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Sacraments and the Sacramental. She calls it a *History of Sacrament in Relation to Thought and Progress* (Williams & Norgate; 6s. net). Her gifts are a sincere belief in the value of the sacramental in life, and an equally sincere and unaffected belief in the value of that love which thinketh no evil. These two gifts, with felicity of expression, are enough. As to the future and the prospects of union, she places her hope in common participation in Holy Communion. 'Our standard of preaching — from Anglican and Nonconformist pulpits alike—is not so high that we can afford to lose any chance of bringing fresh light and thought to any congregation by the presence of some teacher who has the power and the means. Yet we do not gain much sense of fellowship with a congregation by sitting occasionally at the feet of their pastor, with whose views we may or may not agree. Kneeling with others before the Altar is a very different thing. In fact, where earnest people of various denominations meet for consultation and prayer for distinctly Christian objects, they find it sometimes galling as well as unreasonable that they are not able to communicate together, even at the altar of an English church. That is, I believe, especially the case with the Student Christian Movement, among whom, as a *pis-aller*, unity of time is taken in compensation for unity of place, the old Nonconformist dislike of early communion being thrown to the winds.'

The Spirit of Early Judaism.

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Dominant Motive of Post-Exilic Activity.

Let us now see if there is any discoverable unity amid all this variety. Consider first the task which the returned exiles had to face: it was nothing less than the reconstruction of their shattered life. They returned from Babylon with Deutero-Isaiah's words of high hope and promise ringing in their ears and in their hearts. Weeping had endured for a long black night, but joy was to return in the morning. The Creator of the ends of the earth, who had brought them home, was neither faint nor weary. They had waited for Jehovah, and they had been comforted with the assurance that they would renew their strength, mounting up with wings as eagles, running without weariness, walking without faintness (Is 40^{31}). The waste places were to be rebuilt and the Temple re-erected ($44^{26\text{-}28}$). Their imagination kindled at the thought of their beloved Zion and at the glory that was to be hers in the near future. Nowhere is more beautiful expression given to these glowing hopes than in the fine picture in $49^{18\text{-}21}$ of mother Zion welcoming back, with wonder in her eyes, the multitude of her children who had been scattered in the far-off land.

That was the dream: what was the reality? The small Book of Haggai reveals it in all its desolating pathos. The tragic disillusion, after eighteen years' struggle with the most adverse of circumstances in the home land, is poignantly expressed in the simple words: 'Ye looked for much, and behold! little' (Hag 1^{9}). A blight lay upon everything—their land, their grain, their wine, their oil, their men, their cattle—upon all their efforts and all their hopes (1^{11}). They suffered from drought, bad trade, unemployment, opposition: 'there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in, because of the adversary, for I set all men every one against his neighbour' (Zec 8^{10}). There were enemies without and strife within: neighbouring peoples bent on harassing the little struggling community, and ill-feeling and discord among her own members. That was the situation to which Haggai and Zechariah addressed themselves. Their task, like ours, was that of reconstructing their dilapidated world: and in one sense the whole effort of the early post-exilic period was *to assert* or re-assert *their national individuality*, which, of course, was pre-eminently and all but exclusively a religious individuality. It is this that explains the manifold activities of statesmen, prophets, priests, and wise men—of Nehemiah, of Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Trito-Isaiah (chs. 56–66), of Ezra, and of the men who edited the Book of Proverbs: it is this that explains the

revival of the Temple in the earlier period and the creation of the synagogue in the later.

More than most nations the Jew has been conscious of his uniqueness, and vastly more than most nations has his development been governed by a single idea. Always their God had been their glory. As Julia Wedgwood has said, no other race 'has left on the ear of humanity so definite an impression of a single voice.' The sense of Israel's uniqueness runs throughout her literature from first to last: it is as old as the oracle of Balaam, 'Lo! it is a people that dwelleth alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations' (Nu 23^{9}), and it receives, as we have seen, fanatical expression in the very late Book of Esther (8^{17} $9^{1f.}$). Other nations, too, have had their individuality and their mission, but the Jew expressed his individuality and pursued his mission with a sustained and deliberate consciousness which is without parallel. Every agency and institution was made to converge upon that end.

Indeed, the whole of Hebrew development, at least as represented by its greatest personalities, may be regarded as a struggle against alien spiritual forces which threatened to imperil its own distinctive genius. Hebrew life, like Christian (cf. Eph $6^{11ff.}$), was a perpetual warfare. The type of life and religion which the Hebrew felt himself divinely called to realize and to present to the world was unceasingly imperilled, now in this way, now in that. In early times the Canaanites were the assailing force, later it was the syncretistic worship encouraged by kings like Ahab (1 K 16^{31}), Ahaz (2 K $16^{10ff.}$), or Manasseh (2 K $21^{3ff.}$); there was the ever-present menace of idolatry which persisted even during the exile (Ezk 20^{32}); after the return there were the assaults of Samaritans, Arabians, Ammonites, and Philistines; and in the second century B.C. there was the most cruel and organized assault of all from the side of Græco-Syrian civilization. Against all this the Jew—and most deliberately in post-exilic times—sought to assert his national individuality. This is the secret of the unity in a literature of so much diversity.

