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EZRA AND THE PRIESTLY CODE.

THE Wellhausen school of higher criticism assumes that most of the laws of the Pentateuch are of post-exilic origin. They are supposed to belong to the so-called Priestly Code. It is generally accepted that this Code was composed in the Exile by the descendants of the priests of the temple at Jerusalem. If a new order should be established in Judah a full and precise Code was needed. Therefore the priestly scholars composed an historical-legislative Code, intended for the laity. It contained a brief summary of the history of old Israel in order to explain the origin of the sacred institutions, but was mainly of a legislative character. It is supposed that this Code was brought to Jerusalem by Ezra. On his arrival, however, he found it impossible to promulgate the law which he had brought with him. The political situation was uncertain as "the holy seed had mingled themselves with the people of the land." By the arrival of Nehemiah and the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem a new order was created. With the aid of Nehemiah Ezra succeeded in persuading the population of Jerusalem to bind themselves to keep the laws contained in (what was said to be) the book of the laws of Moses" (Neh. viii. 1), but what was really the book written by Jahvistic priests in Babylon. If we except Exodus xiii., the Book of the Covenant and the Decalogue and the "Law of Holiness" in Leviticus xvii.-xxvi., nearly all the laws contained in Genesis—Numbers are assigned to this Code. It is admitted that it received many additions after Ezra's date, but they did not introduce new principles and are only to be regarded as modifications and additions demanded by experience.

The narrative of the promulgation of the Priestly Code is

found in Nehemiah viii.-x. A careful examination of Nehemiah x. shows that things are not so easy as most critics assume, and if we enter into a comparison of the narrative with the alleged priestly laws we meet so many difficulties, that we can hardly assume that the suppositions of the Wellhausen school of criticism are right.

I.

According to Nehemiah viii. 1 sqq., Ezra read in the Book of the law of Moses from early morning until midday in the presence of the men and the women, and of those that could understand, on the first day of the seventh month. And all the people wept as they heard the words of the law. We easily understand why they were deeply impressed by Ezra's lecture. The first day of the seventh month is New-year's day. This day is of the greatest importance for the Israelites, for it is the first day of the period of decision, which runs from the 1st unto the 10th of Tishri. In this period the fate of all individuals is destined by Jahve, who sits in heaven before the opened books, in which all the acts of men are recorded. The final decision about the destiny of every man is taken on the 10th of Tishri; until this day there is hope for the repentant Israelite that he may induce Jahve to give a favourable decision. (Hence until the present day the Jewish greeting on New-year's day is *leshana toba tikkateb*, your name may be written down for a good year.) The reading in the Book of the Law revealed to the population of Jerusalem their shortcomings and sins. Therefore they wept and mourned. Nehemiah and Ezra explain to them that this is a new departure, that they must celebrate New-year's day in the usual way by eating and drinking and sending portions.

On the second day they found written that they should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month. Now

they proclaimed in all their cities and in Jerusalem, "Go forth unto the mount and fetch olive branches, and branches of wild olive, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees to make booths as it is written." Then the feast of the tabernacles is celebrated, and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the ordinance.

In Nehemiah viii. 15, "as it is written" is supposed to refer to Leviticus xxiii. 39 sqq. If we compare both chapters we find that Leviticus xxiii. 40 cannot be the text referred to by Ezra. For here it is prescribed to "take on the first day of the feast the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook, and ye shall rejoice before the Lord seven days." In Nehemiah viii. 15 sqq. the booths are built of the branches which the people fetched from the mount. In Leviticus xxiii. 40, however, no booths are made of these branches, as is apparent from the fruit of goodly trees, which could be hardly used for the building of tabernacles. In Nehemiah viii. the booths evidently are built before the beginning of the feast, for the first day of the feast of tabernacles is a Sabbath (on the first day shall be a solemn rest (Lev. xxiii. 39) and no work was permitted, but in Leviticus xxiii. 40, the fruit and branches must be taken on the first day of the feast.

