

The last region, by which we quit the Jordan Valley, is as different as possible, in its bare and rugged desolation, worn by winter torrents and burning with summer heats, from the cheerful district round the site of Jericho. It is the steep road by which the Samaritan in the parable "went down." It is the steep road by which the Saviour "went up," in the days immediately before the Crucifixion, to Bethany and the Mount of Olives.

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ART. V.—PROFESSOR ROBERTSON SMITH ON THE
PENTATEUCH.¹

A WISE teacher has recorded his conviction that increase of knowledge brings with it an increased burden of sorrow. Study raises difficulties. Whenever we penetrate beneath the surface of a question, whether it relate to things physical, social or philosophical, we meet with what is inscrutable, if not harassing; and where moral and spiritual interests are concerned, our sensibilities are frequently jarred by discoveries which threaten to undermine the deepest convictions of our soul. A man will usually think twice before making these perplexities known even to his friends; whilst to publish them to an unlearned and unthinking world would be the height of cruelty and immorality. He will give his mind time to recover its balance, letting the activities of social life and industry exert their due claim upon him, and refusing to admit as an element of his belief any principle which does not work in with the requirements of daily life. A visit to the cottage of a poor man, or to the bedside of a dying Christian, will often dissipate the lowering clouds with which speculation and criticism have overshadowed the spirit; and a renewed appeal to the Father who seeth in secret has restored the weary thinker to peace.

There are times, however, when the student must speak out, and when the conclusions to which he has been brought after long and anxious research must be made known to others. All knowledge ought to be public property. If a man has ascertained, for example, that the earth goes round the sun, and not the sun round the earth, the fact ought to be published abroad; similarly, if it were ascertained beyond the possibility of a doubt that the writings usually ascribed to Herodotus were the work

¹ "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church." By W. Robertson Smith. Black.

of a literary forger in the fifteenth century, the sooner our popular error on the subject is dispelled the better. In such a case, we should all have to reconsider our other knowledge and its sources, so as to adapt the new discovery to our old information; taking care that, in rooting out the tares of error, we did not pull out the wheat also.

The time has come, in the estimation of Professor Robertson Smith, of Aberdeen, when ordinary Bible-readers should have their eyes opened to certain facts which he thinks he has found out concerning the structure of the Old Testament generally, and of the Pentateuch in particular. In consequence of articles by the Professor, which have appeared in the new "Encyclopædia Britannica," under the heads of "Bible" and "Hebrew," he has been removed from his office; and an appeal is now made by him to public opinion, through a volume of lectures, called "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church." The leading points in these lectures I now propose to examine as shortly and simply as I can, my object being to meet the Professor on his own ground, and to deal with the subject on principles and in a method which the Biblical student and Hebrew scholar will recognize as fair and impartial. If the Professor has failed to substantiate his sceptical conclusions, then the delivery and publication of his lectures is utterly to be condemned.

When we read the Bible for devotional purposes, we skim over a great many *minutiae*, by a true instinct, as matters which are of no use to us. Varieties of spelling proper names, gaps and variations in genealogies, repetitions, notes on words or incidents apparently added afterwards, different ways of telling the same story—these, and similar things, do not aid us in our conflict with temptation, or in our pursuit of holiness, so we dismiss them from our minds. It is the business of the critic, on the other hand, to investigate just such points as these. He will scrutinize the spelling and weigh the usage of Hebrew words with the utmost interest. They are the *phenomena* of the sacred text, by means of which he has to find out, if possible, the internal evidence of the date and authorship of each book. This, however, is the purely literary department of sacred criticism; and it needs to be supplemented by the historical element: the critic reads each book as a whole, considers whether its contents agree with the age usually assigned to it, whether it pre-supposes any of the earlier books; and if not, why not?

Some of us are, perhaps, inclined to stop all such discussions. We say, "The Bible is too sacred a Book to be dealt with thus;" and, "The Old Testament is to be received as a whole, just as it stands, by us Christians, for it was accepted as authoritative by our Lord Himself." It is too late, I fear, to plead thus. The tide of inquiry has set in and we cannot turn it. What, then,

can we do? We can accept it gladly and fearlessly, knowing that we have not followed cunningly devised fables, and firmly convinced that investigation will tend in the long run, if conducted in a fair spirit, to strengthen our position.