It cannot be denied that sometimes—in such a book as Esther, for example—the assertion takes a peculiarly unlovely and indeed repulsive form; but it ought not to be forgotten that behind the form is a flaming jealousy for the fortunes of a people which is conscious of having a very precious deposit committed to its care. In this way, too, we can readily account for the rigour of an Ezra or the vehemence of a Nehemiah. These men felt that religion itself was at stake, and it was for religion that the Hebrew had been sent into the world. The key to their conduct in insisting upon divorce of the foreign women lies in the simple phrase of Malachi (2^{11}) which describes such a woman as 'the daughter *of a foreign god.*' Jezebel cannot come into Israel without bringing her Phœnician worship with her. The vigorous scene in Neh 13^{25}, already alluded to, points the same moral. The thing that prompts Nehemiah to beat the Jews who had married women from the sister peoples and to pluck off their hair is that 'their children spoke half in the speech of Ashdod, and they could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people' (13^{24}). To the devout Nehemiah bad Hebrew was an evil omen. The children's chatter in the streets suggested mongrel influences which could only end by destroying the purity of Hebrew religion, the Hebrew's only justification for existence, and thus shattering his mission to the world.

The Old Testament, read rightly, is one long protest, conscious or latent, from the beginning to the end. The religious distinctiveness of Israel, imperilled by war, trade and commerce, intermarriage, persecution, intercourse with idolatrous nations or subjection to idolatrous conquerors, is being continually defended in every variety of way. Numberless passages in the Old Testament, when we understand their historical implications, can be most luminously described as anti-Canaanite, anti-Assyrian, anti-Babylonian, or anti-Græco-Syrian. This does not mean, of course, that the Old Testament learnt nothing from the types of civilization which it attacked. In point of fact, it has a remarkably absorbent genius, and it learnt from them all, adapting, assimilating, and transforming. But that is another story. Here we are concerned with the aspect of protest. Some even of the most innocent assertions of the Old Testament have, for the historical student, a definitely polemical flavour: there is far more 'fight' in them than the ordinary reader imagines. The first chapter of Genesis, for example, is thoroughly anti-Babylonian. The Creation story, like the Flood story, is throughout an implicit criticism of the old heathen tales, and a deliberate elimination or transformation of such moral and

religious qualities as were intolerable to the purer and austerer genius of the Hebrew religion. Take so simple a sentence as, 'God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: (He made) the stars also.' That is anti-Babylonian: it is a blow struck at the heart of the old mythologies which worshipped 'the host of heaven,' regarding the heavenly bodies as divine—a literary blow like that other blow dealt by Josiah to the priests and paraphernalia of sun, moon, and star-worship (2 K $23^{5.11}$). Nay, it is more; as against the polytheism and the divided universe of Babylon, it involves the great conception of a universe which is truly one, under the control of a single sovereign Will which made and directs them. '*He* made them, and *He* set them in the sky.' So far from being gods, they are only lamps. If that is not criticism, what would be? It is only missed because it is so subtle.

The Book of Daniel is another protest, obvious enough to one who reads it alongside of the First Book of the Maccabees. The faithful Jewish people, with their religion and their sacred books, were being assailed with unparalleled fury by Antiochus Epiphanes. Much that was attractive in Hellenic civilization, as well as much that was repulsive, was being thrust upon them; and the Book of Daniel is the answer. Alike against the allurements and the persecutions of a pagan civilization it asserts the Hebrew religion with its austerity, its horror of idolatry, its gifts of comfort and strength and courage and hope; it counsels the sufferers to be patient but a little longer (12^{12}) and soon will come that Kingdom of God which shall know no end. The protest against contemporary pagan religion in Dn 1 is implicit, as in Gn 1, but it is as unmistakable. Daniel's refusal to partake of the king's food was well calculated to encourage men who had been put to the torture for declining to eat swine's flesh.