The fruit and branches mentioned in Leviticus xxiii. 40 are to be carried by the Israelites in their hands, when they dance and rejoice in the courts of the temple. It is a well-known story that they threw these fruits at the high-priest Alexander Jannai, who was despised by them. Until this day every orthodox Jew will take his branch (*luláb*) and fruit (*ethrog*) and wave them in the feast of tabernacles. The tabernacles, however, are ready before the first day of the feast.

There is no text in the Old Testament where we find

the law Nehemiah viii. 15 refers to. We cannot suppose that Ezra would have misunderstood his own law. So we can only conclude that the law of Ezra was not preserved for us.

We arrive at the same conclusion in studying the 10th chapter of Nehemiah. The people entered into a curse and into an oath to walk in the law of God, which was given by Moses, the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord (Neh. x. 30). Then in Nehemiah x. 38-40 we are told that they bound themselves to avoid mixed marriages, to keep the Sabbath and the other holy days and the Sabbatical year, to pay yearly the third part of a shekel for the temple-service, to bring the wood needed for the altar, to bring the first-fruits and the firstborn and to pay tithes.

It follows from Nehemiah x. 35-37 that these obligations were mentioned in the Law of Ezra, for there we find the formula "as it is written in the law." Evidently some of the prescripts of the law of Ezra, which were of great practical importance, are here specially mentioned.

The first of these obligations is "not to give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons." We understand that this obligation is specially mentioned, if Ezra was prevented from promulgating his law by the mixed marriages of the Jewish population of Jerusalem and Judah. But it is very strange that we do not find a law against these marriages in any part of the Priestly Code. Mixed marriages are forbidden in Exodus xxxiv. 16, Deuteronomy vii. 3. Both places belong to the Deuteronomic literature, Exodus xxxiv. 12-16 being a Deuteronomic insertion. How is this to be explained if the Law of Ezra was the main part of the present form of the Priestly Code?

The next obligation is not to buy victuals on a Sabbath or on a holy day. We do not find a prescript about this in the Priestly Code, as we expect. The Hebrew word

for "victuals" (*makkachoth*) used here does not occur in any other Old Testament text. Where the Priestly Code deals with the Sabbath it forbids to do any work, and if it enters into detail it only forbids to kindle fires (Exod. xxxv. 1-3), but the buying of victuals nowhere is mentioned.

The third obligation is "to let lie fallow the seventh year and the exaction of every debt." The technical term used in Nehemiah x. 32 is שָׁמַר "let lie fallow." It occurs also in the law about the Sabbatical year in the Book of the Covenant, Exodus xxiii. 11, but we do not find this word in the Priestly Code, nor does this Code contain a law about the Sabbatical year. Leviticus xxv. 1-5 deals with this subject but it belongs to the so-called Law of Holiness (P¹) and is supposed to have been written long before Ezra. Its expressions are quite different from the technical terms used in Nehemiah x. 32. The "exaction of every debt" reminds of Deuteronomy xv. 1-3. About this subject the Priestly Code does not contain any law.

It is generally accepted that the fourth obligation is based on Exodus xxx. 11-16, which is assigned to P. "We bound ourselves to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God" (Neh. x. 33). Exodus xxx. 11-16 mentions a charge of half a shekel. Critics, therefore, assumed that Nehemiah x. 33 referred to an older form of this text. Originally Exodus xxx. 11 sqq. would have mentioned also one-third shekel. The increasing costs of the service would answer for the demand of half a shekel. Others supposed that the value of the shekel decreased and explained the half-shekel in this way. We have only to read Exodus xxx. 11-16 and we see at once that we need not trouble ourselves about the solution of the difference, for Exodus xxx. 11-16 does not deal with a yearly charge, but with a charge which is to be paid only once,

viz., as the people is numbered. "This they shall give, every one that passes over to them that are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, half a shekel as an offering to the Lord . . . to make atonement for your souls. And thou shalt take the atonement-money . . . and shalt appoint it for the tent of the meeting, that it may be a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord, to make atonement for your souls."

