

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

her by a woman more after the ideal so finely drawn by Spenser, Shakespeare, and Wordsworth. Those who look deepest beneath the surface see opening out for women new paths of usefulness and not of rivalry. They see in what a wonderful way the hand of God has been leading women through leisure into the paths of knowledge. They do not doubt that the womanly instincts are strong enough to be proof against the temptation to undue self-assertion and self-confidence. They believe that we are drawing nearer the time of "purer manners, nobler laws." That as the dream of the poet's fancy in "The Princess" has been realized and found no chimera, so, too, his prophecy will receive further fulfilment:

The man be more of woman, she of man,
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music set to noble words.

C. M. BIRRELL.

ART. IV.—THE UNITY OF THE VISION OF ISAAH, THE SON OF AMOZ.

IT goes without saying that every reader of the Bible finds himself irresistibly attracted by the writings that claim the name and authorship of Isaiah. Among the "goodly fellowship," the diadem of "beauty and glory" has in all generations been awarded to this prince of the prophets. The recorded utterances of Jeremiah may occupy the first place in position in some manuscript rolls of the Jewish Scriptures, but in the Jewish mind Isaiah ranks second only to Moses, the legislator of Israel. The contents of the book involve questions both of the prophet's day and of futurity that are of the greatest moment to all generations, so that the thoughtful believer is fascinated by a forcible attraction from which he has neither the power nor the will to escape. The pious reader finds a strange light like the twinkling of the morning star scintillating on every page, and the man whose mind is alive to the charms of poetry is entranced by the rhythm of these ancient musings, and by the music (which even a translation cannot reduce to silence) of these sweet and silvery cadences. This last feature, it cannot be doubted, has made Isaiah to the reader of the Old Testament what the Gospel of St. John is to the New Testament readers. Certain it is that this intrinsic beauty of thought and utterance, this harmony of mind and matter, has enlisted and enrolled a larger band of devout students than any other portion of the Old Testament that lays claim to a single authorship. There is no need to linger over the allurements

found in the varied figures and tropes that crowd the pages of this writer, to view the rapid interchanges between the dawn of day and the night-of-death-shadow, the contrast between the hail, the hurricane and rushing flood, and the waters that go softly and the wells of consolation; to listen to the rebukes against sin and the tender reasonings and pleadings of love, the sorrow and sighing and the song of salvation. All these features are familiar, and have furnished abundant food for meditation, and material for exposition and exhortation both in the synagogue and in the Church for many generations. In the religious services held in the former, there was a fixed lectionary for the Sabbath Days, consisting of portions selected from the Law and the prophets—the latter were called Haphtaroth; sixteen of these passages were chosen from Isaiah; of these three are found in the earlier part, and thirteen in the latter part, of his book. In the New Testament no less than fifty-two passages are quoted from this prophet, of which twenty-three are from the former, and twenty-nine from the latter portion.

Throughout the writings of the Fathers, quotations from both the earlier and later prophecies abound, and no sign or symptom, so far as we know, has ever been traced that would lead the reader to entertain the thought that the Book of Isaiah embraced the contributions of one or more besides himself. And it is needless to add how much religious teaching, both in the pulpit and by the pen, has been indebted to this same source throughout the Christian dispensation, yet no one till recent times has dreamt of the existence of a partnership in this prophetic treasury.

In turning over the pages of Isaiah the mixed character of the composition forces itself upon the reader. There are three volumes in the book; this is evident at the most cursory glance. The first volume embraces chapters i.-xxxv. inclusive, containing earlier prophecies, Isaiah's call, the burdens or solemn charges on the nations, and the woes of Israel and of the nations. The second volume embraces chapters xxxvi.-xxxix. inclusive. This is simply a piece of history, almost identical with the narrative contained in 2 Kings xviii.-xx., and as Isaiah was chaplain to the court, and the Books of Kings are the work of the schools of the prophets, it is most likely that this portion of the history of the Kings was also the product of his pen. The third volume embraces chapters xl.-lxvi. inclusive, containing the later prophecies which concern the return from the Babylonish captivity, and under that, as a type, sets forth the "salvation of the Lord," as wrought out by the "servant of the LORD," the future Messiah, the hope and consolation of Israel. Now these three volumes have been handed down by the tradition of the Hebrew people as the work of one author, Isaiah the prophet,