Others, and Professor Smith apparently among the number, are willing that we should let criticism have its own way, even though it destroy the historical value of the sacred records; and we are told to content ourselves with the inward persuasion that God is on our side, and that the Bible is the true expression of man's devotional spirit, and is "self-evidencing." This, however, seems worse than folly, for the Bible is chiefly composed of historical and biographical records illustrative of the dealings of God with man; God is seen in *action*, rather than in *dogma*, from the first of Genesis onwards; facts are better commentaries on the Divine nature than treatises; and if the narrative of the facts is untrustworthy, theology becomes mythology, and Christian Truth has lost that backbone of history which has hitherto been the secret of its vigour.

It is true that men may be influenced by Christ, and may profit by the contents of the Scripture, who cannot at first accept all its narratives as historical. Christ does not break the bruised reed. We do not know what struggles some of our brothers, and even sisters, are undergoing through their perplexities about certain Biblical statements. The keener our sense of truth, and the wider our acquaintance with the facts of human nature, so much the stronger is the demand made on our faith. But the testimony of history is emphatically on the side of Christianity; and the experience of Christ's saving power throws light on all difficulties; "come and see" being still the best answer to the old objection, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth."

Let it be granted, however, that critical questions, concerning the inspired Word, may be discussed with some measure of equanimity. We naturally proceed to ask what are the historical, textual, and linguistic standards by which the correctness, or the incorrectness, of the Old Testament may be judged? and what are the canons of criticism which may be applied to it?

The answer to the first question is an easy one. The Old Testament stands in a unique position, both as to its history and language. It must be judged mainly out of its own mouth. Its latest contributors were contemporary with the Fathers of Greek History; its references to non-Jewish nations can, indeed, be verified to a considerable extent by means of Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Egyptian inscriptions, but the internal history of the people must be drawn from the book itself. And as to language, whilst our knowledge of cognate languages is now considerable, and of the highest value, we have nothing

worthy of the name of contemporary literature by which we can test the usage of words and idioms. Thus, our materials, so to speak, lie in a nutshell.

With regard to canons of criticism the path is more perplexing. Each critic seems to act upon his own instincts. A celebrated contributor to "Essays and Reviews" laid down as a first principle that we should interpret the Bible as any other book. The author of the work before us says that "the ordinary laws of evidence and good sense" must be our guide. These canons keep out of sight the fact that the Bible is professedly no ordinary book, and that the Old and New Testament histories are links in a grand chain claiming to illustrate the method in which the destinies of man are affected by the loving purposes and mighty power of God; and the experience of every true believer in Christ, and of every pious Bible-reader, is a fact or phenomenon testifying to the unique position of the Scriptures as a whole. We all believe that "a book which is really old and valuable has nothing to fear"; but due weight must be given to the spiritual side of the Scripture which presupposes its truth, in all cases where purely critical evidence is at fault. Professor Smith allows that it is the first rule of criticism that a good critic must be a good interpreter of the thoughts of his author, and that "sympathy with the age of the author is a recognized factor in critical study." But where there is what may be called a double authorship—where the thoughts proceed from the Eternal, while the language in which they are clothed is that of a particular man and age—the spiritual phenomena must be kept in view as helping the critic (who, after all, is but a man, and needs guidance from the Father of Lights) to a decision on doubtful questions. In a word, knowing what the Bible is to the soul, the thoughtful critic feels that its contents may be regarded as true unless proved inaccurate, and the burden of proof will lie with the other side.

Supposing we wish to analyze the process by which the Old Testament became what it is, what course shall we adopt? Professor Smith comes to our aid with three guiding principles. "The first principle of criticism is that every book bears the stamp of the time and circumstances in which it was written." To this we are bound to give a general assent. Again: "It is a law of all science that to know a thing thoroughly you must know it in its genesis and in its growth." This also is a good rule, but it would lead us to begin at the beginning of the Bible, and go downwards; whereas, under Professor Smith's guidance, we are to go upwards. Once more: "It is the rule of all historical study to begin with the records that stand nearest to the events recorded, and are written under the living impress of the life of the time described." This is an admirable rule: it leads one to

interpret the patriarchal age by the book of Genesis, and the wilderness life by the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers: but I do not perceive that Professor Smith has acted upon it. His method has rather been to trace our information concerning the Old Testament back from period to period, until we get to an obscure age somewhere preceding the time of the Judges. There is no objection to this course, so we will adopt it for the present purpose.