This assertion of national individuality in the face of the ever-present, if ever-changing, forces by which it was menaced or assailed, is the dominating impulse of the post-exilic age, directing the national energies of the Jews with a consciousness and a deliberation which is without parallel elsewhere; it shapes the ambitions and the policies of the leaders and the institutions of the people. It appears in operation very early in the flat rejection by Zerubbabel of the Samaritan offer to participate in the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezr 4^{1-3}). The Samaritans plead with some justification, 'Let us build with you; for we seek your God, as ye do; and we sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel, who cannot forget the mongrel origin of the Samaritans, bluntly retorts, 'Ye have nothing to do with us in building a house unto our God.' It is the same sense of the peril, from alien intrusion, to all that the Hebrew people stands for that explains the feverish energy with which Nehemiah on his return from Persia, hastens on the completion of the walls round about Jerusalem (Neh 4–6). At first but a heap of ruins which elicited only the scorn of Tobiah ($4^{2f.}$), they were completed in the incredibly short space of fifty-two days (6^{15}). Nehemiah, as truly as Ezekiel or Ezra, was one of the founders of Judaism, and his walls were a spiritual contribution to it. They were the barrier behind which the spiritual forces could develop, and without which anything might happen. For good, as well as for evil, the Jew shut himself off, and deliberately planned to lead his distinctive life.

(i.) The Church.

This life was encouraged and developed in several ways—by the Church and the priesthood, by prophets, by sacred books, by wise men, and later—though this bulks hardly at all in the Old Testament (cf. Ps 74^{8})—by the synagogue. The words 'priest' and 'church' are writ large over all post-exilic literature. Theirs are the supreme interests, not only in the quasi-historical legislation of the Pentateuch, but equally in definitely historical books like Chronicles and Ezra and in the activities of the prophets. In contrast to the intensely ethical spirit of the pre-exilic Amos, nothing can be more significant than the ecclesiastical temper of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, whose messages to a large extent turn upon the Temple and upon ritual obligation. With some justice it might be said of them, as has been said of Ezekiel, that they were priests disguised in prophet's robes. But all this only goes to show the enormous importance of the Church for the post-exilic period. Much of the precious inheritance of the past and all that was distinctive of the people was gathered round the formal observances of religion; and it was by this institution and by these observances that the Jews

made their protest and defended their sacred deposit, against the insidious paganism that encircled them.

(ii.) PROPHETS.

The prophets, too, as we see, played their part, but it was not the old part. Gone is the torrent of ethical passion which lashed audiences into fury and brought the prophets themselves in peril of their lives. They are *epigonoi*, separated by a vast gulf from the days of the great prophetic fathers, and finally they disappear altogether; when the crisis is sorest not a prophetic voice is heard (Ps 74^9, 1 Mac 4^{46} 9^{27} 14^{41}). Where the priest holds sway, originality is stifled. As it was in the days of our Lord, whom men mistook for a resuscitated 'John the Baptist, or Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the (dead) prophets' (Mt 16^{14}), because they had not daring enough to believe that God could create a new mighty personality, so it was in the days of Malachi (4^5), when the best that was hoped for was the reappearance on earth of the great Elijah. But prophecy, such as it was, ministered to a need, and went to strengthen the volume of protest against alien spiritual influences within and without the chosen people. The prophet would appeal to whatever enthusiasm and sense of unconventional approach to God was left in the people, just as the law would appeal to the more conventionally pious, and the wise man to the ordinary person on the level of his secular life.

(iii.) SCRIPTURE.

Unquestionably, however, Judaism found one of her great bulwarks in her sacred books. Deuteronomy started Israel upon the path by which she became 'the people of the book'; and the sorrow-stricken exiles were driven by the love of their country's past and their passionate belief in her future to gather up and put together and edit the now more than ever precious relics of ancient song and history and prophecy and law. Considering that some of those earlier tales, though they must have offended the mature religious sense of the later priestly editors, were not by them summarily dismissed, we may perhaps assume that they were already securely lodged in the consciousness of the people, probably in what we should now call 'canonical' form. In any case it is evident that the Book early began to play an important part in nursing and developing the distinctive life of Judaism. It was a significant—some would say an ominous—day for Hebrew religion when Ezra 'the scribe' appeared with 'the law of God in his hand' (Ezr 7^{14}). The vivid description in Neh 8 of the festival at which, for a week, the law was daily read and expounded, marks a new epoch in the history of the Jews. The impulse given by the exile to the collection of their sacred literature did not die down till all the books that had sustained the life of the Church were securely gathered into one great final collection. The steps of the process can be traced: by the year 400 B.C. the Pentateuch was practically 'canonical,' by 200 B.C. the prophetical and the prophetico-historical books, and by 100 B.C. all the others. It was a sound instinct—though not without its grave perils, as subsequent history has shown—that threw the Jew with ever-increasing passion upon his sacred books. In them was life, more particularly *his* life, the life which he was to incarnate and with which he was to challenge and confront the world. And it was a sound instinct that prompted Antiochus Epiphanes to aim at their destruction. He could not have dealt the spirit of Jewish nationality a deadlier blow. His Syrian soldiers 'rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, and set them on fire. And whereso̊ever was found with any a book of the covenant, and if any consented to the law, the king's sentence delivered him to death' (1 Mac $1^{56f.}$). But, as Ryle says (*The Canon of the Old Testament*, p. 135), 'the blow of the persecutor ensured the preservation of the Sacred Books.' The more powerfully their national and religious life was assailed, the more tenaciously did the Hebrews cling to their sacred books as the guardian and nurse of that life. All the facts go to show that it was the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans that finally led the Jewish Rabbis to determine once and for all, by official pronouncement, the limits of the Hebrew Canon. When they had lost their independence, their country, their temple, their material all, they rallied their national life round the Scriptures; and it has proved as indestructible as they.

