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838TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, MAY 20TH, 1940,
AT 4.30 P.M.

THE REV. C. W. COOPER, F.G.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the Meeting of May 6th were read, confirmed and signed, and the HON. SECRETARY announced the following elections: As Member: J. G. S. Thomas, Esq., D.Sc.; as Library Associate: The Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.

The CHAIRMAN then called on the Rev. W. A. Wordsworth, M.A., to read his paper entitled "The Unity of Isaiah."

The Meeting was then thrown open to discussion, in which the following took part: Colonel Molony, Mr. Sidney Collett, Mr. Cowper Field, Rev. F. W. Pitt, and Dr. Barcroft Anderson.

Written communications were received from Principal Curr, Miss Hodgkin, Colonel Molesworth, Colonel van Straubenzee, and the Rev. A. W. Payne.

THE UNITY OF ISAIAH.

By the Rev. W. A. WORDSWORTH, M.A.

"EVERY schoolboy knows" in these days that there is a second or "Deutero-Isaiah." It is not, however, so widely realised that this "assured result" is not quite so simple as it sounds or that it is the corner stone of a complicated superstructure; for if parts of Isaiah are post exilic, anything which shows traces of that influence must be later still. Great will be the fall when that foundation crumbles, as it surely will, beneath the weight of the absurd complexities in which it is involved.

The modern critical method of study applied to the Scriptures has been salutary. It is great gain that it has restored to us the recognition of the truly human element in the inspired writings, so that once more we see Jesus of Nazareth as the disciples saw

him first, as truly son of man. It is hardly less important that we have learned again to regard the Prophets as men of like passions with our own and like problems, not mere hands which wrote a sort of automatic writing at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, but men who loved justice and mercy and believed in God amidst events which seemed to mock the idea of a Kingdom of God; men who "searched towards whom or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them was pointing when it testified beforehand the sufferings leading towards Christ and the glories after these"; men whose eager hopes constantly misled them as to the nearness of those times and seasons which it is not given to men to know.

Perhaps it may be convenient if I state broadly my position in regard to the Old Testament. I have made no real study of the Pentateuch and historical books, but it seems to me that the critical analysis into documents is firmly established, though the tendency is to underrate the antiquity of these underlying documents. Those books of the Prophets and Poets which I believe to belong to the Eighth Century B.C. I have studied with some care in the Hebrew and I am convinced of the integrity of all those books of the prophets of the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah and usually of their orderly arrangement. Among these I include Nahum and Habakkuk and the last six chapters of Zechariah, the one book which is clearly composite.

The book of Isaiah is not only a unity but arranged almost always in chronological order: only the historical chapters xxxvi-xxxix having been inserted later.

It will be clear from the case of Zechariah that I do not rule out in advance all possibility that the work of two or more prophets might have come down to us in the book of Isaiah; indeed, for many years I accepted it as having been proved that there were two; for what right has an ignoramus to reject the consensus of scholars? But when one begins to look into this apparent unanimity, one finds that it is not a matter of agreement on a simple division, but rather a dispute as to how many are the pieces into which that which has been sawn asunder is to be dissected; and one begins to wonder whether the process of dissolution will not end by leaving only dry bones from which the spirit of life has departed. Indeed, since I was given the clue to the restoration of unity to Isaiah I seem to have witnessed what Ezekiel so vividly describes in his vision of the scattered

bones. Even Professor Torrey has stressed forcibly the danger, though he finds it necessary to get rid of Ezekiel and Ezra to make room for his Deutero-Isaiah in the Persian period.

In many directions the critical process has reached the *reductio ad absurdum*.

It is time to go back to the beginning and try to find where is the fallacy which has led the learned and sincere scholars into such hopelessly complicated Ptolemaic systems.

Before I go further it will be well to mention that in place of the LORD or Jehovah or its modern substitutes I prefer to use the form Yeabe; no one knows how the name should be pronounced, but we do know that the Prophets associated it with the verb "to be". It seems best to coin a form which will represent this significance.

The main arguments for the division of the book of Isaiah are the mention of Cyrus, apparent allusions to the ruined Temple, the fact that the Babylonian captivity is the setting of the message from chapter xl onwards—though by no means always—and differences of style and language.

Arguments from language seem to me always extremely precarious. I would gladly take up the challenge, but cannot afford the time for trifles.

The really important lesson which modern scholars have taught us is that we must read the prophet's message on the background of the history of his own times. It is, I agree, against all analogy and practically incredible that Isaiah, son of Amoz, about 700 B.C. addressed a message to the captives who were in Babylon in the days of Cyrus about 540 B.C.

But the whole problem is changed if we pay attention to what Sennacherib himself has caused to be written for our learning. He tells us that (in 701 B.C.) he captured forty-six fenced cities of Judah, as the book of Kings also records; but to this he adds the all-important fact that he carried away into Assyria at this time the captives, 200,150 in number. A very large proportion therefore of the Jewish people (in addition to the Northern Israelites) was in exile just at the point of time to which, on the face of it, the thirty-fifth and fortieth chapters of Isaiah should apply, if the book is chronologically arranged. Isaiah bids Jerusalem (which alone had survived) to proclaim from a high mountain "to the cities of Judah: behold your God. Behold the Lord comes in a strong one", hazaq, allusion to Hezekiah's name is clear, whatever the underlying thought may be; a

shepherd who is Yeabe himself, is to lead the new exodus of captives.

