

6. The absolute cessation on the part of the Welsh clergy of all reprisals on Nonconformist attacks. Churchmen have no right to offer advice to the Nonconformists; but if that policy could be zealously and enthusiastically adopted, there can be no doubt which would be the winning side.

7. The universal cultivation of friendly relations on the part of the clergy towards all the Nonconformist ministers, no matter how bitterly they may feel their conduct. "In honour," all Christians are bound to "prefer one another." Love is the real conquering element, not war.

8. The recognition by the clergy that the great upheaval of the Reformation, necessitated by the degradation of the Catholic Church in previous ages, brought consequences which cannot now be undone, and of which it is the true Christian policy to make the best; asserting the Episcopal principles of Hooker, Jewel, Andrewes, Cosin, Bancroft and Hall rather than those of Cyprian.

9. Restitution to the Welsh dioceses of the status of a distinct province, so that, while still remaining, like the Province of York, an integral part of the National Church, they could reorganize some of their customs and institutions freely on indigenous needs and principles. Small national churches or provinces were common in primitive times.

10. A wise and vigorous application of discipline for the correction of any irregularities, which may possibly here and there remain.

God grant that all His people may serve Him in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life!

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.



ART. VI.—THE GENUINENESS OF THE PENTATEUCH.

THE dismay occasioned by the publication of Dr. Driver's book on Old Testament Criticism, and its acceptance, not only by the leading experts at both Universities, but by the representatives of one great theological school among us, is rapidly subsiding. This is the result of the appearance of such books as Professor Leathes' "The Law in the Prophets," Mr. F. Watson's treatise on Genesis, the Bishop of Bath and Wells' volume on Chronicles, and, above all, Professor James Robertson's "Early Religion of Israel," beside a vast number of articles and other contributions to the literature of the subject. It is sufficiently clear that the critics *par excellence* are not to have the field entirely to themselves. They will be subjected to a criticism as unsparing as that to which they

have subjected the Books of Moses, and they are not likely to come out less damaged than the Pentateuch itself from the ordeal. The theologians, too, who have been in such needless haste to come to terms with them, will probably be inclined to repent of their rashness. The *Church Quarterly* for January has shown the danger of these premature reconciliations. The idea of special creations, it tells us, was at first broached by geologists, but was eagerly taken up by theologians and erected into an article of faith. A similar course has been unwisely taken by many in regard to evolution. But it is even worse when we are introduced to a serious modification of the accepted belief in regard to the two natures in Christ in order to pave the way to the acceptance of a critical theory, which every man endowed with foresight must have known to be already doomed. As the book to which this article refers¹ plainly points out, the critics are men of one idea. They devote themselves to the discovery of contradictions, and in a book composed under such conditions as the Pentateuch, it would be a wonder if they did not find as many as they wish to find. There would doubtless be plenty of roughnesses, irregularities and blemishes in a *chef d'œuvre* of art, did one but examine it with a microscope; but such a process would be very ill adapted to discover its true character. And so a microscopic criticism can discover all kinds of discrepancies and variations of style in a book, the truth, beauty and harmony of which, from a higher point of view, have for centuries been the wonder of the world. The explanation of the favourable reception this criticism has obtained at the Universities is a simple one. University teachers are rapidly developing—or shall we say retrograding?—from theologians into specialists. But theology in its true aspect is designed to touch and guide the human heart. Isaac Williams, in his "Autobiography," says that no man is a good theologian who has not also been a parish priest. And certainly, how much favour soever they may obtain at the Universities, the dry bones of a disintegrating criticism, though they may alarm, unsettle, confuse, will never be able to gain a hold on the hearts of the present or any future generation.

Mr. Spencer's book, though written in a rather abrupt style, and though a little deficient in arrangement, is learned and acute. If he sometimes fails to dispose satisfactorily of his adversaries, that is due rather to the ingenuity of their methods than to the weakness of his cause. It is difficult to confute an antagonist whose theory is deliberately framed in order to avoid

¹ "Did Moses Write the Pentateuch after all?" By F. E. Spencer, M.A., Vicar of St. Paul's, Haggerston, London. Elliot Stock.