The people is numbered (Num. i.). It is a well-known fact that the Israelites believed that it was very dangerous to number the people (2 Sam. xxiv. 1, 10). So we fully understand that half a shekel is given to make atonement. Of course this amount was given only once. So the Israelites themselves have interpreted Exodus xxx. 11-16. In 2 Chronicles xxiv. 6-9 we find a reference to this text. The temple was in need of repair. Then the king told the high priest Jehoiada to require of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the tax of Moses the servant of the Lord and of the congregation of Israel for the tent of the testimony. So they made a chest and set it without at the gate of the temple. And all the people brought in and cast into the chest. Thus they gathered money in abundance. It is astonishing to see that many critics have explained this tax of Moses as a yearly charge.¹ Evidently it is a charge only made for once, when there is no other way to pay the necessary restoration of the temple (cf. 2. Chron. xxiv. 14, "When they had made an end, they brought the rest of the money before the king"). Evidently Nehemiah x. 33 has nothing to do with Exodus xxx. 11 sqq., and also here we look in vain for the corresponding text in the Priestly Code.

¹ So A. Kuenen *Hco*³ 301. J. Wellhausen, *Proleg.*³ 82, 162. O. Siegfried, *Ezra, Neh., Esther*, 114. T. Witton Davies, *Ezra, Neh. and Esther* (The Century Bible), p. 248.

In Nehemiah x. 34 it is said that the money is gathered for the shewbread, for the continual meal offering and for the continual burnt-offering [the offerings] of the Sabbaths, of the new moons, for the feasts, for the holy things and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.

The shewbread is called in P *lechem panim*, here, however, it is called *lechem hamma'areket*. Again we do not find the term we expect.

The continual meal offering and the continual burnt-offering is usually explained as referring to the daily offerings. If this interpretation is right we do not find in the Priestly Code any law to which Ezra could refer here. In the pre-exilic period, as the daily offerings were paid by the king, a burnt-offering in the morning and a meal offering in the evening are mentioned (2 Kings xvi. 15). But there is no priestly law which prescribes these offerings. In the later additions to the Priestly Code (Exod. xxix. 38-42, Num. xxviii. 3-8) two daily burnt-offerings are mentioned, one in the morning, and one in the evening.

There is some difficulty in the Hebrew text, the words "the Sabbaths" and "the new moons" standing by themselves. It is possible that the preceding words "and for the continual burnt-offering" are to be taken as an irregular status constructus, as the Revised Version assumes, which translates "for the continual burnt-offering of the Sabbaths and the new moons." In this case the meaning of the verse is that a continual meal offering was brought every day, but that a continual burnt-offering was offered only on Sabbaths and new moons. Then the difference between Nehemiah x. and P would be still greater. But it is not certain that the text is to be explained in this way. In any case it is to be admitted that Nehemiah x. 34 does not agree with the laws of the Priestly Code.

Besides putting themselves under these obligations "the priests, the Levites and the people cast lots for the wood offering to bring it into the house of our God, according to our families, at times appointed, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the law." Again, there is no text, neither in the Priestly Code nor in the Pentateuch, which prescribes to bring wood for the altar. If Ezra promulgated the Priestly Code we certainly would not miss this important commandment.

The last of the obligations we find in Nehemiah x. 36 sqq. They promised "to bring the firstfruits" of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of all manner of trees, year by year unto the house of the Lord, and also the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, as it is written in the law." This may refer as well to the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxii. 28, 29; xxiii. 19) as to Numbers xviii. 11-20 (P). In both places it is commanded to give the firstfruits and the firstborn. As none of the other obligations corresponds to the laws of the Priestly Code it is probable that no allusion to Numbers xviii. is to be found here.

The last words "as it is written in the law" obviously are a final clause as in verse 35. Nevertheless the text runs on. The construction of the sentences, however, shows that the last part of verse 37 and verses 38-40 are later additions to the text. Verse 37*b* repeats verse 37*a*, saying, "and to bring the firstborn of our cattle and our flocks unto the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God." This repetition shows that this part of the verse must be of younger origin. It points out that the firstborn are to be delivered into the hands of the priests in the temple and not offered in any other way—for instance, by giving them to the priests living in any of the towns of Judah. Probably the verse combats this custom, as it is expressly stated that the

“priests that minister in the temple” are entitled to them.