What the Prophet expected did not happen as and when he expected; that is equally evident whether he was Isaiah or another. Isaiah (who had foretold that Yeabe would intervene to save Jerusalem at the decisive moment and whose prediction had been marvellously fulfilled in 701 B.C.) being human would naturally rise up with wings as an eagle, would naturally soar up into a visionary world, would see that Yeabe, who had bared his arm to save Jerusalem, would go on to finish the work of Salvation by sending a new Moses, yea the Angel of his Presence, to lead a new Exodus of captive Israel. It was illusion, but it was an illusion natural in the circumstances, and one which contained a vision of Eternal truth; rays of Divine Light refracted in passing through the misty atmosphere of earth. But why anyone should have an illusion of this kind in the days of Cyrus I cannot see; nor how anyone can regard the prophetic vision as fulfilled by the pedestrian return of a few Jews led by Zerubbabel or Ezra.

Sennacherib does not tell how he disposed of these 200,000 Jews who were "sent after him to Niniveh"; but as in the campaign immediately preceding his invasion of Judah he had removed 200,000 "Aramaeans" from Babylonia, it is probable that he sent them there. It seems to me more reasonable to take the book of Isaiah as evidence that this was so and that Isaiah was concerned with these Jewish exiles, than to take the words addressed to captives in Babylon as evidence that Isaiah did not write them; unless there is decisive evidence to the contrary. My conclusion after careful study is that the whole course of the prophecy fits consecutively into the little we know of the last days of Hezekiah and the beginning of Manasseh, and into no other period whatever. But this cannot be maintained unless in one or two places we claim the liberty to go behind, not only the other versions, but also the Hebrew text as *pointed by the Jewish scribes*. This can hardly seem an unreasonable claim to a Christian, who recalls that our Master said to those very people "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge", "Ye have made the word of God of none effect by your tradition." There is no need to alter one jot or tittle of the Hebrew text. But it must be understood that the original Hebrew text consisted of consonants only. Not only was there no division into chapters and verses, there was no trace of punctuation, no

vowels and no spacing of the letters into words. To judge from the Lachish letters the dot between words was more often omitted than inserted. It was not until about the Eighth Century A.D. that the vowel points and other guides to reading, which amount to the making of an authorised version, were added by the Scribes. That we should feel bound to follow such a guide, when it leads into the ditch of muddy confusion in which Deutero-Isaiah ends, is preposterous. But the fundamental error is far older than the Scribes; and really amounted to the rejection of the Christ more than 500 years before the Good Shepherd came. Josephus tells us that the book of Isaiah was shown to Cyrus and that he was much impressed by finding himself proclaimed by name as destined to build the temple at Jerusalem, by a Prophet writing more than a century before he was born. It is interesting to recall that Josephus himself brought off a similar success, by persuading Vespasian that he was the Messianic Shiloh who was to come out of Judah, where he was to be proclaimed Emperor. Cyrus in one of his inscriptions appears to be practically quoting the particular passage in Isaiah, which as commonly read, refers to him by name.

Of course, modern scholars will not admit this or the statement of Josephus.

In this inscription Cyrus says that "Merodach . . . sought out an upright prince after his own heart whom he took by the hand, Cyrus king of Anshan; he named his name, to the kingdom of the whole world he called him by name". Isaiah xlv in the Authorised Version reads "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him . . . that thou mayest know that I the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. . . . I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee though thou hast not known me". There is not only the taking by the hand in both, but also the peculiar insistence on the calling by the name which points to some connection between the two. But in the inscription Merodach takes the place of Yeabe: and the merit of Cyrus which won the favour of Merodach, the god of Babylon and "king of gods", was that he had restored to their homes the gods (*i.e.*, idols) which Nabonidus had collected in Babylon and which had roused Merodach by their complaints. So far is Cyrus from being a monotheist that he boasts of his reversal of the policy

of Nabonidus which had at least tended in that direction by centralising worship in Babylon.

Now, according to the modern theory, Deutero-Isaiah wrote these chapters at the time of the advance of the power of Cyrus, whose own inscriptions show that he professed himself a worshipper of all the gods of the nations. To this unprincipled schemer, about whose views he could not be ignorant, the Prophet gives the titles of Yeabe's shepherd and anointed: and he does this immediately after the most scathing and contemptuous description of the stupidity of bowing down to the stock of a tree after cooking your dinner on a fire made of its chips and shavings.

It is monstrous. "He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he can not deliver his soul nor say, 'Is there not a lie in my right hand.'" How can they believe that such sublime poetry, such a sense of the majesty of the Holy One of Israel as fill these chapters of Isaiah, could be combined with such time-serving flattery of an unscrupulous adventurer, even though he were more liberal minded and humane than the Babylonian kings whom he succeeded?