It is granted by all parties that the Old Testament is substantially a Jewish work. We have received it from the most tenacious and conservative people in the world. "Eastern writers copy but do not alter." They are chroniclers rather than inventors or philosophers. They possess a pictorial language, an observant eye for details, an astounding memory for literary *minutiae*. Hence the vividness of the narratives, and the freshness of the conversations in the Old and New Testaments. Professor Smith observes that "the Jewish scholars are the most exact and retentive learners, and their masters spared no pains to teach them all they knew"; and he adds: "we in the West have little idea of the precision with which an Eastern pupil, even now, can take up and remember the minutest details of a lesson, reproducing them years afterwards in the exact words of his master." This gives us a good starting-point for further inquiry, and gives us a second reason for expecting accuracy in the Old Testament history, and justifies us in the determination already arrived at—namely, that nothing but the strongest evidence would lead us to regard any statement in the Bible as unhistorical.

In proceeding to consider the composition and authorship of the Old Testament, we have this great advantage, that Jews and Christians are agreed as to the books which it contains. Any one who takes the trouble to compare our own Authorized Version with a Jewish Version, such as Isaac Leeser's, will see that though the books are in a different order, they are, to all intents and purposes, the same both as to number and as to text; nor are there material differences as to translation. If a Hebrew scholar compares the editions of the Hebrew Bible, published by the Jewish and Christian Bible Societies, he will also find them in entire agreement as to text, though there may be, here and there, a difference as to vowel-points. It may thus be taken for granted, that in our Lord's time, before Christianity diverged from Judaism, the text of the Old Testament was practically the same as it is now. To trace it up from that date to the time of Ezra, is not so easy. The Greek translation, commonly called the Septuagint, which takes us back to 250 B.C., presents some remarkable phenomena. First, Books, and parts of Books, which we now call the Apocrypha, are incorporated with the sacred text—though never quoted or regarded as authoritative in ancient

times by Jew or Christian; secondly, where the Septuagint agrees in substance with our text, there are many not unimportant differences of "reading," some of which doubtless preserve a more ancient text than our own. Attempts have been made, by Houbigant and others, to reproduce the ancient Hebrew readings of value, which might thus be elicited from the Septuagint Version, but for various reasons this has proved a hazardous experiment, and critics are very cautious in substituting such a reading for the *textus receptus* of the Old Testament. Still, the fact remains that the MSS. of the Hebrew Scriptures varied considerably from one another some three centuries before our Lord's time, marks of such variation being traceable not only in the Septuagint, but also in the New Testament quotations; and our present received Hebrew text must be regarded as, on the whole, a "survival of the fittest," but not as an exact reproduction of the original sacred MSS. as they left their authors' hands. Professor Smith would, I think, give a general assent to this statement.

Two other difficulties, which meet us at this stage, must be mentioned—In what "character" was the Old Testament originally written, and in what language? Learned men are by no means of one mind as to the first of these questions;¹ but on the second, considerable light has been thrown by modern discoveries. The language spoken by Abraham in Ur, and again in Charran, was evidently akin to that of some of the Canaanitish nations. The long sojourn in Egypt did not rid the people of their language, though it must have led to the adoption of some Egyptian words and idioms. The intermixture and intermarriage of Israelites with the Canaanites and other surrounding nations, would also tend to introduce further elements of decay into their language; and the wonder is that it was kept so pure as it was. Then came the forced emigration, which we usually call the Captivity, the results of which can be seen in the incorporation of Chaldee passages in the books of Jeremiah,² Daniel, and Ezra, and of various Chaldaic words in other books. On the return from the Captivity, there must have been a still greater

¹ The oldest Hebrew character we know of is allied to the Phœnician, and perhaps derived from the Egyptian. The Moabite Stone and the Siloam Stone give us excellent specimens of it. But we have no *written* Hebrew documents in that character; and it is quite possible that the form of letters which was found suitable for stones and coins gave way to another form in the period of the kings. The Samaritan character is allied to the Phœnician, and professes to be very old indeed, but its history is wrapped in obscurity. The square Hebrew is supposed by some to have been learned by the Jews during their sojourn in the Euphrates Valley; this, again, is regarded as questionable. There yet remains a "Chaldee" character, which is probably of later origin.