the son of Amoz. It may be well to state here the few particulars concerning him which we may gather from Scripture and tradition. There is a tradition among the Rabbis that Amoz, the father of our prophet, was a prophet also himself, and brother of King Amaziah, though Kimchi confesses ignorance both of his family and even of his tribe. Internal evidence in Scripture goes far to show that he was closely connected with the court of Judah, and held the office—it may be in consequence of his relationship to the royal family—of spiritual adviser, or, as we might term it, of chaplain or clerk of the closet to the kings under whom he flourished. These kings are specified in the introductory chapter to be Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. As we do not know at what period in the reign of the first-named of these kings he commenced his mission, the *terminus a quo* must remain undecided; and as to the *terminus ad quem*, although no mention is made of the demise of the prophet, still it is hardly conceivable that so zealous a defender of the faith would be permitted to execute his office for any length of time under Manasseh and his sinful abettors; hence there is every probability that the foul murder of Isaiah by being sawn in halves, according to the tradition of the Rabbis, which seems to derive a certain amount of support from Heb. xi. 37, was perpetrated in the earliest days of the reign of that apostate king. Every mode of computing the period during which the prophet lived and taught will show that his life was a protracted one, covering a space of four-score years and more. In addition to these particulars we have evidence that Isaiah was gifted with the talent of intellectual industry, as he appears to have been the author and compiler of other works besides this ever-memorable rôle. In 2 Kings, in the xviii.-xx. chapters, as remarked above, we have an account of the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib in the days of Hezekiah, and of the miraculous defeat of the foe, the sickness and restoration of the king, and the subsequent visit of the messengers from Babylon. This narrative is closely parallel with the history of the same period and circumstances as detailed in the Book of our Prophet, xxxvi.-xl. It has been held that the Books of Samuel and the Kings are the literary product of the schools of the prophets, whereas the Books of the Chronicles are the records of the matters of the state as made and kept by the priestly succession. There can be little doubt, therefore, that these chapters in 2 Kings were written by Isaiah, and the subject matter contained in them was incorporated in his prophetic rôle either by himself or an after editor who arranged his prophecies in their present order and form. We have further information furnished us on this point in 2 Chron. xxvi. 22, where we read: “Now the rest of the acts

of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write;" and again in xxxii. 32: "Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel." The former of these quotations refers to a work which has not been preserved to us, and the second work referred to in the latter quotation must be placed in the same category. Another proof of the literary activity of the prophet presents itself, we may, I think, safely infer, in Prov. xxv. 1: "These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, King of Judah, copied out or collected." The men of Hezekiah must denote those who helped the king in his noble efforts to restore and establish the Theocracy in righteousness and truth, and hence it was that he collected all the oracles of wisdom that came within his reach. At the head of this band of holy reformers was of necessity Isaiah, the great prophet and religious leader of that day. The men of Hezekiah are probably identical with the disciples of Isa. viii. 16. Solomon, it would appear, in his earlier days had originated the preceding proverbs or gathered some of them from the wise men of old, and so rescued them from oblivion; but after his fall it may be that some doubt would arise in the hearts of the pious as to their inspiration and authority; hence it is most probable that Isaiah examined and tested the gnomes and maxims of the later years of the king, and thus the second portion of the Book of the Proverbs comes down to us having the additional seal of the Prophet Isaiah to attest their canonicity and authority.

The group of writings consisting, as has been said, of three distinct parts, bears the simple title in our Hebrew Bibles and in the LXX. of "Isaiah," in the Vulgate, "The Prophecy of Isaiah," in the Peshitto Syriac, "The Prophecy of Isaiah, the son of Amoz," and in our English Versions both the Authorised Version and the Revised Version the "Book of the Prophet Isaiah." This book in its present form and solidarity has been accepted as the work of one author throughout the ages; neither has any voice been lifted up against that belief, either among the Jews of old, or the Christians of more recent date till the eighteenth century, when a string of critics of the rationalistic school arose in quick succession in Germany, some of whom initiated the theory of a dual, and some of a manifold, authorship in the book; in a word, the *rôle* of Isaiah was a symposium of various contributors. Of late these opinions have spread widely over the Protestant portion of Christendom, and, it may be said, have been accepted almost to a man by theologians who hold Rationalistic or Latitudinarian sentiments, who have but small respect for tradition and external authority.

and who regard any features of discrepancy, real or imaginary, in any literary legacy of antiquity, to be of more weight in deciding a question of authorship than the opinions of others, even though they were almost contemporaries with the book which is the object of their scrutiny.