While Cyrus stood as the legendary hero, belief in Isaiah's prediction was rational compared with that. But since his own records have exposed his boasted reverence for idols, some other explanation there must be.

And it is not far to seek if you approach the Hebrew text without regard to the tradition of those scribes who rejected the Shepherd and the Christ when he came to claim his kingdom, which had been given over to thieves and robbers. Jesus himself said to the Chief Priests "Ye have made the house of prayer a den of robbers".

There are at least three possible ways of reading those letters which the scribes have interpreted as meaning "to Cyrus".

I suppose that some Jewish exile, trying to interpret the unfulfilled prophecies of Isaiah and puzzling over the letters which he found written in his unpointed text, believed that he had made a wonderful discovery when he read in it an allusion to the name of Cyrus, the king whose victories filled the minds of all men with mingled hopes and fears and who seemed destined to be the heir to the Empire of Babylon. "But behold the false pen of the scribes hath made falsehood."

What I think Isaiah wrote and intended was "to thee and the crushed one" (or impoverished), "thee" being Jerusalem,

the saved remnant of Israel, and the "crushed one" her anointed king; on the face of it Hezekiah, who had been brought very low, but in reality another mysterious personality, who is elsewhere called the Servant. For it will be immediately evident to anyone who reads the opening verses of Isaiah xlv without the name of Cyrus, that this is one of what they call "the servant songs," which moderns are wont to regard as insertions sprinkled about aimlessly, but which are really parts of the vital cord uniting the whole.

It is impossible to give an adequate explanation in a few words: I can only give a literal version of my reading of what Isaiah wrote, the end of xlv and the beginning of xlvi.

Let me repeat. "Thee" is Jerusalem, the saved remnant of Israel: the crushed one is the Servant, the ideal king who is to be manifested as the glorified head of the redeemed Israel, the new Jerusalem. He is the head, she is the body and the bride; they are ideally two in one. The Servant is always Israel personified but is sometimes an individual, the head on whom are laid the sorrows of all the people: this passage identifies him with the Anointed, the Christ.

"That saith to Jerusalem she shall be established:

And to the cities of Judah they shall be built;

And her wastes I will raise up;

That saith to the deep be dry:

And thy rivers I will shrivel.

That saith to thee—and the Crushed one my shepherd:

And all my delight he shall fulfill;—

Even saying to Jerusalem, She shall be builded:

And a Temple thou (masculine) shalt be founded."

I would call attention to one word in passing, Hephzi (my delight); Hephzibah, you will remember, was Hezekiah's queen. In the next verse in order to point out the allusion to the name of Hezekiah, I substitute "he's secure by my right hand" for "whom I held by his right hand."

Thus hath said Yeabe to his Anointed:

To thee and the Crushed, he's secure by my right hand;

To lay low before him nations:

And the gifts of kings I open;

To open before him double doors:

And the gates shall not be shut.

I myself before thee go :
 And the uplifted I make straight ;
 The doors of brass I break :
 And the bars of iron I cut through ;
 And I give to thee treasures of darkness :
 And trove of hiding places ;
 That thou mayest know that I am Yeabe :
 Who calls by thy name, the God of Israel.
 For the sake of my servant Jacob :
 And Israel my chosen ;
 And I call thee by thy name :
 I entitle thee and thou hast not known me.

You will observe that the run of the sentences implies that the person addressed is to be called Israel—as the Servant often is. Nor will you forget that almost the first sentence of Isaiah's book is "Israel doth not know," and again in xliii, "Who is blind as my servant?" You will also recollect that the Patriarch Jacob was given the name Israel by the Divine Being who wrestled with him but refused to tell his own name: for "I appeared to Jacob by my name of God Almighty: but by my name Yeabe I was not known to him."

Throughout Scripture, Yeabe's anointed is always Israel, usually but not always personified in her king. So here "his anointed" is divided into "thee and the Crushed one", a double reference which is continued in "before him" and "before thee." As soon as Cyrus goes the sense becomes plain: for what sense is there in saying that the name of Cyrus was given to him by Yeabe or given for the sake of Jacob and Israel?

In lxiv the apparent allusion to the burning of the Temple disappears when the true punctuation is given. It is the ornaments of worship of Yeabe which were cast into the fire by Manasseh.

There I must leave it, for it is important at least to mention the earlier chapters.

"The burden of Babylon which Isaiah son of Amoz saw" belongs to the time when Merodach^yBaladan the Chaldean, with Elamite allies, was moving to capture Babylon from the Assyrians: from Isaiah it appears that the Medes were moving at the same time. The date is indicated by the mention of the death of Ahaz at the end of chapter xiv. The king of Babel who

has been slain and dishonoured is therefore Shalmaneser who was also known as Elula of Babylon, who was assassinated before Samaria at the time of Sargon's usurpation.

The remarkable combination of events in the years 722-1 is of great importance to the interpretation of Isaiah and other prophets. Thus the assassination of Shalmaneser and a change of dynasty in Assyria coincided with the loss of Babylon, whose capture had crowned Tiglath Pileser's career only eight years earlier. Within a few months the death of Ahaz set Hezekiah, who had previously been co-regent, free to establish his reforms. At the same time the fall of Samaria brought the great schism to an end. Israel had no possible king as rival to the heir of David.