Verse 38*a* is a repetition of verse 36.¹ It says that the firstfruits are to be delivered into the hands of the priests and brought to the chambers of the temple. Instead of the Infinitive with ה, as in verses 33–37, the Imperfect, “we shall bring,” is used. This also proves that the verse does not belong to the original text.

Verses 38*b*–40 deal with the tithes. Verses 38*b*, 39 disagree with the narrative of Nehemiah xiii. 4–13. Verse 40 tries to explain this and is a “secondary gloss.” Verse 38*b* says, “(we will bring) the tithes of our ground to the Levites, for they, the Levites, take the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house.” Here the tithes are given to the Levites, who live in various places all over the country, and the tithe of the tithes is transported by the Levites to the treasure house of the temple.

In Nehemiah xiii. 4 sqq., it is told that the priest Eliashib gave some chambers of the temple to Tobiah. Formerly these chambers were used for storing the meal for the meal offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels and the tithes of the corn, the wine and the oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites, and to the singers and the porters. This happened during the absence of Nehemiah. After his return he cast forth all the things of Tobiah out of the chambers and cleansed them. Then he perceived that the parts of the Levites had not been given to them, so that the Levites and the singers, that did the work,

¹ There is no difference between *reshit* and *bikkurim*, as some critics assume. From Exod. xxiii. 19, Numb. xviii. 12–13, Deut. xviii. 4 it follows that both terms are used promiscuously.

were fled every one to his field. Nehemiah contended with the rulers. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the wine and the oil into the treasuries. Nehemiah made four faithful men treasurers and their business was to distribute among their brethren. In this narrative the tithe of the tithe is not yet known. The tithe is not paid to the Levites in the various cities of the country, but the tithe is brought by all Judah to the treasury. This shows that x. 38, 39 does not belong to the original text. x. 40 tries to harmonise, and explains, "for the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the heave offering of the corn, etc., unto the chambers."

It is probable that in verse 38 the words "and the tithe of our ground for the Levites" and the last words of verse 40, "we will not forsake the house of our Lord," belong to the original text. But all the rest of verses 37-40 is addition. This implies that the prescripts of the Priestly Code concerning the tithes were not yet known. If this had been the case Nehemiah xiii. 4 sqq. cannot be explained, for we cannot assume that Nehemiah would act against the law. Numbers xviii. 26 prescribes that the Levites shall take the tithe of the Israelites. They shall eat it in the places they live in (ver. 31) and they shall give a heave offering of all their gifts to the priests (ver. 29), a tithe of the tithe (ver. 26). In the time of Nehemiah only those Levites that ministered at the temple received tithes, which were brought to Jerusalem by the people. The other Levites had to live on the proceeds of their fields. Probably the tithes were only given partially to the Levites, as it is prescribed in Deuteronomy xiv. 27. If the whole Jewish population of Jerusalem and Judah had brought the tithes of corn, wine and oil to the temple, these goods could not have been stored in one large chamber (Neh. xiii. 5), where, besides the tithes, were also placed

the meal for the meal offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the heave offerings for the priests.

In Nehemiah xiii. 1-3 it is narrated that they found written in the book of the law that an Ammonite and a Moabite should not enter into the assembly of God. This is forbidden by Deuteronomy xxiii. 3 sqq., but not in the Priestly Code.

Summing up in conclusion, we state that five out of the six obligations which are mentioned in the original text of Nehemiah x. do not correspond to P, and that the sixth one may as well correspond to the Book of the Covenant as to P. So there is no room for the theory of Wellhausen and Kuenen. We have to agree with Professor T. Witton Davies, who has also arrived at the conclusion that "Ezra's torah corresponds neither to our Pentateuch nor to the Hexateuch, and still less to any one of the recognised Hexateuch sources (JE, D, P)."

We now proceed to an inquiry into some of the laws of the Priestly Code.

II.