The purpose of this paper is to set forth in as simple a manner as the subject will permit the general features of this controversy, and to state the arguments with all fairness and impartiality on both sides, that the reader of ordinary intelligence and education may be able to form a judgment for himself as to the real truth of the question from the evidence which is advanced by both parties in the controversy. From the nature of the case there is but little scope for originality in carrying out an investigation of this kind; our duty will rather consist, with a few exceptions, in making a judicious selection from the arguments that have been advanced by advocates both of the conservative and negative theories.

When any question is proposed which involves a difference of opinion and consequent discussion, and an amendment is moved, the amendment is generally taken first and voted for, and perhaps in the present instance this will prove the most convenient mode of proceeding. Only one premise is necessary to our understanding the position: the amendment rests entirely on modern surmises and so-called critical grounds; and the original question, that is, the unity of authorship, rests on ancient and unbroken tradition, combined also with arguments, based equally on criticism, which have been elicited by the uprising of these recent exceptions taken to the traditional view.

I. A brief account must be given of the rise and history of the modern theory. Koppe was the first to express some doubts about one chapter in the latter portion of *Isaiah*; Döderlein then threw suspicion on the whole, which was afterwards fully confirmed by the adherence of Eichhorn, Paulus, and Bertholdt. These were followed by Gesenius, Hitzig and Ewald, who elaborated these views into a system, which has been largely adopted by theologians at home and abroad, and is set forth by some of our leading professors, who have adopted other portions of the Rationalistic programme, as an ascertained and undoubted fact. We must, therefore, endeavour to discover upon what basis this opinion rests; for so important a change of front in a question that affects not only the genuineness and authenticity of the book, but also its canonicity, and even its credibility, must bring forward something more convincing than personal and subjective impressions. We have a right to demand some historical testimony, or some indisputable evidence which is calculated not only to conciliate the approval of those who are willing to accept the theory, but to compel the consent even of opponents.

This is the ground on which the leading doctrines of the Church have been built, and the question before us has no right to claim an exemption.

II. The real source and origin of this controversy is the presence of the name of Cyrus (Koresh) as the restorer of Israel from the Babylonish captivity (ch. xlv. 28, and xlv. 1). It is argued that prediction in the sense of foretelling special acts, names and occurrences is simply an impossibility. The Rationalistic School ignores miracles, supernatural religion, and consequently *prophecy* in the sense in which the Church in all ages has understood and used the word. There is no doubt, it is admitted, that Cyrus is found in the Hebrew text of these passages, no doubt that he is spoken of as the Deliverer of Israel, and no doubt that as a matter of history he was the chief agent in the crisis of the nation's life—the return from the bondage of Babylon. But all these facts could not be foreseen and known by anyone 210 years before they actually took place; hence to the reasoning mind, it is urged, there can be no question that this portion of the book must have been written by some prophet or scribe at a period posterior to the return of the Jews to their own country. Prediction is impossible, and therefore these statements are not predictions, but historical records, in which the writer idealized present facts and ante-dated them for a dramatic effect. Modern characters of his own day were arrayed in old-fashioned vestments.

III. It having been laid down almost with the certainty of an axiom that prediction is impossible, the next step to be taken was to seek for other proofs to substantiate these premises—a useless task, for if prediction can be proved, or admitted, to be impossible, there is no more need of argumentation—*causa finita est*. But the upholders of the theory do not seem to be quite satisfied with the security of their position. The assertion, therefore, has been made that all the prophets take their stand upon facts that occurred in their own day or within the range of their own survey, and that no prophet breaks this law, no prophet leaves his own time and circumstances and by a leap takes up his position in the future, and fixing on that distant period as a standpoint, makes a fresh start to tell of things yet more future still; in other words, Isaiah in the reigns of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, might utter judgments likely to spring from existing defects and transgressions among the people, but he would not transfer himself to the times of Cyrus, of Ezra, of Nehemiah, and predict as though he were living at that time and occupying a watch-tower which surveyed a new and strange field that was entirely foreign to his experience. According to this canon of interpretation, Isaiah should have predicted the captivity, then the destruction of

Babylon, then the rescue of Israel and their restoration to their own land, and then their after prosperity; the line of continuity should begin with the beginning, and maintain its course unbroken till it came to the destined end. By this law Isaiah cannot be the author of the later chapters, as they start from a point far distant from the prophet's days, and remote from his knowledge and experience.