coming to close quarters. It is impossible, for instance, to show that Ezekiel quotes the Law of Moses when it is ingeniously assumed (for in such matters, it should be remembered, anything like proof is out of the question) that the *materials* of the Law were in existence in Ezekiel's time, but that they were not put together until after it. But Mr. Spencer does not fail to point out that the theories he combats rest, for the most part, on the purest conjecture. In his Preface (p. vi.) he makes the timely observation that "in every department of inquiry, we, in this nineteenth century, need a good deal to be withdrawn from the worship of authority to the worship of fact." He reminds us (p. 2) that as "it is a question of science" we are called upon to discuss, our methods must be "strictly inductive." If the traditional school (p. 3) reposes too blindly on the verdict of past ages, the "British school of critics leans too much upon a German authority, which at its source is tainted with prejudices." He deprecates the "intellectual terrorism" (p. 4), which tells us, in the pages of Professor Robertson Smith, how "almost every scholar of mark is on the side of Vatke and Reuss, Lagarde and Graf, Kuenen and Wellhausen." It may be so, but if the criticism identified with these names will not stand examination by the test of common-sense, so much the worse, in the long run, for the "scholar of mark." Mr. Spencer goes on to deprecate the ignoring of tradition. He quotes Frederick Schlegel (p. 6) as saying of historical tradition that "as soon as, in the investigation of ancient history, we let slip that thread of Ariadne, we can find no outlet from the labyrinth of fanciful theories and the chaos of clashing opinions."¹ Traditions about individuals are no doubt very often untrustworthy, but national and literary traditions are usually authentic in the main. Accretions may gather around the original story, but it is, to say the least, unusual to find a nation handing down a mistaken account of the *genesis* of its own institutions, or to find a book which has been universally assigned to the wrong author. For, as Mr. Spencer remarks, we have first to explain how the work came to be so attributed, and next, there would appear, in most cases, to be no motive whatever for fraud.

He goes on (p. 11) to show that, even if we are convicted of setting too much value on the authority of Ezra and the men of the great Synagogue in the matter of the Canon of the Old Testament, this does not dispose of the question even of the Mosaic authorship, still less of the early origin and authenticity of the Pentateuch; for we still have to account for the

¹ "Philosophy of History," sect. i., p. 81 (Bohn). The great thinker's metaphors seem here to be a little confused.

fact of its reception as authentic and homogeneous history. And then he avails himself of an argument which Professor James Robertson has used with great effect in regard to the earlier Prophets. To conceive of a Moses as he is handed down to us involves a condition of things capable of appreciating him. Again, we ask, how did such a conception arise? His position as lawgiver and writer of the Law rests upon evidence which, in "any other literary history" would be "decisive" (p. 15). Why, then, is it not credited in this particular case?

The answer is, that a careful examination of the documents discovers (1) such discrepancies and discordances in their account of events, and (2) such marked distinctions in style, that we are compelled to regard them as a compilation in later ages of documents written at an earlier period by various hands. If these earlier documents were themselves authentic, this contention would be a matter of little consequence. But when we are told, first of all, that the narrative is compiled from accounts altogether inconsistent with one another, and next, that the earliest of such accounts is of a date far later than the events described in it, we naturally feel that the correctness of our histories, as histories, is seriously impugned. It is no answer to tell us, as we are frequently told, that they are unexceptional in their moral and religious tone. We want to know whether or no they are true. And in order to determine this question, we are bound to subject the theories in question to a rigorous examination. This Mr. Spencer does for us with much learning and acuteness.

"Five compilers," he tells us, are supposed to have been "discovered, denoted severally as J, E, P, H, and D." "The algebraical nature of the symbols employed," he continues, "indicates that these compilers are no historical personages, but that they are an inference grounded, we are told, on cumulative historical probability that they may or even must have been" such. In point of fact, however, they are not compilers but "sources," and Mr. Spencer here again points out the studied vagueness of phrase, which makes it difficult to grapple with the theory in argument. But although *we* are forbidden to call them compilers, the supporters of the theory are permitted to do so whenever it suits them. Thus Dr. Driver repeatedly mentions each of them as "he" or "him"; enlarges on the characteristics of "his" style; applies the term "author" to more than one of them. But the method by which these conclusions are reached seems not a little open to objection on scientific principles. We have all heard of the "vicious circle," and it is usually supposed to mark the lowest depths of weakness in an argument. But, as Mr. Spencer says,

it is difficult to give any other name to a process in which "you allot to J all passages where certain words and phrases occur, and then use those words and phrases as among the proofs of the existence of J." There is a remarkable instance of this in Dr. Driver's "Introduction," which, if it appeared in a treatise on any other subject, would have effectually disposed of the writer's claim to attention. He first of all effects the severance from the narrative of Korah's rebellion of everything which occurs in Deuteronomy, assigning these portions to P, and then points out how Deuteronomy is based on the narrative of J E, and how the writer of Deuteronomy is entirely ignorant of the contents of P. It is obvious that on these principles a conclusive argument is derived for the priority of Deuteronomy to P. But on such principles as these what is there which cannot be proved?