It is supposed that the Priestly Code was written by the priests in the exilic and post-exilic period. But we cannot enter into a closer investigation without discovering several features which point to a pre-exilic origin of at least some parts of the Priestly Code. It is impossible to give here an exhaustive treatment of this subject. But some instances may show the weakness of the current theory.

In a previous article on the Passover and the days of the unleavened bread (*EXPOSITOR*, November, 1909) I dealt with Exodus xii. 1-14 that is supposed to be of post-exilic origin and is assigned to P. We found that the post-exilic rites of the Passover, as known from Ezra vi.

and 2 Chronicles xxx. and xxxv., were different from the rites mentioned in Exodus xii., and were compelled to assume that Exodus xii. 1-14 must be assigned even to the pre-Deuteronomic period. For the arguments I refer to EXPOSITOR l.c. pp. 453, 454, and *Alttestamentliche Studien*, iii. 115-119 (Giessen, 1910).

This is not the only instance of pre-exilic elements in the laws assigned to P. Exodus xxv.-xxix. contain the legislation about the tent of the meeting. The present form of these chapters certainly alludes to the temple of Zerubabel. Jahve commanded Moses to make a candlestick with seven branches. We know from Zechariah iv. that such a candlestick stood in the second temple, for there it is the symbol of the daily cult in the temple. In the temple of Solomon were ten candlesticks (1 Kings vii. 49) and no candlestick with seven branches. So there cannot be much doubt about the fact that Exodus xxv. 31, sqq. implies the existence of the second temple. But besides the candlestick with seven branches in this chapter (ver. 6) and in Exodus xxvii. 20, is mentioned a lamp with only one light, and in these verses this lamp is the only one burning in the tent. This lamp is called *ma'or*, the candlestick is called *menorah*. Most scholars identify those lights and assume that *ma'or* is only another name for the *menorah*. But it follows from Leviticus xxiv. 1-4 that they are wrong.

The verses Leviticus xxiv. 1-3 are complete by themselves. "The Lord said to Moses, Command the children of Israel that they bring unto thee pure olive oil for the lamp (*ma'or*) to kindle a light to burn continually . . . it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations." These last words are a final clause. Verse 4 shows that the candlesticks of the second temple had more lights, and explains verses 1-3 as follows: "He shall order the lights

upon the pure candlestick (*menorah*) before the Lord continually." It is obvious that verse 4 is a later addition. This implies, however, that verses 1-3 are older than the exilic or post-exilic period. We find that the various texts which mention the *menorah* in Exodus xxv. sqq. always mention its lights (plural), cf. Exodus xxv. 37, xxx. 7, xxxix. 37, xl. 4-25; Numbers viii. 2. The *ma'or*, however, has only one light (singular), Exodus xxv. 6, xxvii. 20; Leviticus xxiv. 2. Furthermore the place of Exodus xxvii. 20-21 shows that the original text of Exodus xxv. sqq. must have been a much shorter one. The verses deal with the oil for the lamp and have nothing to do neither with the preceding verses nor with the following chapter, describing the construction of the tabernacle and the holy garments of Aaron. They belong to Exodus xxv. 6. This original form must be of pre-exilic origin.

Another pre-exilic element we find in Leviticus i.-v., the legislation on the offerings, that is generally assigned to P. In the first chapter the regulations concerning the burnt-offering are given. The man who wishes to sacrifice a burnt-offering "shall lay his hand upon the animal that it may bring mercy upon him and make atonement for him. And he shall kill the bullock before the Lord. And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall present the blood and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar. And he shall flay the burnt-offering and cut it into its pieces. And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar and lay wood in order upon the fire. And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall lay the pieces, the head and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is on the altar, but its inward and its legs, shall he wash with water, and the priest shall burn the whole on the altar." The man, who brings the sacrifice, slaughters. He kills the animal, flays it and cuts it into pieces. The priest presents the blood and

burns the offering (ver. 4 sqq.). The same regulation we find in i. 11-12, iii. 2-5, 4, 13, iv. 15, 24, 29, 33.