(iv.) THE WISE MEN.

The synagogue, the appeal of whose services was spiritual, not spectacular, must also have been

a great support to Jewish religion on its non-ritual side; but, as it is scarcely alluded to in the Old Testament, we shall here pass over it and conclude by pointing out the place of the Wisdom literature and of the wise men in the strengthening of that which was distinctive of Hebrew religious and national life. Some of that literature is very daring, like Job and Ecclesiastes. These books are—like the Old Testament generally, as we have tried to show—protests: this time not a protest against degrading external influences, but against shallow and conventional attitudes of piety within Israel herself, a protest against a too facile faith which ignores facts. The Book of Proverbs, however, which is more dispassionate, and more moralistic than religious in the narrow sense, meets the average man on the ordinary levels of his secular life. But can this book of apophthegms, most shrewd, some witty, some commonplace, be in any sense regarded as a protest against some anti-Hebrew view of life? There are brilliant passages, like the notable description in the eighth chapter, and especially vv.[22-31], which make one feel how solemn and wonderful a thing Wisdom was to the profounder Hebrew mind. But what of the book as a whole? Does it encourage the good Jew to cherish his own religion against the seduction of other appeals?

Yes, this book, too, is a protest—a protest against the subtle and all-pervading spirit of the time when the wise men were teaching in their casual and unprofessional way: it was the spirit of Hellenism. Mr. W. A. L. Elmslie has put this with remarkable power and lucidity in his fine *Studies in Life from Jewish Proverbs* (pp. 98 f.). 'Hellenism,' he says, 'was swiftly becoming the very atmosphere men breathed. Certainly its manifold allurements were only too visibly and temptingly displayed before the eyes of the young and ambitious in Jerusalem. And yet Hellenism had met its match in the strange city of Zion. Greek met Jew, and in the struggle the Wise-men of Israel played no insignificant part. For they marshalled and moulded their proverbs till they represented the Wisdom of Israel set over against the worldly-wisdom of Greece. They counselled a way of life which was not the seductive Greek way. They sturdily opposed another doctrine to the fashionable immorality of Hellenism with its overwhelming prestige and its ostensible success. For several generations the attack of the new civilization came by way of peaceful penetration, which was perhaps harder to resist than open enmity, since nobody could deny the good in Hellenism, its beauty, and its cleverness, if only it had been pure in heart. Later . . . the campaign was to be conducted with all the devices of reckless and inhuman violence. Hebraism against Hellenism! All Egypt, Syria, and Persia had made scarcely an effort to resist the spell of the new learning and the new ways. At first sight, then, how unequal the contest! A stiff moralism preaching against the pleasures of sin to hot-blooded, able, and ambitious men. A clique of obscurantists arrayed not against a kingdom or an empire but against a magnificent world-conquering civilization. The Jews maintain their ground? Impossible! No, not wholly so; for this battle . . . was ultimately spiritual; and because the Jews held a conception of the nature and destiny of man deeper, truer, than even the Greeks had found, Hebraism in the end proved stronger than Hellenism with all its genius and all its works.' To this end the Proverbs, for all their seeming pedestrianism and simplicity, made a contribution of inestimable worth, because they insisted with unceasing iteration that there is no true wisdom apart from the fear of the Lord. Virtue is safe only when it grows upon the soil of a religion which has austerity at the heart of it, and the brilliant philosophies which deny this only illuminate the road that leadeth to destruction.

So it may be roundly said that the whole of post-exilic life and literature is organized round a protest. Was there ever a literature in which the presence of an enemy is so pervasively felt as it is in the Old Testament? Sometimes within Israel and sometimes without, but always he is there; he haunts the music of even the quietest Psalms (23^5). Israel's life is always being assailed by forces, material or spiritual or both—by Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, Ammonites, Moabites, Assyrians, Babylonians, Samaritans, Arabians, Greeks, Syrians. The story of the full-armed Philistine giant, ready to crush the little Hebrew boy, but defeated by him in the end, is a pictorial summary of Hebrew religious history. The life of the Hebrews, and especially from the exile on, was a struggle to keep that which they believed God had committed to their trust, and by various devices and with varying success they have kept it unto this day.