² See Jer. x. 11.

admixture of race—new Assyrian, Babylonian, and Egyptian elements being introduced—while the Philistine, Phœnician, Ammonite, and Syrian dialects seriously infected the popular dialect. The consequence of all this can be seen in the 8th of Nehemiah. To a considerable number of the people the language of the Pentateuch was no more intelligible than that of Alfred the Great would be to us. It needed interpretation, if not retranslation. Henceforward, Hebrew was to the Jews what Coptic is in the Coptic Church, and Syriac and Ethiopic in the Syrian and Ethiopic Churches respectively. Professor Smith hardly enters upon this subject in his Lectures, and in his article on "Hebrew" he does not give full weight to the various elements which call for consideration.

We are now brought back to this point—that Ezra was to the Jews of his time somewhat in the position of a Sanscrit Pundit, expounding the sacred books of ancient days to the Hindoos. But when we try to take another step backwards, we find ourselves enveloped in mystery. All parties are agreed that the great mass of the Old Testament was then in existence. But by whom were the various documents preserved? By whom collected? How many copies of each were in existence? Were the annals of the Kings still extant? and the various books referred to in the Chronicles? and the Book of Jasher? These questions neither Jewish tradition nor Christian research can answer. Professor Smith suggests that "the great mass of the Old Testament books gained canonical position because they commended themselves to the experience of the Old Testament Church, and the spiritual discernment of the godly in Israel." In other words, the "verifying faculty" of pious Jews decided the question. We need have no objection to the existence of a verifying faculty; it is of God, and is frequently referred to in the New Testament under other titles. But there must be an external claim of authority before we bring this faculty into play; and the claim always advanced through the Old Testament, and probably through the New Testament also, is *the Prophetic*. Whatever book was published under the hand of the Prophet of the Lord was to be regarded as of authority. Prophecy, as Professor Smith says, became a thing of the past after Malachi, so far as the Old Testament is concerned; but from Malachi upwards the prophetic spirit may be traced, step by step, to Moses; probably further; but this is enough for our present purpose. The prophets were the teachers of God's truth through the whole intervening period; and to whatever rank and tribe they belonged, it was to them that men looked for true teaching, and from their hands must have come all the collections of history, poetry, proverb, and prophecy, which Jew and Christian alike accept as inspired.

"But there were false prophets among the people" in those days (2 Peter ii. 1). Numerous references to them are found all through the history, and the people must sometimes have been sorely perplexed by their utterances. Tests, however, were given whereby true prophecy might always be distinguished from false; the grand test of all being conformity to the Law of Moses (Is. viii. 20). It is at this point that Professor Smith's views have awakened so much dissatisfaction in Scotland. He takes the history of Ezra's time as true. He even says, "there can be no doubt that the law which was in Ezra's hands was practically identical with our present Hebrew Pentateuch." But when he applies principles of higher criticism to the Pentateuch, it falls to pieces in his hands. He grants that the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd of Exodus are the work of Moses, and contain the basis of the national law. The Book of Deuteronomy, he thinks, was "found" (that is to say, "invented") in the temple in Josiah's days, and by whom it was written "is of no consequence." The Levitical legislation he brings to a later age, somewhere between the visions of Ezekiel and the time of Ezra.

It is my business, in the remaining part of this paper, to give Professor Smith's reasons for these disturbing conclusions, and to inquire whether he has proved his points.

The "traditional view" of the Pentateuch regards the prophets as ministers and exponents of the law. "It has only one fault," we are told (p. 216); "the standard it applies to the history of Israel is not that of the contemporary historical records, and the account which it gives of the work of the prophets is not consistent with the writings of the prophets themselves."