IV. Internal evidence, it is said by the new school of critics, is strongly adverse to the unity of authorship. The features of the scenery and the surroundings described, or incidentally referred to, by the writer, are claimed as representing Babylonia rather than Palestine. Thus he is familiar with the "ships" of Babylon (xliii. 14); with the "rivers" (xliv. 27); with the far-famed gates (xlv. 1); with the idolatrous processions and the names of the idols (xlvi. 1); with the sorceries and enchantments practised by the inhabitants (xlvii. 8-10); and above all, the "mirage" (xlix. 10) is claimed as a well-known phenomenon in Babylonia. The animals also mentioned in these later chapters are denizens of the same country; and some of the trees also; though when trees are mentioned which are not indigenous, the shifty argument is resorted to that the prophet's mind wandered back to the arboriculture of his own country.

V. Another proof is sought in the language, the phrases, figures, and words found in this portion, and in the absence of others that are found in the former section. Thus the titles of the Divine Being, such as the Father, the Creator, the Redeemer, the Saviour of Israel, are peculiar to the latter chapters. A long list of words and phrases, which it would be impossible to reproduce in our narrow limits, have been adduced; these may be found in most critical works which deal with this controversy: some of them, it is asserted, are employed in the former portion only, some in the latter only; in some cases the meaning of the word is different, and it is pressed upon the student that the same author will always use the same modes of expression and in the same sense. If this rule is not adhered to, the unity of authorship is held to be fully disproved.

VI. It is further advanced with confidence that the whole line of thought and design of teaching are in striking contrast in the two portions of the book. In the former the majesty of God is the subject, in the latter the infinitude; the salvation of a remnant of Israel is the characteristic of the one, and not a prominent feature of the other. In the one we have the *King of Israel*, and in the other the *Servant of Jehovah*. The likeness between the two portions, where such exists, is superficial, the differences are deep and fundamental. The one was the work of the true Isaiah, the other of an imitator who built on the basis of his predecessor, and sent forth his supplement, so to speak, to the

world, either concealing his personality under an anonym, or seeking to gain credit by the assumption of a name to which he had no claim. But as this theory, if accepted, must invalidate the authority of the book, these extremists assert that we need entertain no such fear; for inspiration, whatever that word may mean, in no way depends upon the authorship of a book, but upon the matter of its contents.

The above are the chief arguments that have been brought of late years against the ancient and hitherto universal opinion that the book in its entirety is the work of one author, and that author the Prophet Isaiah. The portion of the task that remains to be performed is to state the chief points of evidence on which the old and traditional view rests for acceptance. The arguments shall follow in the same order in which the objections were arranged.

I. The History.—We have seen that the critics who hold a duality or plurality of authors do not pretend to have discovered any historical proofs of their theory, and they cannot trace the pedigree of their predecessors beyond the last century. It will, therefore, be more convenient to commence the collecting of counter proofs from the present time, and to carry on the investigation to the furthest point that we can reach in the literary evidence that is available for the purpose. It is true that during the last few years the negative theory has enlisted a considerable number of followers; still it cannot be said that the consent is universal, or that a surrender of the question has been made. It has been widely asserted that Delitzsch became a convert to this theory before his death. This statement goes a trifle beyond the truth. In the last edition of his commentary on this prophet he admits that there is nothing inherently objectionable to the view that prophetic discourses by Isaiah and other prophets may be blended together on a definite plan. Such passages might be the work of his pupils (see chap. viii. 16). "Such," adds the professor, "may possibly be the case, it seems to me even probable, and almost certain that this may be so, but indubitably certain it is not in my opinion, and I shall die without getting over this hesitancy." He proceeds to enumerate the obstacles that stand in the way of accepting the modern theory, and that in so cogent a manner that it is wonderful that he could really feel any doubt concerning the unity and homogeneity of the Book of Isaiah. We may with confidence assert that there are still to be found many critical scholars who, while giving all due weight to the arguments of their adversaries, are unmoved by their plausibility, and though they are willing to grant that there are difficulties to be accounted for in this as in any other question that is not capable of direct demonstration, yet fail to