This combination of events clearly underlies the remarkable series of chapters xxiv-xxvii, which alone are not placed according to chronological sequence.

Chapters xx-xxiii are of vital importance for chronology. Twenty gives us a date which is quite certain, when Sargon sent Tartan to Ashdod, *i.e.* 711. Twenty-one is a remarkable vision of a fall of Babylon by which the Prophet is deeply moved with anxiety for Jerusalem. This unique tone is only possible on the occasion when Merodach Baladan, Hezekiah's friend, was driven out by Sargon, *i.e.*, 710. Twenty-three mentions the only two facts recorded by inscriptions concerning the last two or three years of Sargon, *i.e.*, the submission of Cyprus (Chittim) and the devastation of the land of the Chaldeans, the home of Merodach Baladan.

Thus we get chapter xx 711 B.C., xxi 710 B.C., xxiii about 707 B.C. Manifestly xxii should belong to 709 or 708, *i.e.*, the fourteenth year of Hezekiah. It clearly indicates a miserable surrender of Jerusalem to the Assyrian and the carrying away of hostages and treasure. I cannot explain here, but from thus treating Isaiah as an orderly book and as a trustworthy guide to history, we receive the clue to the chronology of Hezekiah's reign, which has hitherto proved insoluble. The solution comes from a recognition of the fact that Sargon and Sennacherib loved their own glory more than truth, Isaiah loved only truth and the glory of God.

For a fuller treatment of all these matters I can only refer to my translation and commentary recently published by T. T. Clark under the title *En-Roeh*. All that time will now allow is to read a few paragraphs from the Introduction to that book

to indicate how the living gospel of Isaiah is bound up with the unity of the book.

“The conclusion of the whole matter is this : that the interpretation of the Old Testament has not really begun. Modern criticism has cleared away some rubbish ; but the scholars now seem to me, so to speak, to be hurrying round in a vicious circle, ploughing the sand, while close at hand there is a fruitful soil ready to yield a harvest more abundant than we could ask or think, if only they will turn their attention to it.

“And the one essential idea is simply that which Christians were told from the beginning, that the whole of the Scriptures are united by the one purpose of the Spirit which inspired them, the revelation of the things concerning the Christ, whom the Father would send, as God with us, in whose name alone we can be enlightened and saved.

“The Jewish scribes have taken away the key of knowledge ; they are blind guides ; how could it be otherwise if they rejected the Christ, the shepherd, Whom we call Master, but heed not the things he said ; for He declared to us that the purpose of the Scriptures was to reveal the things concerning Himself. Yet we owe to the Jews an unpayable debt, the careful preservation of the oracles of God committed to them ; and they alone perhaps can lead us in the understanding of them, if they will look on Him whom they pierced. It may be that they have preserved also priceless knowledge hidden under a heap of rubbish of tradition and legend. Surely there must have been hidden knowledge among the Rabbis who spoke of the Messiah who was a leper ; of Menahem the son of Hezekiah who was born at Bethlehem and how ‘Israel shall have no more Messiah, for they had him in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah.’ The statements are blind and perverse ; but do they not bear witness to some genuine memories, which were cherished among them that looked for redemption in Israel ? and will not scribes, instructed into the kingdom of God, and called in laughter, bring forth out of their treasures things new and old ?

“That there are mysteries that lie hidden in the writings of the greatest of the prophets is no gratuitous invention, darkening counsel by words without knowledge. He himself declares quite distinctly that he binds up the testimony and seals the lore among his disciples ; that all prophecy was to most of his contemporaries as the words of a book which is sealed ; that he was to speak in such a way that seeing they should see and not

perceive ; and at the end he complains ‘ Who hath believed out report ? ’

“ One thing Isaiah requires, and justly requires of his readers ; that they should credit him with meaning what he says. Prophets did not write history before it happened, but they were men who were spiritually in advance of their times by anything from one to a thousand generations. Some day a mystic poet scholar will take up the task of interpreting him : then men will begin to understand what hitherto seeing they have not perceived. But his writings belong irrevocably, as a peculiar treasure, to his people, to whom are committed the oracles of God, a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of his people Israel. His heart shall discern ; and turn and be healing to him.

“ It seems to me clear that chapters vii, viii, and xi imply that a child was born about 734 B.C., of Davidic descent, but not of the reigning family, whom Isaiah regarded as the Messiah ; that the description of the servant implies that there was an actual person whom he regards as embodying in himself the hope of Israel ; and that the only possibility of doing justice to the prophet’s words lies in identifying the latter with the former. The whole vision is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, but there must have been someone in Isaiah’s day in whom the whole process of our salvation was foreshadowed, that the prophet might be enabled to see in the visage which was so marred more than any man, the vision of the King in his beauty.”

