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A table of contents for *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_jtvi-01.php

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1912.

534TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

HELD IN THE ROOMS OF THE INSTITUTE ON MONDAY,
JUNE 3RD, 1912, AT 4.30 P.M.

LT.-GENERAL SIR HENRY L. GEARY, K.C.B., PRESIDED.

The Minutes of the preceding Meeting were read and confirmed. The SECRETARY announced the following elections:—

MEMBERS: The Rev. J. Iverach Munro, M.A.; Charles Stewart Campbell, Esq., B.A., I.C.S.

ASSOCIATE: Major H. J. H. de Vismes.

The CHAIRMAN then called upon ARCHDEACON POTTER to read his paper.

*THE INFLUENCE OF BABYLONIAN CONCEPTIONS
ON JEWISH THOUGHT.** By THE VENERABLE ARCH-
DEACON POTTER, M.A.

I N introducing this question my first duty is to apologize for venturing to undertake to write on it, because the subject is one which needs a master-hand to render it full justice. My excuses must be (1) that I endeavoured to get one who is much better qualified than I to undertake it, but he apparently was unable to find the time; (2) that I think it possible that a person like myself, not an original worker in archæological fields, but only one who studies work accomplished by distinguished men, has some advantage in co-ordinating these results with those attained in other sciences, because his mind being less devoted to one particular study may be more pliable in reconciling the results of several; (3) I have always had an intense conviction, which has grown with years, reading, and thought, that every science is a revealer of God; and that religion gains enormously, and loses nothing in the application

* N.B.—The letters, P., J.E., E., in this paper, refer to the different sections in the Old Testament, as distinguished by the Higher Critics, P. being the latest, supposed not to have been completed till the period of the exile; the others being earlier, their completion dating certainly before 750 B.C.

of scientific results to what we call revelation. No doubt all things are shaken in the process ; but the result is the making it quite clear what are those permanent Divine and important things which cannot be shaken, and remain.

There can be no more fascinating study than that of the influences which preceded and surrounded the beginning and development of the Jewish religion. This religion is the foundation on which Christianity is built. So that if we desire to understand the real meaning of the latter, we must understand the former.

To gain a true conception of a religion, it is desirable to ascertain the conditions under which it took its rise. Unless we were to assume that the historical and scientific setting in which religious conceptions are enshrined was directly and infallibly revealed to men by God, we may suppose that the conditions under which religious thinkers and prophets were born, and the ideas current, at their time and before, in their country and surrounding countries, would influence their thoughts and writings. And as we find out the amount of that influence, we learn to distinguish between the Divinely revealed and the historically developed elements.

With regard to Old Testament teachings, everyone now knows that they correspond in a very marked way with Babylonian conceptions, ever since Mr. George Smith (following Layard and Rawlinson) unveiled the library of Asur-banipal in 1874. This learned Assyrian king compiled his library in about 670 B.C. But in one of the tablets found at Nineveh occur these words: "according to the copies of the tablets of Assyria and Accad I have written on tablets." The Assyrian tablets were therefore copies of older Assyrian and Babylonian ones; and Babylonian duplicates have since been found at Borsippa and Sippara. "These Babylonian copies are of great importance, as they cannot have been taken from the Assyrian tablets, which were probably buried at the fall of Nineveh, but are from older copies in their own libraries."* Moreover, the creation tablets found at Nineveh give honour to Merodach, not to Asshur, and consequently are Babylonian, not Assyrian in origin. Also a story of the flood has recently been found, which experts date at before 2000 B.C. And the fight between Merodach and Tiamat was found sculptured upon two limestone slabs in the temple of Ninib at Nimrud. This temple was built between 884 B.C. and 860 B.C., and across the sculpture

* *Vide* Boscauwen.

was inscribed a dedication to Ninib by this king. This dates back the creation legend to at any rate 200 years before the formation of the library.* It seems, therefore, clear that the tablets from Nineveh are of much greater antiquity than 670 B.C.

In them the beginning of things is thus described: "At that time the Heavens were unnamed. The chaotic Sea was the mother of all."