see the pertinency of the proofs produced, especially in the face of plain historical evidence that exists to the contrary. We may trace our steps backwards through the labyrinths of history, passing through the period of the reformation of doctrine and the revival of letters, and no hint is thrown out that bears upon this question. The Mediæval Church in her slumbers never dreamt of it; the fathers show no sign—all portions of the book are cited by them as the work of Isaiah. The synagogue confirms the same opinion; the thought of a diversity of authorship never lodged in the fantastic brains of the Rabbis. The Massorets in giving fixity to the text exhibit no mark of distinction, but rather set their seal to their belief in the unity of the book. Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion in the relics of their translations furnish no testimony, though it would have been a gain to the side they advocated if they could have lowered the authority of the latter portion of the prophet. We now come in our ascending journey to the writings of the New Testament. We find St. Paul quoting the second-Isaiah at the least thirteen times, in two of which he specifies by name Isaiah as the author of the passages cited (see Rom. x. 16 and 20). The same Apostle is recorded by St. Luke in the Acts as having fallen back on the utterances of the second-Isaiah in his great missionary speeches at the Pisidian Antioch (Acts xiii. 34 and 47). St. Peter in his first Epistle refers to the same authority (i. 24, 25; and ii. 24). When Philip was commissioned to unravel the mystery of grace to the Ethiopian eunuch, as he neared the chariot he found him reading, as the historian declares, "the Prophet Isaiah," but the passage under consideration was from the second portion, chapter liii. 7, 8 (see Acts viii. 32, 33). A step further back brings us to the scene of the first recorded martyrdom for the faith, and we hear St. Stephen before the Sanhedrim appealing to the words of the same section of the prophet's writings, Isa. lxvi. 1, 2 (see Acts vii. 49, 50). We now come to the Holy Gospels. St. Matthew cites this portion of the prophet twice in the body of his history of the Lord, and in both cases adduces the name of the prophet (iii. 3 and viii. 17). St. Mark has a quotation in the received text (xv. 28), but it seems to rest on but slender authority. St. Luke quotes both the name of the prophet and a passage from this section of his writings (iii. 4), and narrates that the Lord read and expounded from the book of the Prophet Isaiah, and the passage was taken from this portion, iv. 17, 18. St. John cites Isaiah liii., and then by name groups it with an extract from the earlier writings of the prophet, which are in like manner quoted by name as being of exactly the same authority (chap. xii. 38, 41). Above all, the historians of His life have put the words of this portion of the prophet's writings

into the mouth of the Lord Jesus Himself (Matt. xxi. 13, Mark xi. 17, and Luke xxii. 37). St. John has testified that the Baptist also quoted this section and stamped it with the authority of the name of the prophet (i. 23).

The name of Josephus is well known; he was born A.D. 38, and wrote the ancient history of his people. He states expressly that Cyrus said "that God had foretold His name by the prophets, and that he should build Him a house at Jerusalem"; and then adds, "This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies" (Antiq. xi. 1, 2). One of the best and most ancient of the apocryphal books is Ecclesiasticus, written by Jesus, the son of Sirach, about the year 270 B.C. In chap. xlvi. 20, 25, he evidently refers to this portion of the Prophet, and identifies the writer with the Isaiah of the earlier portion. Further, there is direct historical evidence in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23, and in Ezra i. 1, 2, that Cyrus did effect the restoration of the Jews. It is true that the name of Jeremiah occupies the place of prominence, but this is accounted for by the fact that it was he that foretold that the exact period of the captivity would be seventy years, but it is also clear that Isaiah xlv. 28 was present to the mind of the chronicler. There are, moreover, passages to be found in the later prophets which furnish evidence that they were conversant with this portion of Isaiah's writings (see Jer. x. 1, 16; xxv. 31; Ezek. xxiii. 40, 41; and Zeph. ii. 15, and iii. 10). These witnesses bring us up to a date which makes it difficult to believe that the author was a contemporary or, as the theory would demand, posterior to them. Such is but a meagre sketch of the historical proofs of the unity of authorship, and when put side by side with a theory started in the latter half of the last century, it ought not to be a difficult task to decide which view is the correct one.