In defending this thesis Professor Smith takes his stand on the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, which "bring down the history in a continuous form to the Captivity, and possess many essential characteristics of contemporary documents." He dismisses Joshua, "which hangs closely with the Pentateuch," and the Chronicles, which are long after Ezra. This is a short and easy method: but it occurs to us to ask, if Joshua is thus dismissed, why should not the Judges also be dismissed? They hang very closely with Joshua, as any one can see for himself, by examining the first two chapters. And if the Chronicles are dismissed, what are we to say about the materials from which the book is professedly composed? (See for example, 1 Chron. xxix. 29.) However, we proceed to examine the residuum granted to us. Professor Smith affirms, from a study of the remaining books taken together with the prophetic writings, that the ritual of the Pentateuch is a fusion of the teaching of priests and prophets, and that it was adopted as part of the law in the days of Ezra for the purpose of insulating the people from the sur-

rounding nations. What, then, was the popular theology up to that time? It was (he tells us) that Israel is Jehovah's people, and He their God, and that Israel was bound to do homage to Jehovah, and to serve Him according to a fixed ritual. If we ask what that ritual was, we are referred to the three chapters of Exodus already named.

Professor Smith is quite certain that he is right in the main. He says: "It is certain that Israel before the Exile did not know all the Pentateuch." But does it follow that the Pentateuch did not exist. Has Professor Smith ever seen the picture of Luther's first study of the Bible? Would he like to prove therefrom that the Bible did not exist before Luther's time? Again, "If the Pentateuch was written by Moses, it was lost as completely as any book could be." Might not the same be said of the Bible during certain centuries, and in certain Christian Churches? But further (p. 298): "What is quite certain, is that, according to the prophets, the Torah of Moses did not embrace the law of ritual. Worship by sacrifice, and all that belongs to it, is no part of the Divine Torah given to Israel." Is this so certain? What do we gather from such a chapter as the first of Isaiah, or from the 40th Psalm? Are there not indications that ceremonies had lost their meaning, and had degenerated into superstitious ceremonialism? And cannot the same tendency be traced back to the days of Saul? Which is most reasonable on the face of the case, Professor Smith's theory that Ezra and his friends invented an elaborate system, in a great measure unfitted for their own time, and foisted it into the Pentateuch? or the "traditional theory," that Ezra once more recalled the people to the Mosaic code, as Malachi did in the last words of his solemn prophecy?

But we have not come to the end of Professor Smith's certainties. From the Judges to the time of Ezekiel, he tells us, "the law in its finished system and fundamental theories was never the rule of Israel's worship." It is hard to prove a negative; but if we grant that Israel never carried out the Levitical code, we may at least ask whether it was carried out in and after the time of Ezra; and we challenge Professor Smith to prove it. Let him compare the temple services in our Lord's time, for example, with the Levitical ordinances, and see if his theory works better than the traditional. The materials are ready to his hands. If he fails, then the whole of his argument fails.

Professor Smith adds (p. 297), that "the prophecies (of Hezekiah's age) never speak of the written Law of Moses." He allows that they often refer to the *Torah*, or Law, but affirms that this word means "advice;" he adds, "that the prophets rarely spoke of a "book-revelation," and that when they did, only a few chapters were referred to. This subject has been discussed again and again in past times, and Professor Smith does not

throw new light on it. The question is not one involving Hebrew research, but calls for "the ordinary rules of evidence and of common sense;" for though there are seven Hebrew words translated "Law" in the Old Testament, six of them are very rarely so rendered, and the word *Torah* (which, by-the-by, means *instruction*, and never *advice*) is applied to the whole collection of the Divine utterances and precepts which had been recorded and preserved for the guidance of the people. Any English student can investigate the matter for himself. Let him examine (*e.g.*) David's parting advice to Solomon, in 1 Kings ii.; also let him turn to 2 Kings xiv. 6, where we are told that Amaziah acted in a certain way, "according unto that which is written in the book of the Law of Moses"—the reference being to a passage in Deuteronomy. The writer of the Book of Kings evidently intended his readers to believe that Deuteronomy was in existence in the days of Amaziah, even though lost afterwards.