In Genesis the deep is called "Tehom." In Babylon, "Tiamat," the dragon conquered by Merodach, was the personification of chaos and darkness. From her body were made the sky and heavenly bodies, like the firmament in Genesis and the lights in it. Consequently, the tablets and Genesis (P.) agree in putting the deep as the first existence. In one tablet Merodach says, "Bone will I fashion." Issamtu is the word used for bone. It corresponds to *esem bone* in Genesis ii, 23 (J.), where Adam calls Eve "bone of my bones."

This tablet also says that Merodach opened his mouth and spake to Ea, telling him what he had conceived in his heart. This corresponds to Genesis i, 26 (P.), "Let us make man."

As Merodach was originally a solar deity, his conquering the dragon may be looked on as parallel with the Hebrew narrative (P.) of the existence of light before the creation of the heavenly bodies. And the dividing of the primeval waters by a firmament before the creation of the heavenly bodies agrees with Genesis; and also the culminating act of creation being that of man (as in Genesis (P.).)*

In the Assyrian tablets, the stars and night came first in the order of creation, then the sun and the day, the reverse being the case in the Hebrew record (P.); this has been attributed to the nomad life of the earlier people; and would point to an early date (*viz.*, during the nomad period) for the Babylonian legends—the sun, being associated with agriculture, would come first with agriculturists—the moon would come first with persons leading a nomad life.

Another tablet describes the gods calling forth mighty monsters, the cattle and wild beasts by Ea. The lower part of this tablet is mutilated, and it has been supposed might have contained a description of the creation of the human race. And in a hymn to Ea occur these words, "for their redemption did he create mankind, even he with whom is life," and in another tablet occur the words, "may his word be established and not

* *Vide* King.

forgotten in the mouth of mankind whom his hands have created."

Further in the sixth tablet, which was published, I think, for the first time by Mr. King, the creation of man is narrated (and it agrees largely with the long-known account given by Berosus,* who says that Bel formed mankind from his own blood mixed with earth). The sixth tablet says, "when Merodach heard the words of the gods, he spake unto Ea—my blood will I take, and bone will I fashion. I will create man to inhabit the earth, that the service of the gods may be established, and their shrines built," reminding us of an old Christian conception that man is the priest of nature, made for the purpose of understanding God's works, and praising him for them.

In the mythological tablet, the third of the creation series, occur the words, "the great Gods entered; in sin they join in compact, the fruit they broke, they broke in two. Merodach, their redeemer, he appointed their fate." This reminds us of Adam and Eve tempted by the serpent to eat the fruit in Eden (J.).

The story of Sargon's birth bears an interesting resemblance to that of the birth of Moses (E.). Sargon was the first Semitic king of Babylonia at a date which Nabonidus, a later learned and accurate king of Babylon, places at a period which would be about 3800 B.C. (King, I find in his *Sumer* and *Accad*, puts this at nearly 1,000 years later, and others quote both dates as possible.† However, the latest date given is nearly 1,000 years before Moses.) A tablet preserved in the British Museum gives the story thus, "My little mother in the city of Atsu Pirani, on the banks of the Euphrates, brought me forth in a secret place. She placed me in a basket of reeds, and closed its mouth with bitumen. She gave me to the river, which did not cover me over, but carried me to Akki the irrigator." By the latter he was brought up as a gardener; the goddess Istar prospered him, and he eventually became king of the land.

The great difference between the Babylonian story of creation and that in Genesis is that the former was mainly polytheistic and the latter monotheistic.

* A Babylonian priest, 330-260 B.C.

† Lehmann considers that a scribe employed to copy the original statement of Nabonidus must have misread one stroke too many in the numerals, and thus made an excess of 1,000 years. Others believe that Nabonidus had no means of judging the date of Sargon.

But as modifying this undoubted distinction, Eerdmann thinks that polytheism dominated originally all the narratives of which Genesis is composed. He refers to the passages in chapters i, 26, and xx, 13, as ones in which the original polytheism is still apparent: and others, as *e.g.*, "blessed be the Lord God of Shem," or "I am the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac," as recognizing Yahweh as one among many Gods.* Moreover, many Babylonian expressions have a decidedly monotheistic tendency, as *e.g.*, the following: a hymn to the Moon God of Ur and Harran, from which Abraham and his father came, says, "Father long suffering and forgiving, who upholds all living things by his hand; begetter of gods and men, firstborn; omnipotent, whose unfathomable heart none can know; in Heaven and on earth thou alone art supreme. Among the Gods thou hast no rival." This hymn Boscawen considers older than the time of Abraham.

