

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

such an attempt before made to foist such pure fiction into history." And the treatment of the *Textus Receptus* at the hands of these scholars, who were unfortunately able to impress their views upon the Revisers, has been to mutilate or altogether remove some of the most striking passages in the New Testament. Another point which we think suggests somewhat unfavourable criticism occurs in what we must call the very meagre account of the ancient British Church. Dr. Plummer writes as though he wished to disparage the British Church, and makes the statement that Eusebius omits Britain (p. 138). But in the note he quotes one passage where he speaks of it, and he has also forgotten to quote two passages in the "Life of Constantine" which allude to the early Christianity of Britain. These, however, are slight blemishes. As a specimen of excellent historical argument we would refer to chapter vi., in which the author dissects the early history of the Church of Rome, and shows it to be Greek in its origin, almost Presbyterian in its earlier constitution; with no claim to dictate to other churches; owing as much, if not more, to St. Paul than to St. Peter; not without its heresies and schisms, and without any trace of being regarded by other Churches as the mother and mistress of all. Of the Synod of Sinuessa, at which it was said to have been determined by three hundred bishops that the Pope could only be judged by himself, he says that it is a clumsy fable, whose object is to bolster the claims of the Pope to be above law. It was probably forged about 500 A.D. Of the four Councils said to have been held at Rome in the second century it is said, "All these were probably fictitious. There is no sufficient evidence of any of them." In conclusion, we must say that in our judgment Dr. Plummer has accomplished his task excellently well, and brought into a small compass a great mass of information; and, what is more, has contrived to handle his subject, for the most part, in so attractive a way as to ensure his useful statements being read and digested.

CANON.

Correspondence.

"SHILOH."

To the Editor of THE CHURCHMAN.

SIR,—Dean Perowne has, in nearly five pages of small type, replied to my briefer paper. If I were to examine as minutely every point of his reply, I should have to ask at least as much of your space, but I shall be satisfied if you can permit this shorter response on some denials and questions. I mentioned as a "fact" that "the earliest known *Hebrew*

text is the *Massoretic*," meaning, of course, the earliest that has been *preserved*. Of *lost* texts, whatever the evidence for such, I did not speak. The Dean asks two questions as to my meaning, and adds a third as to my repeating "the extraordinary blunder of the *Quarterly* reviewer," concluding with the declaration that my statement is "contrary to the most certain 'facts,' and referring me to the Dean of Canterbury's papers in the *CHURCHMAN* of March, 1886. Well, the latter says, "The work of the Massorettes was to contrive a system which made the *traditional* method of reading the Scriptures independent of oral teaching and memory." Of course the Massorettes worked upon a text, then known, which they "fenced" to "prevent (says the same writer) any deviation whatever from that which they had received;" but no earlier text than theirs now exists, and, since the aim of the Massorettes was to preserve it from deviation for the future, *its value as to any reading is special*. The Dean of Canterbury may answer Dean Perowne's next question as to "what evidence there is that שִׁלְחָה was 'the inherited' reading," when it first appears "in the Talmud in the sixth century." He says, "I believe the Massoretic text to be eminently good and trustworthy by the evidence of the many witnesses which the good providence of God has given us, from various countries and of various dates, but all testifying to the substantial accuracy of the Jewish *traditional* text." If שִׁלְחָה was not the "inherited" reading, it must have been a Massoretic corruption; but Dean Payne Smith says, "The Massorettes did not *tinker up* their text"!

Dean Perowne next denies my statement about the early versions being all derived from the Septuagint. "The Samaritan Version (he says) was not made from the Septuagint, neither were the Targums." Grinfield says, "Hence it has been wisely and providentially ordered that every ancient version of the Old Testament, with the single exception of the Syriac, should have been formed on the basis of the Greek Septuagint," and Dean Payne Smith says, "It is curious, nevertheless, that both this Targum (Onkelos) and the Samaritan Version and Pentateuch all show signs of the influence of the Septuagint, which is surely a remarkable testimony to its importance" (*CHURCHMAN*, March, 1886).

But the Dean's introduction of the Samaritan Version, as against my statement, is surely an oversight, since that is a translation of the *Samaritan Pentateuch*, and not of the *textus receptus* of the Jews, *about which alone my statement was concerned!* Nevertheless, the Dean of Canterbury's words, just quoted, would justify a like statement, some way, even as to the Samaritan Version and Pentateuch, which I did not refer to; and would even include the *Targum* of Onkelos. But it must be noted that Targums are not literal versions or exact translations, but are explanatory renderings, and therefore, as to accurate examples of a *text*, are not wholly reliable.

Again, the Dean disputes my statement that the Massoretic text represents one of "*unknown antiquity*." His brother Dean once more helps me, who says, "The value of this group (of works) is that they carry the Massoretic text back to the second century, with, upon the whole, unimportant variations." Dean Perowne probably will not assert that its antiquity is *known* not to have been even earlier. I hope he may allow that it is of "*unknown antiquity*," unless he really *knows* the contrary.

The Dean is hot against the Massoretic text. He launches seven questions thereupon, but I cry mercy; he is "very reverend," and very learned, and I am only *mediocriter doctus*: an ignorant man may, it is said, ask a question that would take years for a wise man to answer, but

the Dean reverses the conditions and has infinite odds : let him not abuse his power, but rather put his questions into the form of positive statements : let him tell what he really *knows* against the antiquity of the tradition which the Massora surely represents. I need not consider any "unpleasant conclusions" resulting from an imaginary *perfection* of the Massoretic text, since its *perfection* is not asserted.

