

SOME RECENT LITERATURE ON THE OLD
TESTAMENT.

THE most important contribution recently made by English scholars to the criticism of the Old Testament is the *Oxford Hexateuch*.¹ As the present writer's share in this work was almost entirely confined to some suggestions as to the analysis of *Joshua*, which were not always accepted, his commendation is entirely disinterested. The analysis was made by a committee of the Oxford Society of Historical Theology, and a special feature is the statement of reasons for the detailed division of the material. But the book is mainly important on account of the introduction by Prof. J. Estlin Carpenter and Rev. G. Harford Battersby, which gives a more complete statement of the evidence for the modern theories of the composition of the Hexateuch than any yet accessible to English readers. An interesting section supplies examples of works similarly composed. Much capital has been made by opponents of the modern view out of the supposed absurdity of the theory that the Hexateuch was pieced together out of independent documents. In chap. i. § 2 the editors show that there are numerous documents which are certainly known to have been composed by that method; e.g., Asser's *Life of Alfred*, the Saxon Chronicle, Codes of Early English Laws, Indian Sacred Literature, *Chronicles* (the Old Testament book), and the *Diatessaron* of Tatian.

There are also to hand two new volumes of the *Cambridge Bible*. Archdeacon T. T. Perowne's *Proverbs* is more elementary, especially in the introduction, than most recent volumes of the series. He explains "virtuous woman," in xxxi. 10, as "woman of might, or power, or capacity," and yet maintains that "no better English

¹ *The Hexateuch*, etc.: Longmans, Green & Co., 1900, 2 vols. pp. xii. 279, 359, 36s.

representative of the Hebrew word could probably be found "than virtuous." But, according to his own showing, this word misleads the English reader. The present writer has elsewhere suggested "the capable woman," perhaps "notable" would be better still. Dr. W. E. Barnes' *Chronicles* is a useful volume. Prof. R. W. Moss's *From Malachi to Matthew*¹ is a careful and succinct history of Judea from B.C. 440 to B.C. 4. Apparently the author's critical views excluded any reference to *Daniel* and other portions of the Old Testament now commonly assigned to this period. In *The Christian Use of the Psalms*,² Prof. Cheyne makes another contribution to the series of works in which he shows how the results of criticism may be applied to spiritual edification. He discusses the use of the Psalter in the Anglican liturgy, with special reference to the "Proper Psalms" appointed for Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter Day, Ascension Day, and Whit-Sunday. He pleads for some rearrangement of the services which will relieve minister and people from the necessity of reciting the imprecatory Psalms as an act of Christian worship. He thinks that the proper Psalms were selected "on principles of interpretation which in no other field of literature would be tolerated for a moment" (p. 24), *i.e.*, apparently, because these Psalms were understood to be Messianic in a crude and mechanical sense. Prof. Cheyne thinks that, to a large extent, the liturgical use of these Psalms with reference to Christ may be defended on a suitable understanding; *e.g.*, "So then I am of opinion that as we read Ps. ii. 7 ['He hath said to me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee'], we may, at least in the congregation, fitly think of the early spiritual crisis of Jesus, and call to mind that wondrous equipment with the Divine Spirit which lifted Him above the greatest of His race, and baffles the powers

¹ C. H. Kelly, pp. xiv., 255, 2s. 6d.

² Isbister, pp. 273, 5s.

of language worthily to describe" (p. 49). On the other hand, he says, with regard to the use of Psalm cxxxii. on Christmas Day, "We ought not to withhold the confession that we regard that appointment as a misfortune" (p. 271). We must acknowledge that we are distressed to be told, on such high authority, that "Anglicans are but half-hearted lovers of the Bible" (p. 22).

In the two volumes¹ of *The Messages of the Bible* series on the *Earlier* and *Later Prophets*, Prof. F. K. Sanders, of Yale, and Prof. C. F. Kent, of Brown University, have achieved a considerable measure of success in their attempt at a popular exposition by means of chronological arrangement, analysis, and free paraphrastic rendering. The books are written from the standpoint of modern criticism. In *Israel's Messianic Hope*,² Prof. G. S. Goodspeed, of Chicago, gives an interesting popular account of the development of the Messianic hopes of Israel, *i.e.* the growth of those ideals and expectations of blessedness and righteousness which were ultimately fulfilled in Christ. He traces these throughout Jewish literature from their first beginnings in the Old Testament till the Advent. Mr. Tyler has published a new edition of his notable commentary on *Ecclesiastes*.³ The book is rewritten, but chiefly in order to maintain more forcibly, and with additional evidence, the positions advocated in the first edition in 1874, especially the "Manifest Influence of Greek Philosophy" upon the author. With most modern scholars he assigns the book to the Greek period, dating it about B.C. 200; but, unlike many, he defends its substantial integrity.

Part ii. of Mr. C. G. Montefiore's *The Bible for Home Reading*⁴ contains a judicious selection of passages from the Wisdom literature, the Prophets, the Psalter, and the

¹ James Clarke, pp. xv., 304, xx., 382. ² Macmillan, pp. 315, 6s.

³ Nutt, pp. xi., 168, 6s. net.

⁴ Macmillan, pp. xxviii., 799, 5s. 6d. net.

Apocrypha. The "comments," etc., preserve the high standard of excellence reached in part i., bearing in mind that the book is written for Jewish parents and children.

We have also received *Jacob at Bethel, an Essay in Comparative Religion*,¹ by Dr. A. Smythe Palmer, an interesting collection of illustrations of the Bethel narrative from other religions; *The Original Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus xxxi. 12-31, xxxvi. 22-xxxvii. 26*,² by Rev. G. Margoliouth, text, translation and notes; *The Book of Psalms*,³ containing the Prayer-Book Version, the Authorised Version, and the Revised Version, in parallel columns; *The Psalms in Verse*,⁴ by the Rev. R. J. Spranger, intended for devotional use; *The Student's Deuteronomy*,⁵ by the Rev. R. B. Girdlestone, written from the traditional standpoint; *Genesis an Authentic Record*,⁶ by the Rev. G. Greenwood; *The Unity of the Book of Isaiah*,⁷ by Letitia D. Jeffreys, with a preface by Dr. Sinker; *Two Sermons*,⁸ on the material and the spiritual creation, by Rev. C. B. Waller; and the *Gospel of Genesis*,⁹ three sermons by the Rev. G. Witherby. The author should note that "higher criticism" does not, as he supposes, describe the views of advanced critics, and imply a claim to superiority. "Higher" in this phrase has the same value as in "Higher Algebra." Mr. Spurgeon, when he discussed the date and authorship of the books of the Bible, was as "high" a critic as Prof. Cheyne.

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¹ Nutt, pp. 187, 2s. 6d. net.

² Williams and Norgate, pp. 35, 2s. 6d. net.

³ Cambridge University Press, pp. 220, 2s. 6d.

⁴ Vol. i., Rivington's, pp. lvi., 670, 7s. 6d.

⁵ Eyre and Spottiswoode, pp. xxxii., 92.

⁶ Church Printing Society, pp. xvi., 240.

⁷ Deighton Bell & Co., pp. xiv., 56, 2s. 6d.

⁸ Unwin, pp. 24, 6d.

⁹ Skeffington, pp. 69, 1s.