Perhaps I may be permitted to mention two smaller and earlier publications, *Sawn Asunder* and *The Stone Rejected*, copies of which can be obtained from me at St. Michael’s, Hindhead, price 1s. and 3d. Though there are matters of detail which need modification, they give a simple exposition of the main argument.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN (Rev. C. W. COOPER) said : The question whether or not the Book of the Prophet Isaiah is a composite book containing the writings of different authors, and edited by another, is one which immensely concerns the Christian religion, and therefore the faith of our nation.

The Victoria Institute has laboured for a number of years, and not without considerable success, to vindicate the Bible as having within its pages, from Genesis to Revelation, all-sufficient evidence

to prove that its writers gave their message as God's truth, meaning what they state and stating what they mean.

It is the opinion of many of us who claim to have a knowledge of what the Bible states that its statements clearly, uniformly and consistently set forth the unfolding purposes of God, which have been, and still are being, worked out in the history of the world.

A type of mind, however, in these latter days has arisen which hesitates to believe that any man could possibly write upon or foretell future events, who also finds it difficult to believe in miracles, such as God's destruction of Sennacherib's army in one night, as stated in Isaiah xxxvii, 36.

The result of such views is that it drives the modernist to deliberately neglect or explain away plain statements in this book in order to make the Bible to agree with their theoretical notions.

The Paper read to us to-day shows once more that wisdom to expound the Scriptures belongs far more to those who understand the message given throughout the entire book, rather than to those scholars who depend mainly upon their superior knowledge of the language in which our Bible was written.

Concerning scholarship itself, I think it worthy of notice to state that scholars of every school of thought commit their views and arguments to paper, with the result that any intelligent student is thereby enabled to weigh the claims, and the pros and cons of each of the differing advocates, so as to judge for himself which of the claims or views set forth are the more likely to be the true exposition.

The determining factor, to my mind, as to the truths of the Bible is not scholarship only, concerning its statements in part, but the understanding of the whole of the message therein contained. Such I consider is the great value of the Paper read to-day, and for which I now propose that a vote of sincere thanks be given to the author and reader.

Colonel MOLONY said : The Council of the Victoria Institute were very sorry to have to ask Mr. Wordsworth to limit his paper to 4,000 words, for that is evidently much too narrow a limit to deal with such a great subject. We are all the more grateful to Mr. Wordsworth for having attempted it ; but, in justice to him, we must mention that he has published two books and two pamphlets

relating to the subject. His book, called *Sawn Asunder*, should certainly be read.

The story is told in Scotland that two ministers were driving in the Highlands when one said, "Do you see that cottage?" "Yes, what about it?" "That is where Isaiah was sawn asunder." He meant that it was where Dr. Sir George Adam Smith was staying when he wrote his well-known book on Isaiah. In that book he mentions Cyrus 22 times in four pages, which shows how much his argument for sub-division turns upon that name. Now Mr. Wordsworth has shown that all this argument is inconclusive. Having compared Dr. Smith's book with Mr. Wordsworth's, it seems to me that most of the latter's counter-arguments are satisfactory. But not quite all. It will not do for it to be thought that we of the Victoria Institute do not go carefully into the matters brought before us. So I must mention the following passages from the latter chapters of the books of Isaiah, in the hope that Mr. Wordsworth may be able to meet them with satisfactory explanations. On the face of it, it does not seem probable that they can have been written by Isaiah the son of Amoz, who died about 700 B.C. Babylon flourished for a further 160 years, yet we read in Isaiah—

xlvi, 5, Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt *no more* be called the lady of kingdoms.

xlviii, 20, Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans.

xlix, 17 (Of Zion), Thy destroyers, and they that made thee *waste* shall go forth of thee.

li, 19 (Of Jerusalem), These two things are befallen thee who shall bemoan thee? *desolation* and destruction.

lxiii, 18, our adversaries have trodden down Thy sanctuary.

lxiv, 10, Thy holy cities are become a wilderness, Jerusalem a *desolation*.

On page 84 of his book, *Sawn Asunder*, Mr. Wordsworth allows that this verse and the next "present a problem".

Sir G. A. Smith says the same of parts of *his* solution. He writes: "Chapter lix is perhaps the most difficult portion of all, because

it makes the Jews responsible for civic justice in a way they could hardly be conceived to be in exile" (Vol. II, page 21).

Mr. Wordsworth's main contention is surely sound. That the wonderful predictions which we read in the latter part of the book are much more likely to have been written about the great Messiah than about an idolater such as Cyrus is now known to have been.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT said: I am glad this question has been raised in to-day's lecture, as the popular view still is that there were two Isaiahs, one who wrote the first 39 chapters, and another who wrote from chapter xl to the end. The usual reason given is the alleged difference in the *tone* between the two sections. But how weak such an argument is! Have *we* never written a letter which first tells the *sad* news of the death of a friend, and then, in the same letter, send the *glad* news of a friend who had just returned from abroad after an absence of many years? How unreasonable it would be to suggest that such a letter *must* have been written by *two different persons*.

Now happily, like many other Bible difficulties, this question is authoritatively settled within the covers of the Bible itself. Let me put it to you like this. Supposing we could find a passage in the New Testament with two quotations from Isaiah, one from the first part—what we may call the earlier Isaiah—and another from the second part—what we may call the later Isaiah. And if, in that passage, *both those quotations are definitely attributed to one man*, ought not that to settle the question for ever?