If these regulations originated in the post-exilic period they must agree with the religious practice of this period. In those days the Levites officiated in the temple as helpers of the priests. Their functions were subordinate and consisted, for instance, in the slaughtering of the sacrifice. According to Ezra vi. 20, the Israelite himself was not entitled to kill the sacrifice, the priests and the Levites killed the Passover for all the children of the captivity. See also 2 Chronicles xxx. 16, xxxv. 6, 10 seq. 1 Chronicles xxiii. 31 says that the Levites must offer all the burnt-offerings, and 2 Chronicles xxix. 34 supposes that only the priests were allowed to slay the burnt-offerings. In the days of Hezekiah, however, the sacrifices were so numerous that they had to be assisted by the Levites. The laymen had nothing to do. This agrees with Ezekiel xlv. 11, "The Levites shall be ministers in my sanctuary . . . they shall slay the burnt-offering and the sacrifice for the people." In the post-exilic period the Levites took the place the laymen held in the pre-exilic period. In the days of Ezra and Nehemiah many Levites lived in Judah (see Neh. vii. 43, viii. 8, ix. 4 seq., x. 9). According to Nehemiah xi. 18, 284 Levites lived in Jerusalem only.

Nevertheless the Levites are not even mentioned in the priestly legislation on the sacrifices. They do not occur in Leviticus 1-5. We can only understand this if we assume that these chapters are to be assigned to the pre-exilic period.

This implies that the kinds of sacrifice described in Leviticus i.-v. cannot be regarded as inventions of the priestly scholars, who liked to meditate on the ritual ceremonies. The sin-offering usually is supposed to have its origin in a more intense sense of sin in the exiles, who attributed their exile to Jahve's divine wrath. If our

theory is right we shall have to admit the sin offering into the pre-exilic religion of Israel and to regard it as an old kind of sacrifice.

Another consequence of the pre-exilic date of Leviticus i.-v. is that the priesthood of Aaron and his sons appears in the pre-exilic tradition. Perhaps it is not superfluous to remember that the common analysis of the Hexateuch assigns Deuteronomy x. 6 to the Elohist writer. In this verse and in Joshua xxiv. 33 (also assigned to E) the priesthood of Aaron and his son Eleazar is mentioned. So this cannot be an objection to the probability of our theory.

Exodus xxix. deals with the hallowing of Aaron and his sons. The chapter contains some regulations which must be older than the post-exilic period, as they do not suit in the least the supposed monotheistic tendencies of the Priestly author and his school. One young bullock and two rams must be sacrificed. As the second ram is killed Moses "shall take of its blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about" (ver. 20). What is the meaning of this ceremony? Scholars feel mostly inclined to explain it as an innovation of P, who intended to hallow in this way the organs of hearing, of action, and of going in order to consecrate all the acts of the priest. He must go into the temple and act, but he must also listen to the Lord (Bäntsch, *Exodus*, 251. Strack, *Exodus* 257 a.o.). This explanation of the ceremony, however, does not satisfy. We expect that both ears will be hallowed and not only the right one. If the priest gives his blessing he uplifts both hands, therefore the blood should have been put on both his thumbs. The hallowing the right foot is wholly inexplicable, as the going is no holy action at all.

Furthermore, it is very strange that the leper is to be hallowed in the same way as Aaron and his sons (Lev. xiv. 14). We can hardly assume that he too should have holy ears, hands and feet in order to hear the word of the Lord and to act in holy ceremonies. Benzinger (*Hebrew Arch.*² 358) supposes that the ceremony symbolises the covenant made here between Jahve and his priests. But there is no instance of a covenant made in this way, and we do not understand how the same ceremony can be applied in the case of the leper, Leviticus xiv. 14.

