

TWO IMPORTANT WORKS ON THE OLD
TESTAMENT.¹

A NEW volume of the *International Critical Commentary*² is always welcome, especially where, as in this case, there has been hitherto no complete modern commentary for advanced students. Prof. H. Preserved Smith's work adequately fills a gap in the exegesis of the Old Testament in English.

Considering the extreme difficulty of deciding how to use a limited space, what to insert and what to omit, it is perhaps ungracious to criticise selection of material; but we could have wished that some of the room devoted to textual criticism and elementary grammar had been given to introduction and exposition. Those who care for such details as the authorities for the insertion or omission of a *Waw* can find them in Driver's *Text of Samuel*, or Budde's *Samuel*, in the *Sacred Books of the Old Testament*. The statement, i. 3, that "the perfect with *Waw* Cons. is used of customary action," hardly needed to be supported by references to three grammars; and few Hebrew students who consult this volume will be ignorant that *בכה* in *ובכה תבכה*, i. 10, is the "emphatic adverbial infinitive." The type and paper used in giving references to a series of grammars is wasted. A very small proportion of readers look up the references, and these would consult their grammars of their own accord, and would know their way about them themselves. On the other hand, the author does not allow himself space enough to do justice to his views on the introduction and analysis; and there is a somewhat meagre treatment of such matters as the "Sons of Ariel," II. xxiii. 20;

¹ H. P. Smith, on *Samuel*; Piepenbring, on *Old Testament History*.

² *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, by Henry Preserved Smith, Professor of Biblical History and Interpretation in Amherst College (Mass., U.S.A.); Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark, 1899, pp. xl. 422; 12s.

Book of Jashar; the beginnings of prophecy in Israel; the date and origin of *Hannah's Song*, and of *David's Last Words*, II. xxiii. 1-7, etc. Here and there a necessary detail is absent, e.g. in the account of the temple at Shiloh, I. i. 9, Jeremiah's references, vii. 12-14, xxvi. 9, to the ruins of that sanctuary should have been given. Probably our author has done all that is of any practical use, in simply giving the translation of II. xxi. 19, "Elhanan ben Jair the Bethlehemite slew Goliath the Gittite," but most readers will look for some discussion of the difficulty raised by this statement. One serious defect is the absence of any tabular synopsis of the analysis: this will doubtless be remedied in a second edition; but it might be worth while to add it to unbound copies of the present issue.

The textual criticism fully recognises that the Masoretic Text is by no means a final authority, and an appendix combats the reactionary views of Löhr's *Samuel*. As to details, our author, like Robertson Smith, and Cornill, considers that the passages in the account of David and Goliath, omitted by LXX. (B, etc.), viz., 1 Samuel xvii. 12-31, 38b, 41, 48b, 50, 55-xviii. 5, are additions to the text, introduced from some lost history of David. In I. xx. 8, and one or two other passages, it is proposed, on the analogy of the Arabic *la*, to read נָּ (usually pointed נֹּ, *not*) as נָּ, "a strongly affirmative particle—*Verily*"; thus for II. xxiii. 5, "Verily my house is not so with God," R.V., we have, "Verily, sure is my house with God." If נָּ may mean either "verily" or "not," according to the context, a serious addition is made to the resources and temptations of the textual critic. But the effect of substituting "verily" for "not" may generally be obtained by turning the clause into a question: thus, in the passage cited, R.V.Mg. has "For is not my house so with God?" It seems scarcely necessary to enrich the Hebrew language

with this new particle. Other examples of amended text are I. ii. 2 :

There is none holy like Yahweh,
For there is none righteous like our God,
And there is no rock besides thee.