Now that is exactly what we do find, for in John xii, 38-40, we read: "that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled which he spake: Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed". That is a quotation from Isaiah liii, 1 (now according to the critic, that is the later Isaiah). Then immediately follow the words: "Therefore, they could not believe, because that Esaias said again" (*not another Isaiah*, but the *same Isaiah* said again), "he hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart", etc. Now these words are taken from Isaiah vi, 9-10 (which, according to the critics, was the earlier Isaiah). Then in John xii, 41, this clear and definite statement follows *from the lips of Our Lord*: "These things said Esaias when

he saw His glory"—not when *they* saw His glory, as Christ would have said, had there been two Isaiahs !

But more than that, this erroneous idea of a two-fold division of Isaiah's prophecy blinds our minds to the true division, which is three-fold, and a careful study of this prophecy shows that each division commences with a *solemn call* from God, and ends with an *equally solemn warning*.

Chapters i to xlvi constitute the first section. Here is the *call*, Isaiah i-ii, "Hear O Heavens and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken." And the *warning* at the close of that section is found in chapter xlvi, 22 : "There is no peace saith the Lord to the wicked".

The second section is chapters xlvii-xlvi. Here is the *call* with which the section opens, chapter xlvii, 1, "Listen O isles unto Me and hearken, ye people from far". And the *warning* is in the last verse of that section (chapter xlvi, 21), "There is no peace saith my God to the wicked".

The third section commences with the *call* in chapter xlviii, 1, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up Thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the House of Jacob their sin". While the *warning* with which this section closes in chapter xlviii, 24, "Men that have transgressed against Me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched". Moreover, herein is the plan of the Bible revealed ; for it will be noticed that the first call is to the *Jews*, while the second is directed to the *Gentiles*, because the Jews rejected His call ; but the *third* call is again given to the *Jews*, who will be finally restored in the millennial age.

The Rev. F. W. PITT said : The paper read to us this afternoon is very unlike what is generally heard at the Victoria Institute meetings, and one can but hope that it does not indicate that we are moving toward modernistic theories of inspiration.

There are too many questionable suggestions to deal with in a brief reply, so I must confine my remarks to one statement which I had hoped even higher critics had abandoned in face of historical facts.

The learned lecturer says : "Prophets did not write history before it happened". Considering the detailed predictions concern-

ing Egypt, Tyre, Nineveh, Babylon, and the rest, this is obviously incorrect. "Show the things that are to come hereafter" is the divine challenge to false prophets, which implies that the true prophets wrote history before it happened.

One instance of the supposed method of Isaiah is given in regard to the prediction of the Messiah's Virgin Birth. Our lecturer suggests that "a child was born about 734 B.C. of Davidic descent, but not of the reigning family, whom Isaiah regarded as the Messiah; that the description of the Servant implies that there was an actual person, whom he regards as embodying in himself the hope of Israel".

Are we, then, to believe that there have been two persons born of a Virgin—the child born about 734 B.C., and the Son of God—born in the days of Herod the Great?

It seems to me like a pure invention, for there is no historical record of any such thing as the lecturer's mythical child born about 734 B.C.

The whole paper leads to confusion on the vital question of Divine Inspiration.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION.

The Rev. Principal H. S. CURR, M.A., B.D., B.Litt., wrote: The theories advanced in this learned paper were also adopted by Dr. J. W. Thirtle, whose name is honoured and loved in the Victoria Institute by all who knew him. In one of his books he defends an interpretation of the second half of Isaiah's prophecies which does not differ very much from that of Mr. Wordsworth. If the arguments do not carry complete conviction, they serve as a protest against the modern view of the book that it consists of a treasury of miscellaneous prophetic oracles, distributed over several centuries, and collected in one book which bears the name of Isaiah. Wesley's collection of hymns is a fair analogy. The book still bears the name of the great evangelist, but it contains a very large number of pieces which are much later than his date. The earlier view of Isaiah was that it consisted in the main of contributions from two supreme prophets who may have both borne the same name. Thus the book becomes the production of two Isaiahs, one living in Jerusalem and the other in Babylonia. That theory gave rise to the facetious observation that the critics had treated the book of Isaiah as

Manasseh's officers treated his body. It is supposed that the prophet met a martyr's death by being sawn asunder when he had fled for hiding in a mulberry tree whose trunk was hollow. The book has been dismembered in the same way.