II. As to the impossibility of foretelling events before they happen, it is surely a waste of words to dwell upon such a statement. No one can deny that in Scripture generally, and in our prophet in particular, this power is claimed for God. Such has been the creed of Jews and Christians alike. To deny the existence of prophecy is practically to deny God Himself, for surely, if there is a God, He must reveal Himself, and this can only be done in some way that man can recognise. It will be, however, sufficient in connection with this branch of the subject to show the weakness of the advocates of the negative theory. Predictions of the future fall of Babylon are found in chapters xiii., xiv., and xxi. What was to be done? To admit the authorship of Isaiah was at once to recant and throw up the whole question, so they came to the conclusion that as they had denied the Isaianic authorship of the last twenty-seven chapters,

they would also deny his right to claim these, so they argue that these chapters must have been foisted into their present position at a late date ; but chapter xxxiv. bore a strong resemblance, it was clearly seen, to chapter xiii., and chapter xxxv. was a summary of the later portion of the book, so these, too, must be wrenched out of the position allotted them from the beginning to suit, not the necessities of true criticism, but the whims and fancies of those who started with the foregone conclusion that God either could not or would not reveal the secrets of the future. It is mere child's play to urge the presence of different words in these chapters ; the Lexical varieties were not the cause of the theory being started. The real truth is that the denial of prediction was the source and origin of the dislocation of these chapters, and then search was made to see if any trifling feature could be seized on to help the lame argument over the stile, and then it was given out that the exigencies of the language demanded the excision !

III. The next objection, pronounced to be perfectly insuperable, is that a prophet always starts from the circumstances of his own day, and never vaults over an interval to make a future starting-point, and then proceeds to a still more distant fulfilment of the prophecy that springs from it. Such an argument is full of interest, because it can be proved or refuted by facts. Feeling this to some extent, it may be, it is admitted that there may be a "*momentary* transference." Surely the truth of a prophecy or the identity of its author does not depend upon the length of time occupied by the vision, or the space taken up by its insertion in the roll. This is trifling. Now, what are the facts ? Let us look at a few decisive examples. We have seen that these modern critics make an excision of passages which refute their theory and alter the chronological order of arrangement, because the present position of such passages negatives their theory. But surely in chapter xxxix. 6, 7 Isaiah predicts the captivity of Babylon, and though the present and immediate future might be bright and prosperous, still the coming scourge was gathering like a thunder-cloud all along the horizon, and it is quite consistent with all analogy that the prophet should declare the judgment and the deliverance that should follow afterwards. But cannot other instances be produced ? Unless we are with Wellhausen entirely to upset the order and sequence of the Pentateuch, we have in Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. predictions concerning Israel, which were uttered by Moses before they entered the land, but the prophet leaps into the future—to the time when the people should have been settled in Canaan and have fallen into idolatry, and he sets before them the result of their doings. In Deut. iv. 29 the prophet again transports himself from his present position in the wilder-

ness to the time when they should have remained long in the land and committed sins against God, and then taking a fresh standpoint he says, "If from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God thou shalt find Him." Again, in chapter xxviii. 36 he actually places himself at the period when a king shall rule over them, and foretells the future beyond that date, and in verse 68 he predicts a second going down into Egypt, and from that standpoint he predicts a second slavery. But we have the highest authority for this kind of prophecy in the example of our Lord Himself. In Matt. xxiv. he predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and the flight and dispersion of the people; then in verse 29 he takes his standpoint at the date of the fall of the city and starts afresh. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days," that is, so soon as the dispersion of the people and the occupation of their city by the Gentiles shall be fully accomplished, then shall the end come, and the Son of Man shall return in His glory. That prophecy is not yet come to pass. Jerusalem is still in the hands of the Gentiles, and her people are still absent from their land. The "immediately after" may be at the doors, but it has not yet come. These examples are sufficient, without searching further, to show that prophetic foresight was not limited to one particular point in the lifetime of the prophet.

IV. The internal evidence is claimed as on the negative side. We have seen above that it is stated that the surrounding objects which were familiar to the writer of this section bear the stamp of Babylonia, and not of Palestine. Is this exclusively true? Are there not species both in the fauna and flora which may belong to both countries? The "willow" or "poplar" is common to both. Some trees are mentioned that belong to the latter only, and the "palm" tree, which is common on the plains of the former, finds no mention. Moreover, specific places in Palestine are spoken of in this section, as Lebanon, Sharon, the Vale of Achor, and features of Palestinian scenery such as forests, crags and high hills. The mirage (xlix. 10) is pressed as indicating Babylonia, but this phenomenon is not confined to that country, and, if it were, it must be remembered that communication between eastern nations was such that they learned from each other the characteristics of other climes than their own. Besides, the emissaries of Babylon who came to Hezekiah must have had frequent converse with Isaiah, and would naturally set forth the features of their land, when in communication with each other, as an inducement to form an alliance between the two kingdoms. For this reason the argument derived from familiar scenes and sights is, to say the least, weak and dubious. If it is advanced, it bears quite as much, if not considerably more, on the side of the unity rather than on the diversity of authorship.