But Professor Smith says, if the Pentateuch had been written in the time of Moses, how came it to be so systematically ignored by priests and prophets? How is it there were so many sacred places, altars, high places, trysting places, openly or tacitly sanctioned? How is it that there are so few ritual references in the historical books, and that those which do exist are so frequently inconsistent with the Levitical system? These are no new questions. Every thorough student has had to face them. The answer may shortly be put thus:—(*a.*) The historical books give us an exceedingly brief outline of Israel's history, and do not profess to go into details; (*b.*) They pre-suppose the Pentateuch; and there was no more need of constantly referring to its rites than was there a necessity for St. Paul to be frequently referring to the ordinances of the Lord; (*c.*) The patriarchal system of local altars was allowed for in the Mosaic law, but it was supplemented by a more elaborate Levitical system, which was devised as a standing testimony to certain truths; (*d.*) There is a remarkable uniformity of technical terms bearing on ritual all through the Old Testament; (*e.*) The apparent inconsistencies between the Pentateuch and the later books will be found on examination to be exaggerated; (*f.*) The phenomena on which the charge of inconsistency is based are such as might be expected in the history of such a hard-hearted and disobedient nation as Israel, and may be paralleled in the history of the Christian Church; (*g.*) The theory that Leviticus and Deuteronomy were added to the Pentateuch in later times adds infinitely to the difficulty of the critic, the historian, and the Christian.

¹ I may be allowed to refer to the sixteenth and other chapters of the "Synonyms of the Old Testament," as giving proofs of what is here advanced.

A few specimens may be given of Professor Smith's attempts to prove a negative. In speaking of Judges xxi. 21, he says that "Shiloh was visited, *not* three times a year, but at an annual feast." But does the fact that there was *one* annual feast, prove that there were *no more*? Would Professor Smith like to stake his logical reputation on this utterance? And where is the Professor's Hebrew lore? The word is "yearly" in the English Bible; and in the margin we read, "Heb., from year to year;" but I invite the Professor to turn to his Hebrew Bible, and see if the word "periodical" does not give the true sense of the word. Here, then, was a periodical feast, very "like the Pentateuchal Feast of Tabernacles," as the Professor allows. He thinks, indeed, it was "local," though this is not easily proved. But behold, when we turn to 1 Sam. i. 3, we have another annual or periodical feast in the same place. What was this feast? Professor Smith does not tell us; but calls our attention to the fact that the ark then stood, *not* "in the tabernacle, but in a temple" (p. 258). It had "door-posts and folding doors." Samuel "actually slept in it;" and, "to make the thing more surprising, Samuel was not of priestly family!" and, worse still, he wears an *ephod*, which the law confines to the high priest. This seems very shocking. But where is the Professor's logic? and where is his Hebrew? Is he sure that the structure here called a "temple" was not the tabernacle? Let him look at the Hebrew word here rendered temple. He will find that it simply means a "palace, or dwelling-place of a great king." Besides, what will he do with the 22nd verse of the second chapter? For there we read of the "door of the tabernacle of the congregation"—the normal Levitical phrase. The Professor is, of course, aware that Samuel, though not of priestly family, was descended, as Aaron was, from Kohath, the son of Levi; for we possess two genealogies containing his name, evidently independent, the one tracing his family upward, and the other downward. Was it incorrect in this young Levite to wear an *ephod*? Is there any order in the Pentateuch restricting *ephods* to priests? Was the word *ephod* invented for the occasion in Ex. xxviii. 4, when it first occurs? or was there a garment already in existence, and worn on sacred occasions by various kinds of ministrants?¹ The same argument is used concerning the high priest's mantle, which Samuel is accused of wearing (see 1 Sam. ii. 19, where we read "coat"). Anything less critical and scholarlike we can hardly conceive. What will the Professor's followers think when they find the same garment worn by princes, and even by

¹ Whether the word translated "gird," in x. 29-5, and "bind" in Lev. viii. 7, is derived from "ephod," or *vice versa*, may be an open question, but the latter seems the most likely view. There was a man named Ephod in the tribe of Manasseh (Num. xxxiv. 23).

women? (See the word "robe," in 1 Sam. xviii. 4, xxiv. 5, 11; 2 Sam. xiii. 18; and "mantle," in Job i. 20, ii. 12.) Is it conceivable that Ezra, acquainted as he was with these passages, wrote the 20th of Exodus, restricting the garment in question to the priests? This is Professor Smith's theory. He might as well say that no one was to wear a *girdle*, because directions are given in Exodus for a priestly girdle; and the same irrational canon would apply to other garments also. If "modern criticism" is to proceed much further in this direction, some learned Professor will arise and affirm that the camels in the days of Abraham had no "bunches," because "bunches" are not referred to in the Bible until the time of Isaiah.