Sinai was called after Sin the Moon God, and it was a sacred place long before Moses communed there with God. Sargon and Naram-Sin conquered Sinai in very early times; in Exodus iii, 1, we read that "Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; and he came to the mount of Yahweh, even to Horeb." This seems to infer that the mountain was so called "the mount of God" before Moses visited it. Driver thinks that possibly Israelites had worshipped Yahweh at Sinai before Moses went there. In 1896, at Kurnah, in the funeral temple of Manephtah, were found the words, "Ysiraal is desolated, its seed is not"; this is in a description of this king's victory over enemies in Canaan, and as these words were written before the Exodus, probably there were Israelites in Canaan before the Exodus (possibly left behind after the famine of Joseph).†

If this were so, we can understand Yahweh and Sin having some attributes in common. Sin had been called "the Lord of laws," "he who created law and justice," "the ordainer of the laws of heaven and earth." And Sinai was the place where Moses received God's laws.

* The Rev. H. T. Knight considers that it was not until the time of Isaiah that the higher conception was reached, that Yahweh was not merely a tribal god, but the god of all the world: and he points out that Jephthah regards Chemosh as having a real existence: that Ruth is content to follow Naomi, and cleave to her people and her God: and that David, when driven into exile, conceived himself as in a land belonging to other gods.

† *Vide* Petrie.

Professor Sayce in 1898 discovered in the British Museum a tablet of the period of Khammurabi, in which occur the words "Yahweh is God"; also in the Kassite period (1500 B.C.) occur the words I-au-bani, "Yahweh is creator," and in a letter written about 1450 B.C., found at Taanach, occur the words Akki-Ja-nu—(like Ahijah)—"Jehovah is brother."

Rogers mentions this, and adds that there can be no doubt that the Divine name Jehovah is not a peculiar possession of the Hebrews, but that "coming from outside there poured into it such a flood of attributes as no priest had dreamed of in his highest moments of spiritual insight." Driver says, "the origin of the name Yahweh is still uncertain." In Exodus iii, 13, we read, "thus shall ye say unto the children of Israel, 'I am' hath sent me unto you." This is an E. passage. In Exodus vi, 3 (a P. passage), we read, "by my name Yahweh was I not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." These two passages imply that the name originated in the time of Moses. But in Genesis ii, 4, 5 (a J. passage), we read, "the Lord God (Jehovah, or I am) made the earth and the heavens," and in verses 7 and 8, "the Lord God formed man out of the dust, and the Lord planted a garden eastward in Eden," apparently implying that the name Jehovah came from the creation times.

Nebuchadnezzar's prayer to Merodach (about 606 B.C.), written during the Israelitish captivity, shows striking similarities to Jewish religious thought, "Oh, Merodach, firstborn of the goddess, who didst create me, and hast entrusted to me the sovereignty over hosts of men, accept the lifting up of my hands," and in another prayer, found on a clay cylinder, occur the words, "Oh, Prince, thou that art from everlasting, Lord of all that exists, I the Prince who obey thee, am the work of thine hands."

In the prayer of Assur-nazir-pal I. about 1800 B.C., *i.e.*, five centuries before Moses, Istar is described as "the merciful goddess, who loves justice." He prays that "through her turning towards him his heart may become strong." "Thou didst preserve for me the sceptre of righteousness; thou hast granted unto the faithful salvation and mercy. Look on me with compassion; grant me forgiveness."

The prayer of Lugal-Zaggisi (about 3500 B.C.*), says, "Oh Enlil the king of the lands, may Anu to his beloved father speak my prayer, to my life may he add life, and cause the lands to dwell in security." In a hymn to Shamash the Sun God, first

* Or 2800, according to King.

published by Brünnow, occur the words, "the mighty mountains are filled with thy glance; thy holiness fills and overpowers all lands; at the uttermost points of earth, in the midst of heaven thou dost move; thou dost watch over the inhabitants of the whole earth. Among all the gods of the universe there is none that exceeds thee; who plans evil, his horn thou dost destroy; the unjust judge thou restrainest with force. Thou art gracious to him who does not accept a bribe; who cares for the oppressed, his life thou dost prolong."