V. A comparison has been instituted between words, phrases, figures and titles that prevail severally in the two sections, and it is urged that the distinction is so great that the book must be the work of, at least, two different minds. It is of importance to remember that when the former prophecies were uttered Isaiah was a young man, and when the latter were delivered he was far advanced in years. Is there no difference in style between the writings of any author when half a century separates his compositions? Again, when the subject treated of is quite different in the actors, the scenes, the circumstances and the purposes, must not the language undergo an equal change? The former is, for the most part, a message of judgment, and the latter, for the most part, a message of mercy. Moreover, take any known writers. If an important doctrine depended on the issue, who might not urge with far greater force that the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" of Homer came from diverse pens? Who would not allot the "Odes" and "Satires" of Horace, or the Georgics and "Æneid" of Virgil, the tragedies and comedies of Shakespeare, to different authors? Let anyone who has handled his pen through a long life look at his earliest and latest productions, especially if they treat of different subjects, and he will see how far he has drifted from his first moorings. The Tübingen School made an attack upon the Epistle to the Philippians, and the argument used by Baur was that the words which were decidedly Pauline were copied by the forger, and those that were not so were proofs of the diversity of authorship. Against such a mockery of true criticism there is no use or place for honest argument. The present attack on Isaiah is much the same in character, and contains the same amount of truth. There are, indeed, numbers of words and phrases which are common to both sections of our prophet, and the variations are perfectly natural and befit the subject in hand, the different use of particular words has been much overstrained, as the same meaning yields good sense throughout. In the Divine titles the truth declared in the closing chapters is equally involved in the teaching of the opening announcements of the prophet.

VI. This brings us to the last objection, which may be summarised that the aspect under which the Divine Being is set forth is not the same; in one He is great, in the other infinite; the people of Israel are viewed differently—in one they furnish a remnant to be saved, in the other the whole nation is redeemed. Above all, the Messiah—or, as they would say, the nation, or the ideal of the nation—is predicted as a *King* in one part and as the *Servant of Jehovah* in the other. These opposite features, they say, are irreconcilable and separate the two portions by an impassable gulf. Such is

strong speech. Surely the attributes of the Divine Being are brought into prominence according as any particular attribute is most exercised for the good of His people. Again, when the people were looking forward to punishment for their sins, consolation would be most wisely administered to them under the form of a promise of a remnant that should be saved; but when the chastisement was over and the "iniquity pardoned," then the full and final redemption of the nation would have its proper divulgement. The distinction which is made much of by the recent criticism between the *King* of the earlier chapters and the *Servant of Jehovah* of the later ones rests on a thorough misconception of the latter title. It is so far from being a term of detraction or disparagement, that it is, on the other hand, a title of the highest rank and note, given only to those that inaugurated, or reformed, some dispensation or ordinance of God, and hence is given in Scripture, as every Bible-reader knows, to but few, and those noted leaders in the armies of the living God. The title is awarded to the Messiah in these chapters, and quoted in the Acts of the Apostles as being the *Servant of Jehovah par excellence*, almost synonymous with the Angel or rather Agent of Jehovah of the Pentateuch, who in all ages was the revealer of the Father and the executor of His plans and purposes, the vicegerent of the theocracy, and therefore equivalent in the second portion of Isaiah to the King of the first portion of the prophet. To the critical scholar, who studies the words that have been collected and catalogued and are to be found in most modern commentaries, there will be no stumbling-block in the objection derived from this source if he brings with him a mind free from prejudice and unwarped by a foregone conclusion.