Mr. Spencer next insists on the fact that the age of Moses must have been one of literary activity, and cites Ewald in support of his views. The "ten Commandments," says that original thinker, "which, taken alone, are a mere dry skeleton, when considered with reference to their intrinsic character and significance, imply a religion originally taught with a perfect living fulness." Then Mr. Spencer shows how the "homogeneousness" of the contents of the Pentateuch, and the "pictures of moving and popular life," "eludes the dissector's knife" and makes it quite impossible that the story could have been strung together out of "fragments differentiated by difference of age and of standpoint." Canon Cheyne's "gibe at the 'common-sense' of the 'plain Englishman'" is met by the crushing rejoinder that "science which cannot recommend its main ultimate results to the ordinary understanding is no science at all." But whether this be so or not, it is with the common-sense of the average Englishman that the decision must ultimately rest. There are not wanting signs that the conclusions of the critical school are too high-pitched or too fine-drawn, or both, for the "homely wits" of the Bible-reading public. "Science" may retort with a sneer, but the Church at large will in the end effectually reply by leaving the critics to themselves—as critics in the past have been left to themselves—until they are forgotten. As Mr. Spencer goes on to say, there may be *something* in their theories. There is no reason to deny that various historical materials may have been used, or that the histories may have gone through a process of editing. What is denied is that the conclusions of the critical school now before us give us an accurate account either of the process itself, of the materials used, or of the date at which the various narratives were composed.

Four long and useful notes are appended to the first chapter;

the first on the value of Wellhausen's judgment, the second on "the critical *ipse dixit*," the third on the character and phraseology of P and the general character of the supposed sources, the fourth on the "historical colour and accuracy of the Pentateuch." The disintegrating theories are carefully and learnedly analysed, in a manner that will repay perusal.

The second chapter on the Mosaic legislation does not appear either so interesting or so conclusive. But the third chapter strikes on a vein which it is to be hoped will be thoroughly worked. The criticism of the Pentateuch, it may seem a bold thing to assert, is as yet in its infancy. It is going through the same process as all other scientific inquiries. First of all, there is the period of foregone conclusions, when certain arbitrary principles are laid down, and we are bidden humbly to accept the doctrines our authorities are pleased to impose on us. Old Testament criticism is at present in this position. The Aristotles of Biblical criticism are the German scholars, who lay down the postulates that there can be no miracle, and that there can be no prophecy. Its Rabbis, to borrow a simile from Jewish literary interpretation, are the English school, who tell us that the "critics have proved," or, in Jewish phraseology, that Rabbi Graf and Rabbi Kuenen have spoken, and whose Hillel and Shammai are Dillmann and Wellhausen. Even they themselves have an uneasy conviction that the first stage of the inquiry only is reached. Wellhausen laments that Hebrew knowledge is yet in its infancy, and others have echoed his lament. Another and a more scientific era is at hand, when facts will take the place of theories, and will be investigated without previous theological bias of any kind whatever. It may be safely affirmed that the first condition for genuine investigation will be the entire sweeping away of the whole paraphernalia of J's, E's, D's, P's, and post-exilic redactors, and the examination of the phenomena afresh from a rational and logical standpoint. It is to Mr. Spencer's praise that he has boldly ventured upon this as yet untrodden ground. It is premature at present to express an opinion on his investigations. The subject requires much more time and thought than is at our disposal. But he has at least proved that the linguistic features of the Pentateuch are capable of a different treatment from that accorded to them by the analytic criticism. That criticism, as Mr. Spencer shows on Dr. Driver's own admissions, commences by ignoring certain facts on which the older grammarians are agreed. Dr. Driver admits that the Pentateuch, alone of the prose-writings of the Bible, contains certain presumably archaic forms. He evades, rather than disputes, the proposition that in the poetic books these forms may fairly be regarded as poetic archaisms. He takes no

