Jael for what in all the circumstances bears the appearance of treacherous murder, is of course the greatest difficulty of all"—a difficulty which no attempt is made to relieve, except to add, "We need not follow these interpreters into all the morasses of casuistry into which an unhistorical idea of religion and revelation leads them." That Jephthah in his vow deliberately "intended a human victim" (p. 299) certainly cannot be disproved by putting him on the witness-stand at the present time; but when the commentary pronounces any other view "trivial to absurdity" (*ibid.*), and insists that we must translate "*whosoever* cometh forth" (not *whatsoever*), it appears that the body of English and American revisers are guilty of that trivial absurdity, for they retain the "whatsoever," and put "whosoever" in the margin.¹ And while we never have

¹ This commentary deals as summarily with other Hebrew scholars of high repute as with Judges. Thus (p. 94) the rendering "quarries" of the Targum, Syriac, Jewish, and many Christian commentators, A. V.,

deemed it necessary to defend Samson for what the commentary terms "the scrapes into which his weakness for women brought him," and his "fits of demoniac rage," still we look for some hint of a moral or religious pragmatism in connection with Jephthah and Samson, or some dim intimation of the reason for the mention of them in the list of worthies in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

The list of similar remarks and methods could be greatly enlarged, but we refrain. We have endeavored to state facts with as little of comment as was practicable. It could be wished that the facts were otherwise. One cannot avoid comparing the tone and method of this commentary with those of two others already issued in the same series: the Commentary on Romans by Sanday and Headlam, which earnestly and reverently devotes itself to the unfolding of the meaning and argument of the writer; and even Driver's Deuteronomy, which, though belonging to the same school of criticism, and therefore open to all the objections we have previously stated (October, 1895), is yet respectful and even eulogistic in its modes of statement, and devotes itself largely to the work of interpretation without flippancy or constant wrangling with its author.

We offer a few concluding remarks. First, all apparently honest writers are entitled to respectful treatment. The book of Judges, which has for more than two thousand years been read by the devout men of all generations as a book of Sacred Scripture, certainly should command as respectful discussion as Tacitus or Thucydides, to say the least. Secondly, any historian worthy of a commentator is entitled to a sympathetic and friendly interpretation, unless he clearly shows intentional deception. Thirdly, the work of harmonizing an

R. V., "is an unwarranted departure from the well-known meaning of the word." Examples of a certain usage "collected in the grammars of Green, Gesenius, and especially Driver," are "*superficially* similar" to the case in question (p. 142).

intelligent and important and sometimes obscure or difficult narrative is perfectly legitimate and indispensable. If worthy of a commentary at all, it is deserving of such a commentary; and it is wholly a false position to take the attitude of wrangling with him and his work on every possible opportunity, especially of speaking flippantly and contemptuously of him, and, above all, endeavoring steadily to fasten on a book that has received the respect of all the world's best and wisest men an amount of stupid misstatements and glaring contradictions of which an intelligent child should be incapable. If this commentary had expended half its labor and learning in the endeavor to show that Judges has some consistency and actual permanent value as a *religious history* which has been expended in the opposite direction, it would be an important addition to modern expository treatises. It is freely admitted that the book of Judges presents many and grave difficulties; and therefore the greater need of a wise, candid, skillful, and reverent, as well as learned, commentator. We still wait for his appearance.