Professor Smith finds plenty of ritual observance in Saul's days, but affirms that the details agree but ill with the Levitical ordinances. This general, sweeping charge, ought to have been supported by well proved facts, but it is not. The references to various kinds of sacrifice, to the new moon, to ceremonial cleanness, and to various Levitical ordinances, are as full and satisfactory as anyone could desire. The Professor acknowledges that the ark and the legitimate priesthood still existed (p. 262), but asks how it was that the one was allowed to remain at Kirjath-Jearim, whilst the other was at Nob. Why did not Samuel concentrate them instead of falling in with the local worship? Every pupil-teacher who has to "get up" the 1st Book of Samuel for examination is familiar with this kind of question. Is the true answer, that which our critic gives—that "Samuel did not know of a systematic and exclusive system of sacrificial ritual confined to the sanctuary of the ark?" Is not the apparent inconsistency, after all, an invented one?

David's policy is next examined by the Professor, and he is accused, not only of wearing an ephod, but of making priests. The passage referred to is 2 Sam. viii. 18, where the Hebrew word translated chief rulers "means *priests*, and can mean nothing else." This charge looks serious, but it naturally raises the question, what does the word *cohen*, or *priest*, really mean? In another place (p. 285), Professor Smith identifies it with "soothsayer." But there are reasons for believing that the word "cohen" was used in an administrative sense both civilly and religiously.¹ Besides, we have light thrown on the passage before us by the parallel passage (1 Chron. xviii. 17) where we read that the sons of David were "chief about the king," or at the king's hand—"chamberlains," as we should say.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the uncritical inference drawn from 1 Kings ix. 25, that "the king officiated *in person* at the

¹ I have put together the Biblical evidences on the question in "Old Testament Synonyms," chap. xx.

altar three times a year" (p. 248). One might as well conclude from the end of the same verse that "he finished the house in person," or from the verse before, that "he built Millo in person."

Of positive "anachronisms" in the Pentateuch, Professor Smith notes but few. He allows that part of the list of Edomite kings in Genesis xxxvi. may fairly be called a late insertion, and need not affect the date of the book as a whole, if it can be otherwise shewn to be old. He affirms that the writer of the Pentateuch knew Palestine more exactly than he knew the Wilderness. Possibly he has not read the results of Sinaitic exploration. But the references to Palestine, which are so exact, are in the Patriarchal history. If the history is true, why should not the references to localities be exact? If they were "inexact," should we attach more credit to the history in consequence? Again, he stumbles at the expressions west and south, in Exodus xxvii., and says that they would not be west and south from Moses's point of view. But there is nothing about west and south in the Hebrew text. The whole question of points of the compass in Hebrew is a very interesting one, and Professor Smith has dealt with it in a very superficial way.¹

Perhaps the most uncritical, and certainly the most revolting, sentence in Professor Smith's book is a remark on Deut. iv. 19, when the people are warned against worshipping the sun, moon, and stars, "which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven." Professor Smith says (p. 271) that "Jehovah himself, according to Deut. iv. 19, has appointed the heavenly host and other false deities to the heathen nations." Thus, star-worship was of divine appointment! The meaning of the text, whether written in Moses's time or in Josiah's, is so absolutely clear that one's faith in the Professor's critical acumen, which has been sufficiently shaken already, is entirely destroyed by this outrageous comment. The Hebrew word used in this place signifies to distribute or to allot, and is exactly suitable to show the beneficence of Him who makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, on the Jew and on the Gentile.

¹ The Israelites looked towards the east, or sunrising. Thus, the south was to their right hand, and was frequently named Teman from this fact. It is also named *Negeb*, or "arid," and *Darom*, or "Sunny." The former of these words was frequently appropriated to a region south of Jerusalem. In the passage to which Professor Smith refers, the two words are used together, the one guarding and qualifying the interpretation of the other (*Negeb-Teman*), so that the direction would be clear, both to Israel in the Wilderness and for the people in later days. The west is sometimes described as "the going down of the sun"; sometimes as the evening, but usually as the sea. This was the western boundary of the promised land, and its usage was fixed in the patriarchal age. Why should Jacob's descendants have forgotten it? The north was named after the region of obscurity.