notice of the fact that sometimes these forms occur in a quotation of the Pentateuchal narrative in its present shape. Other peculiarities of the Hebrew of the Pentateuch he passes over. No scientific observer would deny that such facts supply a strong presumption in favour of the theory that the Pentateuch is the oldest collection of books in the Bible. Mr. Spencer illustrates its relation to the later Hebrew by the influence of the Authorized Version on the English of later times, and the comparison is an apt one. He goes on to contend that the Pentateuch, like the Authorized Version, has its archaic expressions, which are not met with in the subsequent books. Other words found in the Pentateuch, he further argues, have modified their meaning in later times. There are special words in Genesis, again, which are not met with elsewhere, except in obvious quotations. תהו ובהו, for instance, may be very fairly regarded as one of these. The words occur in a passage ascribed to P, which is supposed to be of later date than Isa. xxxiv. 11 and Jer. iv. 23, the only places where the phrase is to be found elsewhere. It is obvious enough to every candid mind that the probability is very much greater in favour of the view that the prophets were quoting the well-known narrative of creation than that the contrary was the case. Mr. Spencer appears to have clearly established his statement that words are to be found in the Pentateuch which do not occur in the later books, and that other words occur in the later books in a different sense to that in which they are used in the Pentateuch. He does not notice the fact that in the later books words occur which are not found in the Pentateuch at all. Thus, in the Book of Judges, which describes the life of the Israelites when settled in Palestine, we are introduced to a large number of new words, describing a life of quite a different kind to that in which they had previously lived in Canaan, in Egypt, in the wilderness. The Books of Kings introduce us again to a number of fresh words. And the fact has never been faced that, though we are told that the Pentateuch is a post-exilic compilation, the words admitted to be peculiar to the books of the post-exilic period are never found in the Pentateuch at all.

It would be premature, of course, to draw any conclusions at present from these facts. But it may fairly be asserted that it is impossible much longer to ignore them. When coupled with other facts, such as the peculiar *naïveté* and simplicity of the language and ideas in the earlier chapters of Genesis, and Dr. Watson's demonstration that in Genesis we are in the presence of a set of religious conceptions widely differing from those to be found after the sojourn in Egypt, we may go so far as to declare that the first scholar who boldly

casts aside the "traditions" of the critical "elders," and adventures himself, unencumbered with their weight, into the study of the linguistic features of the earlier books of the Old Testament, will reap a rich reward. To Mr. Spencer, as a pioneer of the much-needed research in this new direction, all lovers of the Bible will offer their congratulations, and it is to be hoped that a large number of our younger scholars may be encouraged to follow him.

J. J. LIAS.

Short Notices.

The Churchman's Household Prayers. The Bishop of Ripon. Pp. 142. Price 3s. 6d. Nisbet and Co.

This volume provides a short liturgical form of prayers for family worship, morning and evening, during a month. The scheme is that each short service should begin with a response and answer from the Psalms, followed by a collect and the Lord's Prayer; then follows a lesson, the collect for the day, two or three more collects and a blessing. The revised table of lessons comes at the beginning, and the collects from the Prayer Book at the end. There are also prayers for special occasions. Those short prayers in the volume which are not from the Prayer Book are taken from ancient and modern writers, and the Bishop expresses his particular debt to Canon Bright for the graceful translations of his excellent collection from ancient sources. The volume is compiled with the charming taste and delicate feeling which are native to Dr. Boyd Carpenter, and will be a very agreeable variety in the round of household prayers. There is, of course, a special value in the family prayers of Thornton, Oxenden, Bourdillon, Vaughan and others; but if the same volume is always used the words become too familiar. The Bishop of Ripon's addition to our treasury of devotion is sure to be popular.

Christ Mystical. Bishop Joseph Hall. Pp. 174. Price 3s. 6d. Hodder and Stoughton. 1893.

This is the second volume in Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton's Devotional Library. It was reprinted from a copy presented to the Rev. H. C. Wilson by General Gordon. The marks at the side of the pages are those made by General Gordon in his own copy. There is a preface by Mr. Wilson on the theology of General Gordon. This treatise consists of eight short chapters in the style of the "Imitatio Christi," and it is at once a help to the spiritual reception of the Holy Communion and a corrective to material views of that sacred ordinance. It continually points out that there are other means of grace, though all may no doubt be summed up in that most solemn hour. The tone of the argument may be seen from the following passage: "My son, if ever thou look for sound comfort on earth and salvation in heaven, unglue thyself from the world and vanities of it; put thyself upon thy Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; leave not till thou findest thyself firmly united to Him, so as thou art become a limb of that body whereof He is head, a spouse of that husband, a branch of that stem, a stone laid upon that foundation. Look not, therefore, for any blessing out of Him, and in, and by, and from Him