Towards the close of the paper, Mr. Wordsworth refers to Jewish tradition. It is along that line that the defence of the book's unity of authorship must be sought. The tradition of the Jewish and Christian Churches is unanimously in favour of the theory that Isaiah, the friend and adviser of Hezekiah, was its author. There must be some explanation of that fact. An old proverb reminds us that there is always fire where there is smoke, and such a belief could not have held its ground so long and so widely without some foundation in fact. After all has been said and done, there must have been a period when the sixty-six chapters of Isaiah were put together to form a unit. It seems surprising that two-thirds or more of the book should consist of Non-Isaianic material, especially in view of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Book of the Twelve, as the single roll which comprises all the Minor Prophets is called in the Hebrew Bible. Jeremiah's book is almost exclusively from his pen. The same is true of Ezekiel, and in the Minor Prophets so careful were the compilers of authorship that even the twenty-one verses of Obadiah are carefully assigned to him by name. In these circumstances, it is hard to understand how such a *tour de force* of prophetic teaching as Isaiah xl-lxvi should have been amalgamated with the oracles of Isaiah of Jerusalem unless he were in deed and in truth their Divinely inspired author. Those who were responsible for the present form of the book must surely have known their business. It seems incredible that they should have lumped together pre-exilic and post-exilic compositions under one revered name. They may have been uncritical according to modern standards, but they were surely not lacking in wisdom and knowledge so badly as the popular modern view of the book's composite character demands. They had the same evidence before them, and they were equally capable of pronouncing judgment upon it.

Miss A. M. HODGKIN wrote: It is because we believe that the question of inspiration is involved in the theory of two Isaiahs that we feel strongly about it.

(1) In the first place, the denial of the unity of Isaiah had its root in an unwillingness to admit the supernatural power of prediction in prophecy.

(2) In the second place, to maintain the denial of its unity sets aside the authority of the New Testament.

At first the supposed difference of language was assigned as the reason for doubting the unity of the book. But great Hebrew scholars, with scarcely an exception, have proved there is no linguistic difficulty.

The denial of its unity lies deeper—in the fact of prediction. That the prophet should predict the fall of Babylon when it had not risen to be a great world power; that he should predict the deliverance from captivity before the people were carried captive; that he should tell that deliverance should come from Medo-Persia when these two nations were still separate and insignificant; that he should call the deliverer by name—Cyrus, more than 100 years before his birth—these matters are stumbling-blocks to those who only see in prophecy the human intuition of a good man. But in the second Isaiah, God Himself appeals to the fulfilment of the earlier predictions as ground for believing that the later predictions will also be fulfilled.*

History uniformly attributes the second part of the book to Isaiah.

The witness of the New Testament is explicit and abundant. Isaiah is mentioned by name as the writer of the prophecy no fewer than 21 times. Of these, 10 are in connection with passages from the first part and 11 from the second part. The whole Book of Isaiah is referred to 210 times. John, in the same breath, ascribes chapter liii and chapter vi to Isaiah by name.

The unity of thought and purpose throughout the book is a final testimony to the unity of its authorship. This is seen most of all in the central figure of the person of the Messiah, in His glorious work of redemption, and in His universal reign of righteousness. This forms the great theme of the prophet Isaiah, flowing through his writings in unbroken connection.

* [In this connection compare the case of "the man of God from Judah" who prophesied of Josiah by name that he should break down the idolatrous altar in Bethel 350 years before the event.]

Colonel F. C. MOLESWORTH wrote : A feature of the book of Isaiah is the knowledge displayed by the writer of botany and forestry. Trees and plants are referred to much more frequently than in any other part of the Old Testament. This is, I consider, an argument for the unity of authorship of the book. It would be strange, indeed, if *both* Isaiah and the alleged deutero-Isaiah, who is stated to have lived at a different time and in a different country, should have displayed a much greater knowledge of plants and trees than any of the other Old Testament writers.

I wish that critics who profess to be able to divide Scripture into portions said to be written by different writers at different times, and then to have been edited and re-edited, would try their hand at a modern work which is known to have been produced in that way—for example, a military text-book—and tell us how much of it is new, and how much the work of the latest revisers. Their statements would be capable of verification, and by their success in taking up the challenge we could judge of their qualifications for separating the Pentateuch into its alleged component parts.

Colonel A. H. VAN STRAUBENZEE wrote : Isaiah means “the salvation of Jehovah”. He lived midway between Moses and Christ. The word salvation occurs oftener in this book than in any other save the Psalms. The earlier editions of the English Bible opened with the words, “Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth, for the Lord hath spoken”. In the earlier portion of his book he sees King Uzziah smitten with leprosy and cut off from the house of the Lord ; but, side by side with the death of the earthly king, is presented the King of Heaven, whose arm (Isaiah lix, 16) was to bring Salvation, this being in the latter portion of the book. For over 2,000 years no one ever questioned that there was more than one Isaiah.

Isaiah liii, 9, reads : “He appointed His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death”. Who put such a strange idea into the mind of the man who wrote it nearly 700 years before it took place ? It must be verbal inspiration only that kept the writers of the Scriptures from mistakes in the choice of words, and every word, from the lightest to the gravest, is a reflection of the mind of the Heavenly Father.

Criminals were buried at the foot of their crosses, but God intervened in the case of Christ Who died for others. When His death took place, there must be no degradation. Hence the inspired action of Joseph and Nicodemus, and Pilate's consent, both request and consent being remarkable.

The Companion Bible gives the structure of the book as one whole, which shows that it does not lend itself, in any degree, to an arbitrary ending at chapter xxxix.