Merodach in a hymn is said to be, "he who giveth life and restoreth it; merciful among the gods, who loves to awaken the dead."

In a prayer to Ishtar occur the words, "the fervent prayer of him who has sinned do thou accept, merciful one who accepts sighs." Another prayer addressed to any God against whom the worshipper has sinned says, "the God who is angry with me be appeased—my transgressions are many, great are my sins. My transgressions are seven times seven. Forgive them."

The Babylonian story of the flood is exceedingly like ours. "Oh man of Shuripak, frame a house, build a ship, abandon thy goods, cause thy soul to live, bring into the ship the seed of life of every sort."

The ship was to be as broad as it was high, 120 cubits (in Genesis P. it is 300 × 50 × 30). (In Genesis it was an ark.) It had six decks with seven stories, and nine compartments—bitumen was spread over it for caulking. It was laden with all the man's possessions, silver, gold, the seed of life of every kind, his family, his servants, his cattle, beasts, craftsmen; the ship was launched—a storm came and raged for six days and nights—the ship grounded on Mount Nizir (east of the Tigris) and remained there for six days; on the seventh day Utna-pistim, the Babylonian Noah, let a dove go, and it turned back, there being no resting-place; then he sent out a swallow, and it turned back; then a raven, but it turned not back. He then offers sacrifice on the summit of the mountain.

In Genesis (J.) we read, "I will cause it to rain forty days and nights," Genesis vii, 4 (as compared with the storm above of six days and nights). In Genesis (P.) we read, "the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days (Genesis vii, 24). In Genesis (J.) viii, 6, etc., a raven and a dove were sent forth (not a swallow as above). Professor Driver says that, "the substantial identity of the two narratives, the Hebrew and Babylonian, is unquestionable." It was the god Ea who told Utna-pistim of the coming flood. Professor Hommel points

out that the name Ea was in all probability connected with Jah. Ninep speaks of Ea as the one who knew every event. Boscawen says, "The position occupied by Ea in the classical religious texts approaches very near to that of Jehovah in the Biblical narrative." Merodach was his son, "the protector of good men." In certain Chaldean hymns Merodach appears as the mediator between God and man. He was Asari the good one, and greatly resembles the Egyptian Osiris, the god of the resurrection, and of the dead. The similarity of the correspondence between the relationship between Ea and Merodach, with that between Jehovah and our Lord, is very striking.

Professor Hilprecht recently discovered at Nippur (or Niffur)—identified with the Biblical Calneh—another flood fragment, which he considers is not less old than 2005 B.C. A paper was recently read before this Institute by Dr. Pinches on this fragment. It speaks of building a ship with divisions, into which every beast and bird and Noah's family shall enter, and includes the following passages: "I will loosen—it shall sweep away all men together. On as many as there are I will bring annihilation and destruction—build a great ship—it shall be a house-boat carrying what is saved of life, with a strong deck over it, etc." Canon Driver draws my attention to the fact that this text contains no parallels with the P. portion of Genesis *as distinct from the J. portion*, the supposed resemblances being contained only in Hilprecht's conjectured restorations, and depending on a doubtful explanation of a word *Kumminu*. But Genesis vi, 6, 7, and vii, 4, and Genesis vi, 13, the former a "J.," the latter a "P.," portion of Genesis, are both parallel with this fragment; the former says, "it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth"; and he said, "I will destroy man whom I have created, both man, and the beast and the creeping things, and the fowls of the air—every substance that I have made will I destroy off the face of the earth; the latter (P.) says, "the end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence, and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

The story of Adapa, preserved in the Tel-el-Amarna tablets (1400 B.C.), reminds one of the "Tree of Life" in Genesis (a J. section). Ea had warned Adapa not to accept meat and drink from the gods, because he feared they would slay him: so Adapa would not eat or drink. But Anu says to him: "Why dost thou neither eat nor drink, for now thou canst not live?" So Adapa missed the immortality which Anu had really intended for him.