I. ix. 25, "They came from the Bamah to the city, and they spread a bed for Saul on the roof, and he lay down."

Up to a certain point the analysis agrees substantially with that of earlier critics. The various poems are borrowed from collections. The Lament over Saul and Jonathan is a genuine work of David. But Hannah's Psalm has no connection with Hannah, nor the Last Words of David, xxiii. 1-7, with David. The latter is a "comparatively late production." Our author is rather vague in his statements of time, wherein he shows his discretion, because the data do not admit of very definite results. Still, terms like "late" and "comparatively late" require explanation, unless we may assume that "late" means "post-exilic," a convention often implied in recent literature. Even of II. xxii. = Psalm xviii., which is still claimed for David by many critics, Prof. H. P. Smith writes, "It is difficult to suppose the composition to be David's own." He considers that the psalm was included in *Samuel* before it was inserted in the Psalter; and that the latter adopted the title from *Samuel*. Probably, however, the Psalter and *Samuel* alike borrowed both psalm and title from the early Davidic hymn book. The analogy of the other psalm titles seems to show that this title also was composed for a psalter, and not for *Samuel*. With many, but by no means all, critics, our author considers that the text in *Samuel* has suffered more than in the Psalter.

The bulk of the book is referred to two main sources. The older document, a life of Saul, is denoted by the symbol *Sl.*; "it is more primitive in its religious ideas.

It has a near and clear view of the personages and of the progress of events. We may class it with the stories of Gideon, of Jephthah, and of Samson, which form the ground work of the Book of Judges." To *Sl.* are referred I. ix. 1-x. 16, xi., xiii. 2-xiv. 52, xvi. 14-23, xviii. 6-13, 20-29*a*, xix. 11-17, xxi. 2-10, xxii. 1, 2, 6-23, xxiii. 1-14, xxv.-xxvii., xxix., xxx.; II. i.-iv., ix.-xx. (Ammon, Tamar, Absalom, Uriah, and Bathsheba), and perhaps xxi. 1-14 and xxiv.

The Psalms, etc., already referred to, and certain other passages, do not belong to the main sources; these exceptions account for I. ii. (parts of ii. from earlier source used by *Sm.*, and therefore really part of *Sm.*); xx. 1-xxi. 1 (fragment from another source); II. xxi. 15-22, xxiii. 8-39 (old catalogue of exploits and of heroes), xxii. 1-xxiii. 7.

The rest belongs to a Life of Samuel, denoted by the symbol *Sm.*, which, however, has incorporated I. ii. 12, 17, 22-25, 27-36, iv. 1*b*-vii. 1 from an older source.

Prof. H. P. Smith is not absolutely convinced that either *Sl.* or *Sm.* extends through the whole period. Possibly *Sl.* stands for a series of three sources, one in I. i.-xv., another in I. xvi.-II. i., and a third in II. ii.-xxiv.; while *Sm.* represents a similar series.

Roughly *Sl.* = Kittel's S + Da + Je = Budde's J; and *Sm.* = Kittel's SS + E = Budde's E¹ + E². Our author's uncertainty as to whether the *Sl.* sections are from one or three sources corresponds to Kittel's doubt as to whether his *Je* and *S* are parts of the same source. Prof. H. P. Smith rejects Budde's theory that *Samuel* is substantially a portion of JE. Thus, p. xxii., "Repeated examination of the points of resemblance has failed to convince me of the identity which is claimed," *i.e.* between the sources of *Samuel* and J and E.

The most important feature of the book is the date assigned to *Sm.* According to Kittel, Budde, etc., the