The ceremony reminds us of one of the ways in which evil spirits are expelled in the Persian religion. In the present time it still exists, as may be seen from S. Ives Curtiss, *Primitive Semitic Religion to-day*, p. 152. If the head is touched by some sacred object the spirit flies into the breast; if the breast is touched he seeks refuge in the arms; if the hand is touched he goes into the legs, etc. At last he leaves the body by the little toe. Obviously the touching of the ear, thumb and great toe are parts of this ceremony, that appears here in a concised form. This explanation of the ceremony fully agrees with all we know about the ideas "holy," "clean and unclean." The man who is to be devoted to Jahve and who is to be anointed with the sacred oil must be perfectly free from any impure influences or elements. These ceremonies of exorcism usually accompany the sacred rites (cf., for instance, the original interpretation of baptism). Obviously in Exodus xxix. 20 the hallowing of Aaron is preceded by this ceremony in order to purify him. So we understand that the leper is to be purified in the same way as the high priest and his sons. Illness is supposed to be caused by evil spirits that are to be expelled. If this is the right interpretation of the ceremony in Exodus xxix. 20, it is highly improbable that the monotheistic priestly author classed this custom

with the ritual regulations of his code instead of abolishing it.

Perhaps the school of Wellhausen will answer to this objection, that the priestly author did not invent the ritual prescribed in his code, and argue that he was wise enough to reform all heathenish rites into Jahvistic customs. But this answer would be insufficient, as it is obvious from the situation, supposed in Exodus xxv. 29, that these chapters are inconsistent with the narrative of P as reconstructed by the critics. They assign the last part of Exodus xxiv. to P. In Exodus xxiv. 18, "Moses entered into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mount, and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights." If P wrote Exodus xxv. 29 Moses received the communications of Jahve whilst being in the mount. But in Exodus xxv. 40, xxvi. 30 and xxvii. 8, Moses is not in the mount. He was there or shall go there, according to the translation of the verb as Perfect or Exact Future. "And see that thou make them after their pattern, which *has been shewed* thee in the mount (or will have been shewed thee)." Obviously Moses is not in the mount as this is said to him.

According to the school of Wellhausen the narrative of P did not contain the Decalogue nor the Book of the Covenant. Now the "Eduth" means either the Decalogue or a part of the Book of the Covenant. Wellhausen interpreted Eduth as the Decalogue, Bäntsch supposed it to be a part of the Book of the Covenant. In both cases we fail to understand how the term "Eduth" can appear in these chapters (xxv. 16-21), for the readers (the Priestly Code is supposed to have been intended for the laity) could by no means guess what the Eduth was that Moses should place in the ark.

It is generally accepted that one of the principal aims

of the priestly author was to increase the revenues of the priests. They were to have the flesh of the sin and guilt offerings, which were not known in the older legislation and the invention of which is largely to be explained as one of the means of enlarging the priestly revenues. They received the shoulder and the breast of peace offerings, instead of the shoulders and the two cheeks and the maw of Deuteronomy xviii. 3, etc. But we learn from 2 Kings xii. 17 that the sin and guilt offerings were by no means an invention of the post-exilic priests. The money that was given to the temple was used for paying for the repair of the house, but the money for the guilt offerings and the money for the sin offerings was not brought into the treasury of the temple; it was for the priests. So it is by no means an innovation of P when Leviticus vi. and vii. entitles the priests to the flesh of these sacrifices. The common interpretation of 2 Kings xii. 17 is that no offerings are meant and that in certain unknown cases a penalty was to be paid to the temple. But the plural "chattaot" shows that the money was to be used for offerings or was to be paid instead of bringing a sacrifice.

An inquiry into the structure of Exodus xxix. and Leviticus vii. shows that these chapters are of a composite character. In the original form of the chapters the priests received only the breasts of the peace offerings. In Exodus xxix. Moses acts as priest. In verse 26 "he shall wave it before the Lord and it shall be his portion." In Leviticus vii. the ordinary priest shall do this and receive the breast as his share. In a later period the priests demanded also the shoulder, as is shown by Leviticus vii. 32. But this verse is additional, for it uses the second person instead of the third person of the preceding verses. In Exodus xxix., also, an addition is inserted (vers. 27-29) in order to emphasise that the priest is also entitled to the shoulder.

The breast is certainly no greater portion than the shoulder, the two cheeks and the maw of Deuteronomy xviii. 3. If P had enlarged the priestly revenues in such a way he would have fouled his own nest. If we really must assume that the share of the priests was steadily enlarged in the various codifications of Israelitish law then it is more reasonable to assign the original form of Exodus xxix. and of Leviticus vi. and vii. to the pre-deuteronomic than to the post-exilic period.