Among similarities between the Hebrew and Assyrian

languages, as used on the monuments, are the following: "Bintu," daughter, resembling the Hebrew "Banoth," daughters, and the Arabic "Bint." "Khatanu," father-in-law, from the verb signifying to protect, Hebrew "Khatan." "Sibu," grandfather, Hebrew "Sabah," meaning greyhaired. "Panu," a face, Hebrew "Paneh." "Libbu," the heart, Hebrew "Leb." "Samu," heaven, "Samain." "Naru," a river, "Nahr." "Samas," the sun, "Semes." "Udumu," an ape, Adam the man. "Jibu," a wolf, "Zeeb." "Sarru," a king, from the verb signifying to be bright, "Sar." "Melku," a prince, "Melek." "Resu," a head, "Res." "Pu," a mouth, "Pe," etc., etc. "Abil," a son (Sumerian "Ibila"), is the Hebrew Abel.

As regards the code of Khammurabi, this monarch, probably the Amraphel of Genesis xiv, reigned, probably, 2130-2088 B.C.* He was the sixth king of the dynasty reigning at Babylon. His code of laws was discovered, December, 1901, by Mr. de Morgan at Susa. At the upper end of the front side of the diorite stone is a bas-relief representing the king standing in front of Shamash the Sun God, and receiving his laws from him (reminding us of Moses on Sinai). In the prologue Khammurabi states that Bel and Merodach had called him to cause justice to prevail, to destroy the wicked, and evil, and prevent the strong from oppressing the weak. He ends by promising blessings from Shamash on all future kings who maintain his laws: and uttering terrible curses on those who alter them. The code contains no ceremonial law, but is confined to civil and criminal law. Driver considers that Khammurabi may have formulated some provisions, but that on the whole his code arranged and sanctioned previously existing laws. King reminds us that Urukagina of Lagash, when he modified existing laws, was dealing with laws similar to those codified by Khammurabi, which shows that Khammurabi's laws were of Sumerian origin. The following parallels between Khammurabi and the Pentateuch are interesting. Khammurabi says that a false witness is to be punished by the *lex talionis*. In Deuteronomy xix, 19, we read "if the witness be a false witness then shall ye do unto him, as he thought to have done unto his brother." Khammurabi says if something lost is found in another man's possession, witnesses are to declare before God what they know, and the thief is to be put to death. In Exodus xxii, 9, there is the same provision, only that the punishment is not death but double payment. Khammurabi

* King puts him a little later.

says that "a man stealing the son of a free-man shall be put to death." In Exodus xxi, 16, we read that "anyone stealing a man shall be put to death." Khammurabi says that anyone striking a father shall have his hands cut off. In Exodus xxi, 15, he is to be put to death. In the code of Khammurabi when a wife gives her maid as second wife to her husband, if this maid makes herself the equal of her mistress, because she has borne children, her mistress shall not sell her for money; she shall put the slave's mark upon her, and count her among the servants. So in Genesis xvi, 5, Sarai spoke to Abraham, "Yahweh judge between thee and me." And Abraham said, "thy maid is in thy hand, do unto her as pleaseth thee." And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

Regarding the garden of Eden, Professor Sayce says, "that there is a connection between the Biblical story and the Babylonian legend is rendered certain by the geography of the Biblical Paradise. It was a garden in the land of Eden; and Edin was the Sumerian name of the plain of Babylonia, in which Eridu stood. Two of the rivers which watered it were the Tigris and Euphrates, the two streams which we are specially told had been created and named by Ea at the beginning of time." He adds, "years ago I drew attention to a Sumerian hymn, in which reference is made to the garden and sacred tree of Eridu, the Babylonian paradise in the plain of Eden." Dr. Pinches has since discovered the last line of the hymn in which these words occur, "In Eridu a vine or palm, grew overshadowing."

As regards views of a future life, Professor Sayce reminds us that in Babylon there was no mummification as in Egypt, and that so the horizon was fixed at this life. There is no conception in Babylon like that of the Egyptian fields of Alu—no judgment hall where men are to be tried—the Babylonian was to be judged in this world, not the next, and by the Sun God of day. Professor Sayce adds, "the Hebrew sheol is too exact a counterpart of the Babylonian World of the Dead not to have been borrowed from it": and he concludes, "it is to Babylonia that we must look for the origin of those views of the future world, and of the punishment of sin in this life, which have left so deep an impression upon the pages of the Old Testament. The old belief that misfortune implied sin, and prosperity righteousness, is never entirely eradicated, and Sheol long continues to be a land of shadow and unsubstantiality, where good and bad share the same fate, and the things of this life are forgotten."