sections here assigned to *Sm.* are mostly pre-Deuteronomic ; they belong to the earlier and more historical sources. But, here, *Sm.* "idealizes persons and events. It is dominated by a theological idea. It is, in fact, in line with the latest redactor of the Book of Judges, who embodied the Deuteronomistic theory of history in the framework of that book. There is reason to suppose, therefore, that *Sm.* designed to replace the older history by one of his own, which would edify his generation. This design and this method are indications of a comparatively late date—perhaps in or after the Exile." In passing we may note that the language about *Judges* is a little obscure ; no doubt "the latest Deuteronomistic redactor" is meant ; it can scarcely be intended to deny the priestly redaction of *Judges*. Further, *Sm.* is supposed to be partly based on *Sl.* But, as to the main point, it has hitherto been supposed that *Samuel* was substantially a pre-Deuteronomic work, compiled from genuine (not, of course, infallible) historical sources, with a comparatively small amount of later additions ; and that, with the exception of a much smaller amount of post-exilic additions, our *Samuel* was completed during or shortly before the Exile. But now we are told that *Sm.*, one of the main sources, is exilic or post-exilic ; hence the combination of *Sl.* with *Sm.* must be later still. No proof is given of this position, nor are its consequences worked out ; probably we may look for a special monograph on the subject, which will be read with great interest. The analysis itself, however, shows pretty clearly how these conclusions are arrived at. There is a series of passages, I. ii. 27-36, iii. 11-14, vii. 2-17, xii., xvi. 1-13, xxi. 11-16, etc., often held to be composed or edited by Deuteronomic or even later writers. Budde, Cornill, Kittel, etc., separate these passages from the older sources, and refer them to R^p or to post-exilic writers. Prof. H. P. Smith includes them in *Sm.* ; and by this inclusion is

obviously compelled to regard *Sm.* as exilic or post-exilic. The question at issue, therefore, is whether these passages belong to the same document as the rest of *Sm.*, e.g. the early history of Samuel, I. i., iii. As to some passages, e.g. David's Anointing by Samuel, xvi. 1-13, there is much to be said for our author's contention that they are homogeneous with the rest of his *Sm.*; but then it is equally probable that they are pre-Deuteronomic. We should be glad to see a fuller discussion of this matter than is possible in a commentary.

There is a short but most outspoken and interesting section on the theology of *Samuel*. The older source *Sl.* reflects the primitive religion of Israel, which used Teraphim, and supposed that the exile from Yahweh's land lost his protection and must worship "other gods." This is contrasted with the teaching of the Deuteronomic *Sm.*, which classes, I. xv. 22, Teraphim with idolatry and witchcraft as an abomination to Yahweh, and asserts, I. xii. 21, that the gods of the nations are no gods,

M. Piepenbring's *Histoire du Peuple d'Israel*¹ is not merely a valuable addition to the works which seek to popularize the results of criticism, but is also a useful textbook for students, and an important exposition of the views of a distinguished scholar. What Kittel, in his *History*, did for the views of Dillmann, our author, following in the footsteps of Stade and Cornill, does, in somewhat advanced fashion, for the views of the more advanced followers of Graf, Wellhausen, and Kuenen. The scheme of this work is more comprehensive than that of Cornill's history; it deals not only with politics, but also with the development of art, social life, civil law, government, worship, literature, and theology. Most attention is given to the literature,

¹ *Histoire du Peuple d'Israel*, par C. Piepenbring (de Strasbourg): Strasbourg Libraire J. Noiriel, 1898; pp. iv. 730.

while comparatively little space is given to the formal treatment of the history of Old Testament theology—the author has a separate work on the subject. There is no attempt at a complete statement of critical details, arguments, and theories, but our author makes a judicious selection, deals fully with the points selected, and largely avoids the dry, obscure brevity of technical nomenclature. Hence his work is both intelligible and interesting to the general reader. Numerous references to some of the more important commentaries and introductions enable the student to verify and supplement the statements of the text.