A few observations may be made before closing this paper. The arrangement of the Book of Isaiah is perfect in the correlation of the parts and in the unity and coherence of the whole. There are minute points of interest which, if close observation were brought to bear, would doubtless yield evidence to throw light on the date of authorship. For instance, the Siloam stone is considered by Professor Sayce to be either of the date of Hezekiah or of Solomon; he inclines to the former date. He says (see "Fresh Light," p. 105) that there was in the age of Hezekiah a lower pool in contradistinction to an upper pool, and an old pool in contradistinction to a new one; it would therefore seem that the time of Hezekiah was notorious for the construction of these water-works. May not the opening of chapter lv. have been an allusion to the formation and opening for public use of one of these many conduits? If so, the date of this portion of the book will appear to be in the reign of Hezekiah, and the place where it was written, Jerusalem. The

prophet begins the book with "the vision of Isaiah," etc. The word *vision* seems to embrace the whole revelation that follows; whoever was the author of the latter section, he has at all events inserted no separate preface to his performance: the one word sums up the whole book.

Those that allot the work to two or more writers do not agree as to the individual to whom the honour is due: one ventured to say Baruch; but most prefer a safe silence, and call the creature of their own imaginations after the style of the Athenian altar, the "Great Unknown." The place where the additional chapters were written is again a subject of controversy. Some argue for Egypt, some for Palestine, but most for Babylon. Truth, when denied, generally becomes the root of numberless falsehoods; the integer is broken up into fractions which are valueless, and the faggot of unity, held together and compacted by the bond of peace, is dislocated and dissolved into a wreck of rotten sticks that a child can break.

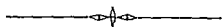
There is one argument against the diversity of authorship which to a candid mind seems to be convincing and conclusive, and with that this paper must come to a close. If we look at our Bibles we shall see that every prophet, or editor of a prophet's work, always places his *name* at the head of his writings. To this was added sometimes the name of his father, sometimes the place of his abode, sometimes the contemporaneous kings; two are simply designated "the prophet," and one, not being a member of the schools of the prophets, states his occupation. In Malachi alone the bare name is given; but in all of them without exception the name is given, and in most some further particulars to prove the prophet's identity and authority; the superscription is the form of his testimonials and credentials with which the writer challenges a hearing and submission from his readers. This is the universal rule and practice with the prophetic writings.

Now, what are we asked to believe under this new system? That one of the longest and most important of prophetic books, one that is characterized by the most exact and explicit delineations of the Hope of Israel, was sent forth to the world without the usual signature; that such an author hid himself under an anonym, and those that heard him proclaim his wondrous unfoldings concealed him under the garments of another; that the next generation failed to find out and perpetuate the name of this genius, and that no tradition, public or private, rescued it from oblivion. Why was this? How could such an anomaly take place? The only answer is that a little over a hundred years ago it occurred to an individual that there might be more than one author of this book, and that, because the theory favoured a growing desire to cancel the inspiration and authority

of the Scriptures, others of like opinions accepted and endorsed it. This is not criticism; it is mere prejudice adopting an hallucination and then compassing earth and sea to discover some quibble to support its pretensions. The testimony of the Church of Israel, and the testimony of the Church of Christ, and above all, the testimony of the Lord Himself, must outweigh all the plausible speculations of modern Socinians and sciolists, and pour contempt upon the pretension of a fatuous claim to a knowledge superior to that vouchsafed to those "to whom were entrusted the oracles of God," a knowledge surpassing that of "the witness and keeper of Holy Writ," and transcending and contradicting (may God forgive even the thought) the knowledge of Him who came to fulfil these very prophecies in deed and in truth.

F. TILNEY BASSETT.

DULVERTON VICARAGE,
August 27, 1890.



ART. V.—IN MY PARISH.

IT was a wet, cheerless August day—one of the many such days of this, until September, disappointing summer, when I went to see some of my old people.

As a general rule, but little visiting can be advantageously done in the country during the month of August. If you call at cottages doors are fastened. The men are harvesting, the women and children gleaning, and few people are ill; even the aged and infirm creep out into the fields. But this wet afternoon I felt sure I should find the old folk at home, and so I did. I called, for instance, on B. He was, he said, *in his eighty*—the usual phrase in these parts. We naturally discoursed on the weather. I confess it had depressed *me*, and I thought of the farmers and of the labourers with a heavy heart—for the labourers because they are paid so much for a harvest, and the longer it lasts the worse the bargain for them. "We shall have some fine weather yet, sir," says he. "I am sure on it. Seed-time and harvest will not fail. They never have." And so the old man, whose prophecy happily proved a true one, with his strong faith reassured me, and I left his cottage in better spirits than I went in. It was not by any means the only part of my conversation with him worth remembering. One or two other things which he said will appear further on. As I went home I thought how general among our peasant population was this firm, this simple faith. The peasantry have their faults many and sad; but as a class they