Regarding the story of Cain and Abel, Professor Sayce (*Exp. Times*, August, 1910) says that, Yahweh being the God of the West Semitic Bedouins, their best offering would be Abel's, the younger brother's, the firstlings of their flocks. The elder brother, resembling the Babylonian master, would offer the first fruits of his produce.

The Sabbath apparently was of Babylonian origin. The Semitic word *sabbatu* (*sabbath*) was derived from *sar*, a heart, and *bat*, to cease or rest. In the sacred calendar of the months Nisan, etc., now in the British Museum, we read, "the seventh is a resting-day to Merodach and Zarpenit, a holy day—a Shepherd of mighty nations changes not his clothes—must not make a washing—must not offer sacrifice—the King must not drive in his chariot—must not eat flesh cooked at the fire, medicine for sickness one must not apply." G. Smith (Ed. Sayce) says, "the antiquity of this text is evident, not only from the fact that it has been translated from an Accadian original, but also from the word rendered prince, which literally means a shepherd, and takes us back to the early times when the Accadian monarchs still remembered that their predecessors had been only shepherd chieftains."

The second part of my subject is an attempt to answer the question "How did these similarities between Babylonian and Hebrew writings occur?" It seems clear from what has been said already that the Babylonian traditions were the earlier: and therefore that they could not have been derived from the Hebrew. On the other hand, there are indications that the Hebrew were not directly copied from Babylonian writings: as is shown by the monotheism of the Hebrew, and polytheism of the Babylonian writings: also the difference in the order of creation in the two accounts precludes direct copying. But the similarities show a common influence: and even in the doctrine of monotheism, the Hebrew seems to have laid the coping stone to a conception, which the Babylonians had been searching after.

There seem to have been three ways in which Babylonian traditions might have reached the Hebrew people: (1) through Abraham. He is said to have come from Ur of the Chaldees, a Babylonian city, sacred to the Moon God. From there he went to Haran, also sacred to the Moon God, and from Haran he came to Canaan. It is quite possible that Babylonian traditions may have begun their Jewish development in the time of Abraham, and that they may have lingered, and been altered during the Egyptian sojourn, and also among the Israelities left in Canaan, according to the belief above mentioned.

But (2) another way in which a knowledge of Babylonian beliefs may have come was through the aboriginal inhabitants of Canaan, on the return of the Israelites from Egypt. It seems quite clear from the Tel-el-Amarna tablets that a widespread knowledge of Babylonian ideas must have been current in Palestine at least one hundred and fifty years before the time of Moses, because these tablets contain letters written from Palestine to the Egyptian king, asking for help against enemies, etc., written in the Babylonian cuneiform script. It seems strange that among these early nations in Palestine the Babylonian language was the vehicle for communicating ideas. It reminds one of the time of our Lord, when Greek was the polite language in Palestine. But if Palestine before Moses was permeated by the Babylonian language, we can understand its being the home of Babylonian religious conceptions. In fact, in view of the Tel-el-Amarna revelation, it would seem strange if there were not a correspondence of ideas between the Mosaic code and cosmogony and the Hebrew. The story of Adapa being among these letters shows that religious conceptions were known in Palestine then.

Bishop Ryle says, "The probability that the Genesis cosmogony is ultimately to be traced back to an Assyrian tradition may be reasonably admitted."

"The ancestors of Abraham were Assyrian. The various creation legends current in Mesopotamia would presumably have been preserved in the clan of Terah."

In a letter which I received from Canon Driver, July 12th, 1911, he says, "Babylonian influence certainly is traceable in the Old Testament, though the extent of it seems to me to have been in some quarters exaggerated. It was mostly, it seems to me, indirect, and it need not, I suppose, have all come in through the same channel, or at the same time."

(3) Traditions may have come through the exile.

Further light may be thrown on this subject by a consideration of the results at which the higher criticism has arrived.

Dr. Sanday is a particularly conservative critic; and he uses the following words with reference to the composition of the Pentateuch. He says, "If we accept, as I at least feel constrained to accept, at least in broad outline, the critical theory now so widely held as to the composition of the Pentateuch, then there is a long interval, an interval of some four centuries or more, between the events and the main portions of the record as we now have it." "In such a case," he adds, "we should expect to happen just what we find has happened.