- A. 1, 2-5, 30 ... Exhortations ; Reprehensory ; Prophetic.
- B. 6, 1-13 ... The Voice from the Temple ; The Scattering.
- C. 7, 1-12, 6 ... Historic ; Events and Prophecies. (Ahaz.)
- D. 13, 1-27, 13 ... Burdens. Alternated with Israel's blessings.
- D. 28, 1-35, 10 ... Woes. Alternated with Jehovah's glories.
- C. 36, 1-39, 8 ... Historic. Events and Prophecies. (Hezekiah.)
- B. 40, 1-11 ... The Voice from the Wilderness. The Gathering.
- A. 40, 12-end ... Exhortations. Promissory. Prophetic.

Dr. J. BARCROFT ANDERSON wrote : This paper states, " We see Jesus of Nazareth . . . as truly son of man". Now, the expression " Jesus of Nazareth " is unknown to the Greek Scriptures. We in them find Nazarene, from Nazaret, and the Nazorite. Matthew ii, 23, states : " He dwelt in a city called Nazaret that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the Prophets, that Nazorite He should be called". Everywhere else the definite article is before this word. When He met Paul on the way to Damascus, He said, " I am Jesus, the Nazorite " (Acts xxii, 8).

Further, " Son of Man " occurs only once in the Greek Gospels, and then to describe the only ultimate Judge of the entire human race (John v, 27). Elsewhere it is " The Son of The Man". The only Hebrew word for man is Adam. So the first Adam, in the Hebrew, is distinguished from all the other Adams by having the definite article before it. So " The Son of The Man " means the son (or builder-up) of the Adam, and is the highest purely human title, and was so used before the High Priest (Matthew xxvi, 64), as

being a higher human title than that of High Priest. Hence the significance of Matthew xxv, 31: "When, indeed, shall come The Son of The Man, in the glory of *himself*, and all the holy angels with *him*, then shall *he* sit down upon the throne of *his own glory*."

This paper reasonably seems to imply that these two errors of translation of all translators were the cause of other views expressed in this paper which appear to be contrary to God's words as written.

This paper also states: "We have learned again to regard the Prophets as . . . not mere hands which wrote a sort of automatic writing at the dictation of the Holy Spirit". As this idea of automatic writing is unsupported by anything in the Scriptures, it would be of scientific interest to know how it was arrived at.

The Hebrew dictionaries unquestionably associate the word Jehovah, or in our alphabet IEFÉ with the verb "to be." But the Prophets associate it only with causation. The letter E in Hebrew carries that meaning. When placed in front of a verb, it makes that verb causal. This word means "He is causing". It is applied to Him Who "is bearing the all things by the spoken word of *his power*" (Hebrews i, 13). Colossians i, 17, states: "The all things by *him* are being held together" (see 1 Kings, xx, 13 and 28).

This paper treats Isaiah as a very human author, in representing him as using in his Hebrew narrative, for purely descriptive purposes, a foreign word, unknown to the Hebrew language. The word we know to have been the Hebrew spelling of the personal name *Cyrus*. But in Daniel x, 1, I understand this paper to leave this same word as the personal name of that Persian king, in whom everything recorded in Isaiah xlv, 1 to 7, was fulfilled to the letter.

This paper states: "Prophets did not write history before it happened". For this misrepresentation of fact I am unable to account.

AUTHOR'S REPLY.

In reply to the interesting points raised by Colonel Molony, Mr. Wordsworth pointed out that in chapter xiii Isaiah, son of Amoz, says of Babylon, "Her time is near to come and her days shall not

be prolonged". In regard to xlix,^f17, and li, 19, lxiii, 18, we must remember that we know very little about the history of Manasseh's reign; it is evident that there must have been a revolution in which the adversaries of the prophets forcibly overthrew the faithful and obtained possession of the temple. In lxiv, 10, following a better punctuation, supported by lxx, he would read "Thy holy cities are become a wilderness: Jerusalem is become a sign-post (ziun) of the wilderness; a desolation the house of our holiness. And the ornaments wherewith our fathers praised Thee: are become for burning of fire"; *i.e.*, it is not the Temple, but the symbols of the worship of Yeabe, which Manasseh has caused to be burned.

The general question raised by Mr. Pitt cannot be dealt with in a few words, but in regard to his reference to the Immanuel prophecy, it is sufficient to point out that it is given as a sign to Ahaz in connection with the events of 735-4 B.C., and therefore cannot have been intended *primarily* to refer to what was to happen more than 700 years later. *Cf.* vii, 16, viii, 8, 10.

What Dr. Anderson means by saying that "the only Hebrew word for man is Adam" is difficult to see, or how he would express "the Son of Man" in Greek without using the definite article with man.

The paper certainly treats Isaiah as a very human author, but it does not represent Isaiah as using in xlv, 1, any but ordinary Hebrew words. It was Bishop Butler who said "Prophecy is nothing but the history of events before they come to pass", but it is manifest that this is a misleading statement. Micah iii, 8, gives a clear statement of the essence of his inspiration. It was the false prophets far more than the true who dealt in detailed predictions of coming events.

The prophets of Yeabe constantly foretold the coming of the Christ as Judge and Saviour, but it was not given to them infallibly to know the times or the seasons.