If further proof were needed to convict Professor Smith of failure, it would be well for the student to take the last three books of the Pentateuch, and examine for himself the evidence as to their composition.

He will find that the first seven chapters of Leviticus are one document, a summary of which is given at the end of the seventh chapter. The next three chapters are historical; and from the eleventh to the twenty-fifth are a series of miscellaneous enactments, professedly given at various times, but all introduced with the same formula. Moses claims throughout to be the mouth-piece of God. The twenty-sixth chapter is distinctly prophetic, and its influence is to be traced by the critical student through the whole period of prophetic writings from Isaiah to Malachi. This chapter is guaranteed as the work of Moses by the note at the end; and so is the remaining chapter of the book.

The Book of Numbers is a most remarkable document, and of deep interest to the historian, the critic and the genealogist. The early chapters contain directions for the wilderness life. Is it to be supposed that anyone in after days would take the trouble to invent them, or would possess the information requisite for such a task? Leviticus, or something very like it, is presupposed at every step. What legislation the book contains has been characterized as "piece-meal," but it is very real. Moreover, the student will notice in it various references to *writing* and to *records*. When these references are carefully examined, they lead one to the conclusion that Moses kept the most careful written account of all the events and enactments in which the Divine Hand and Will were specially manifested.¹

And what shall we say of the Book of Deuteronomy? From the first chapter to the thirty-first we have a collection of addresses. The speaker, the time and the place are all mentioned. Then follows the celebrated "song," which contains the germ of all prophecy, and which was to be learnt by heart by every Jew. Traces of this remarkable poem may be noticed in the Psalms, Prophets, and Epistles of St. Paul. The thirty-third chapter gives us Moses's blessing of the tribes; and the thirty-fourth is added by another hand, and describes Moses's death, designating him for the first time as "the servant of the Lord."

These facts speak for themselves, and a survey of them will be enough to convince most students that Jews and Christians are right in attributing the Pentateuch to Moses. I will only add that it is to the Book of Deuteronomy that our Lord three times appealed, with the formula, "It is written," in the hour of

¹ See, for example, Num. ii. 26, xvii. 3, xxxiii. 2.

temptation. To the same Book He appealed when asked which was the greatest commandment in the law; whilst the second, which is like unto it, is taken from the Book of Leviticus. These are the two Books which Professor Smith has sought to eliminate from the Law of Moses. Whether he has succeeded or not, readers may now decide for themselves. The least they can conclude is that his charges against the Pentateuch are *not proven*; but when they carefully consider the defects in his Hebrew scholarship and critical acumen which have been pointed out—not to speak of graver matters—they will not wonder that he should be deemed unfit for the Professorial Chair at Aberdeen.

R. B. GIRDLESTONE.



ART. VI.—BIBLE CLASSES FOR THE EDUCATED.

IT has been said, with some truth, that the worst instructed people in matters of religion are those which are commonly called “the educated classes.” This fact is sometimes painfully forced upon the mind of the Pastor, when he finds persons of good position more ignorant of facts and doctrines of Scripture than many a child in the first class in his Sunday School.

The reason of this is not far to seek, for if we look at the present system of upper class education we see that there is scarcely any place left in it for Scriptural Teaching. An hour or two on Sunday, and first school on Monday, is a very ordinary public school allowance of “Divinity;” and at the University, unless a man seeks it for himself, the opportunity is even less frequent.

Our young ladies are somewhat better off than their brothers, for, from having less pressure for examinations, there is apt to be more time given in ladies’ schools to the study of the Word of God, and not infrequently a visit from the clergyman gives a little impetus to the study. Often, however, the teaching of this most important subject is placed in the hands of some well-meaning governess, who has herself had but few opportunities, and who sees, indeed, that the morning chapter is read, but makes no effort to render it either interesting or instructive.

But the time which immediately succeeds school or college life, the time which is peculiarly beset with temptations both to faith and practice, is, as a rule, singularly devoid of helps to Bible study; and the result is, that the mind, uninstructed in