The general critical position is a rather advanced form of that expounded in Driver's *Introduction*. Thus, p. 175, "We are no more certain that we possess a single authentic proverb of Solomon, than that we have a single psalm composed by David, or a single law emanating from Moses." M. Piepenbring seems rather inclined to adopt the views of the latest important work on any subject. Thus he holds with Baentsch that the Book of the Covenant was not a part of E, but incorporated by the compiler of JE, and that the Law of Holiness is based on a source used by Ezekiel, but also contains sections based on Ezekiel. He is, as far as we have noticed, the first critic who has endorsed Steuernagel's analysis of Deuteronomy, in which the use of different forms of address, second person singular and plural, is regarded as a criterion of different sources. Further, he adopts the opinion, which is now gaining ground, that the Joshua portion of the Priestly Code was not included in the law promulgated by Ezra. He is inclined to recognise J and E in Judges, Samuel and Kings. In opposition to Kosters, he accepts the Return under Joshua and Zerubbabel; but holds that no attempt to rebuild the temple was made before the ministry of Haggai and Zechariah. The Prologue and Epilogue of Job are taken from a history of Job current at the close of the

monarchy, and are not consistent with the discussion to which they serve as framework; the Elihu speeches are a later addition. Our author rejects, as it seems to us for very insufficient reasons, the view that Ecclesiastes is composite, and regards it as "un seul tout." He follows Budde in rejecting the dramatic theories on Canticles, and in explaining it as a cycle of lyrics sung in celebration of a wedding, in which the bride and bridegroom figure as Solomon and his queen. Ruth and Jonah are post-exilic protests against the particularist policy of Ezra and Nehemiah. Joel and Zechariah ix.-xiv. belong to the Greek period. Only xl.-xlviii. belong to the Second Isaiah.

As to history, the history of Israel begins with the Exodus. The patriarchal narratives concern tribes, not individuals; *e.g.* p. 13, "Les récits qui se rapportent aux fils de Jacob ont été inspirés par la conduite et le sort des principales tribus israélites. Voilà ce qui est de plus en plus reconnu de nos jours par tous les hommes compétents et même par des savants relativement conservateurs." The treatment of the subsequent history is similar to Cornill's; although, of course, there are many minor differences: *e.g.* M. Piepenbring is more favourable to Saul and less favourable to David. The work closes on the eve of the Revolt of the Maccabees. Does the author place Esther later? We see no full treatment of that book. There may be a casual reference, perhaps in a footnote, which we have overlooked, but there is no index to tell us so.

The view taken of Israelite religion is rather extreme: p. 722, "The primitive Hebrews shared the crude (*grossière*) and imperfect religion, and the superstitious ideas, of all uncivilized peoples"; p. 723, "We must break with the narrow particularism and 'magisme,' which have hitherto dominated Jewish and Christian religion, and have regarded the origin of Judaism and Christianity as altogether exceptional, and due to a special divine inter-

vention, not extended to any other people." Nevertheless, "Biblical history is unique, because it describes an evolution 'of religion' which was brought about with an intensity and rapidity which fill us with admiration, and make that history typical, '*une histoire-typé.*'" Our author often distinguishes a "Jahvisme puritain" from the popular religion, though not very clearly; and seems to recognise some truth in the traditional view, that there were always Israelites who had a purer religion than the popular superstitious worship of Yahweh and "other gods." Probably this view may be pressed further than M. Piepenbring would allow. It seems to us that, in the body of his book, he is unduly silent as to the working of the Divine Spirit as the governing force in the evolution of the religion of Israel. But this omission is partly made good in a brief but important epilogue on *Criticism and Faith*, in which he writes: p. 724 ff., "There is no reason to fear for the future of faith and religion. . . . Those who seek an objective foundation for their faith in a Divine Revelation are not deprived of this support by the results of modern criticism. . . . An impartial and enlightened judgment finds certain traces of a Divine Revelation in all the pious souls of all ages, without failing to recognise that this Revelation is manifested in its fullest extent, and in truly characteristic fashion, '*à un degré supérieur et vraiment classique,*' in the Hebrew prophets, sages, and psalmists, and most perfectly in Jesus Christ." What is really important for us in all this, is not that in many matters M. Piepenbring's theology is seriously different from our own, but that his unsparing criticism of the literature, history, and theology of the Old Testament in no way shakes his faith in Revelation or in Christ.

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