I gladly note the Dean's admission that the questioners in the well-known Talmudic passage "might have understood *Shiloh* to mean 'his son,' and still have quoted it as a *name* of the Messiah." That *Shiloh* was the accepted text in the sixth century is not disproved by saying that the Targums "have the other reading;" for the former was a textual quotation, while the Targums are explanatory or paraphrastic renderings, and what their text or texts were is not always provable : they gave the general meaning of passages, not the textual renderings. It is too much to say that "it is *certain* that it (*Shiloh*) was not the reading of the Targum of Onkelos." Dr. Driver (*Philological Journal*, p. 6) says : "Onkelos explains שבט of ruler generally . . . מבין רגליו being interpreted (as substantially in the LXX.) *from his descendants*, and *for ever* being added. In *b* he inserts *Messiah*;" and he notes how popular the "Explanation" of Onkelos became. He next speaks of the Jerusalem Targum as likewise "explaining" the text "substantially as Onkelos." Neither Targum has the character of textual rendering, but rather of paraphrase or explanation. I wish Dean Perowne would allow a little more for this characteristic of the Targums.

The Dean still is exigent for the "sense" and "meaning" of *Shiloh*. Perhaps it is, as the angel told Manoah, a "secret." Dr. Driver says "the true etymology of Hebrew proper names is not unfrequently uncertain or obscure." That the *Shiloh* reading is a tradition and represents some "earliest text" is very probable, though the Dean says it "first crops up in the sixth century;" yet he admits now very candidly that "certainly the reading rests upon *some* tradition"! Now, at the date when the reading is first quoted, it was either a "tinkering up" or a handing down; but the Dean of Canterbury rejects the former, and carries back the Massoretic text to the second century, and this surely satisfies my saying about *some earliest text*. Yet Dean Perowne "*knows*" that the other reading did exist for eight centuries before; and "there is one unambiguous reading in which all the versions agree, though they do not all render it alike." It is hard to allow this curious assertion. The word "*Shiloh*" was either ambiguous, as its several renderings may suggest, or the versions lose some authority as witnesses for any reading; but, notwithstanding this *one* reading "in which all the versions agree," the Dean yet says, "The best supported and probably earliest rendering of the LXX. is τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ—until the things that are reserved for him come"—a rendering and reading surely inconsistent with the previous statement.

The Dean challenges me to disprove his "facts." Well, letting my own stand, I remark upon "fact" (1) that it is not exact. Did the Dean forget his quotation of the Samaritan text and version, which has another reading, or his quotation of the LXX., which has yet another? I doubt that the Dean *knows* what Hebrew text the Seventy had to translate from, for their rendering is uncertain, and, whichever be used, it seems more like a Targuming of a doubtful original text than a literal translation. Then, "from the third century B.C. to the second A.D.," no reading at all is known but the uncertain LXX., and the Dean's referee (Dr. Payne Smith) has fairly carried back the Massoretic text to the latter date contemporary with the versions. The Dean's second "fact" is a little vague,

but not very distressing: "Some Jewish authorities (two only?), as the Targum Jerushalmi and Saadyah, have still this reading, and do not apparently know of any other." On the other hand, "Many . . . accepted the reading *Shiloh*" (third "fact"). The third "fact" is rather an adverse admission as to the main question—the reading: "*Many*, even of the Rabbis, who accepted the *Shiloh* reading (with the 'inserted) nevertheless did not take it as a proper name, but . . . interpreted it to mean 'his (i.e., Judah's) son.'" Yes; and another Targum (pseudo-Jonathan) "*explained Shiloh by his youngest child*," according to Professor Driver. The fourth "fact" must be qualified by the knowledge that the Talmud and Midrash (*Shiloh* in both) were greatly studied in the "schools" of the eminent Jewish Rabbis, and that the Massoretic text was the *textus receptus* and a ruling authority with the Jews. The fifth "fact" is doubtful—a repetition of No. 1—unless the careful and learned Dean Payne Smith is wrong in carrying back the Massoretic text to the second century A.D. We are not certain that *Shiloh* was first heard of in the sixth century; inferences are not proofs. The probability is otherwise. The "Variorum" Bible (Drs. Driver and Cheyne) says very temperately of the readings other than *Shiloh* in the "*Sam. Targums, Pesh.*, perhaps also *Sept. Theod.*," that "*they may have had another reading*"! Did the Dean forget the Samaritan Arabic reading *Saliman*=Solomon, and the Mauritanian Version with its *Shiloh* reading?

I am truly sorry if I did "mutilate" the Dean's words. I did not mean to do so, but only to save your space by leaving out what was mere argument. Alas! the most *bonâ-fide* quotation too often provokes a like complaint, but not seldom unreasonably.

TEMPLE EWELL, DOVER.
March 12, 1887.

W. F. HOBSON.

Reviews.

World without End. By SAMUEL GARRATT, M.A., Hon. Canon of Norwich. Second Edition. Hunt and Co. 1886.

IT is not surprising that this thoughtful treatise has reached a second edition. Its author has handled some very difficult subjects. His researches penetrate, at times, the very verge of the present limits to human investigation. But his manner of inquiry is uniformly reverent and intensely loyal to Holy Scripture.

With an instinct common to many intelligent students of the Bible he has carefully acquainted himself with several departments of natural science. But in the early chapters of his work he does not merely show that he is well read in Geology and Zoology. His references to such topics as the *Ice Age*, *Pleiocene fossils*, the *Machairodos* of ancient, and the *pigeon* of modern, days, are made, as Milton wrote his poem, in order to

"Assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

By a line of argument which deserves careful attention, though supported by a questionable interpretation of "*he who hath subjected the*