Finally, I refer to the laws about clean and unclean in Leviticus xiii.-xv. They are assigned to P. It is supposed that they are incorporated in the Priestly Code by one of the priestly authors in Palestine. They deal with leprosy of men, clothes and houses and with sexual uncleanness. If a man is suspected of leprosy he must be brought to the priest, and the priest shall look on the plague. In some cases the priest shall look on him a second time after seven days. At garments and at houses suspected of leprosy the priest shall look several times, each time being seven days after the former time. If at last he finds that the plague has not spread he shall declare the garments and houses clean. The leper that is healed must bring some sacrifices as described in Leviticus xiv. His right ear, right hand and the great toe of the right foot shall be touched with the blood of one of the sacrifices and after that with oil. A living bird shall carry away the uncleanness into the open field, being dipped in the blood of another bird, that is mixed with water, cedar wood, etc. The priest is supposed to live near the temple for (Lev. xiv. 11, 16, 20, 23) he must bring the sacrifices before the Lord.

If the priestly authors after Ezra are to be made responsible for these laws, we fail to understand how they could make these laws work. In the post-exilic period the temple at Jerusalem was the only legal sanctuary.

But it was impossible that every case of leprosy should be shown to the priest at Jerusalem, or that the Jerusalem priests should travel all over the country to inspect houses suspected of leprosy several times, with an interval of seven days between each time. The supposition of the law is that the priest is near at hand. We understand this law if we assume that it is a law for the priests at the various sanctuaries existing in the pre-exilic time, but we certainly cannot admit that the priests of the second temple would have invented such unpractical laws. Moreover, the symbolical ceremonies are rather heathenish. The bird that carries the uncleanness into the green field reminds us of the ceremonies mentioned on the Babylonian tablets with magical texts. The plague of leprosy was always much dreaded in Israel and existed in the pre-exilic period as well as in later times. This implies that there must have been regulations concerning this illness, and there is nothing that prevents us from assuming that these regulations are preserved in Leviticus xiii. and xiv., as they suit much better the pre-exilic time than the period in which the offerings could be only sacrificed in Jerusalem.

In Leviticus xv. 14, 29 it is also demanded that an offering be sacrificed in the sanctuary, and as here things are dealt with that are common, we cannot suppose that this law originated at a time in which it could not be obeyed.

It would be unwise to deny that the Pentateuch contains later additions that were written in the post-exilic period. In the first part of the book of Numbers, for instance, there are many additions that can only be explained by the religious customs of these times. But the current theory about the exilic and post-exilic origin of all the laws assigned to P cannot be maintained. The greater part of the laws of P must be much older than is usually assumed.

It is very remarkable that our canon does not contain

the Book of the Law that Ezra is said to have brought with him. I think that this is an argument for the thesis that the greater part of the laws contained in our Pentateuch are older than Ezra. It seems that only the additions to these laws that were inserted in the manuscripts have been admitted into the canon. If we think of the great honour in which Ezra was held by the successive generations of priests and scribes it is astonishing that his book is lost. If even his laws are not handed down to us, it will be safe not to underrate the antiquity of the laws preserved by the Israelitic traditions.

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*JOB'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE
FUTURE STATE.*

EVERY serious-minded person has at one time or another debated it in his own mind, "If a man die shall he live again?" Is life after death possible or does the grave end all? But in spite of the much argumentation, the remarkable thing is how little we really know upon the subject, how little we really have to tell to one another, and to support ourselves. The greatest of our English dramatists has written on that "something after death." But the something after death he calls an "undiscovered country." He calls it, and he rightly calls it, a destiny from which no traveller returns. Another has written in a similar strain,

"Strange, is it not, that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of darkness through
Not one returns to tell us of the road
Which to discover we must travel too."

Let us not, then, in taking up the problem of immortality and the future state expect too much. We are not to suppose that if we have been at sea on the subject before,