There is an element of folk lore, of oral tradition, insufficiently checked by writing. The imagination has been at work."

Canon Driver says that, "Two principles will solve Old Testament difficulties: (1) that in many parts of the books we have before us traditions in which the original representation has been insensibly modified, and sometimes coloured by the associations of the age in which the author recording it lived: (2) that often ancient historians merely develop at length in the style and manner of the narrator what was handed down only as a compendious report." Canon Driver also contradicts what apparently Professor Sayce assumed that the belief of the Higher Critics that the Mosaic law (or, to be quite correct, the legislation of P. as a whole) was posterior to the prophets was based on the denial that writing was used for literary purposes in the age of Moses. The Tel-el-Amarna tablets, and the code of Hammurabi, show that it was so used before this age. And Canon Driver adds that critics do not deny that Moses might have left materials behind him, but that the existing Pentateuch is his work.

He also tells us that the age and authorship of the books of the Old Testament can only be determined—so far as this is possible—by the internal evidence supplied by the books themselves, no external evidence worthy of credit existing. As regards the date of the P. portion of Genesis, this writer says: "Though the elements which it embodies originated themselves at a much earlier age, it is itself the latest of the sources of which the Hexateuch is composed, and belongs approximately to the period of the Babylonian captivity." He adds, "the priest's code embodies some elements with which the earlier pre-exilic literature is in harmony, and which it pre-supposes: and other elements with which the same literature is in conflict, and the existence of which it even seems to preclude," and he concludes that "the chief ceremonial institutions of Israel are of great antiquity: but that the laws respecting them were gradually developed and elaborated and in the shape in which they are formulated in the Priest's code belong to the exile or post-exilic period—and were not therefore manufactured during the exile, but based upon pre-existing Temple usage."

An interesting article appeared in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine* of December, 1911, by Rev. E. McClure, in which he gives us information regarding a recent find in Elephantine, Upper Egypt, of certain Aramaic papyri dating from a period between 494 B.C. and 404 B.C. Among them is an epistle addressed by the Jewish colony then existing at Elephantine, to

the Governor of Judaea, a previous one having been sent to the High Priest at Jerusalem, complaining that, their temple having been destroyed by the Egyptians, they could not offer the usual meal offerings, incense offerings and burnt offerings (the terms used for these offerings being equivalent to those used in Leviticus (Mincha, Lebonah, and Olah)).

As it appears that this colony was founded in probably the reign of Psammeticus I., or Psammeticus II. (594-589 B.C. or 659-611 B.C.), it would appear that these offerings were customary from a period preceding the return from Babylon.

Hommel also finds many other apparent evidences in favour of the view that much of the P. code came down from the time of Moses, among them is the similarity between the description given in Exodus xxviii, 17-20, of the dress of the High Priest, and Erman's account of the dress of the Chief Priest of Memphis in the XVIIIth and XIXth Dynasties (shortly before the time of Moses). Erman describes the latter thus: "From the shoulders or neck two parallel rows of cords descend obliquely to the breast; the cords cross one another, and at every point of intersection there is a little ball or a small ornament (the ankh). There are four rows of these ornaments, each of which is composed of precious stones, and there are three crosses and three balls, then three more crosses and three more balls." The passage in Exodus compared with this (chapter xxviii, 17, etc.) says, "Thou shalt make the breastplate with cunning work, of gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, foursquare it shall be, being doubled; and thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones—they shall be set in gold in their inclosings." Hommel calls the similarity an "almost absolute similarity which can scarcely be explained except by assuming that it was borrowed by the Egyptians in the time of Moses." But the resemblance does not seem to me clear enough to justify these words. However, the pre-exilic period shows no indications of the legislation of P. (as a systematic whole) being in operation. The place of sacrifice in P. is strictly limited, and severe penalties are enforced when any but priests presume to officiate at the altar, while in Judges and Samuel sacrifice is offered in places not consecrated by the presence of the ark, and laymen officiate. In P. only Aaron's descendants exercise priestly functions; in Deuteronomy, the tribe of Levi (*vide* Driver).

With regard to the date of Genesis xiv, which narrates the battle of the four kings against five, Hommel argues from the form of the name Amraphel that it must have originated from

a cuneiform text dating from the time of the Khammurabi dynasty, as at that period alone do we find the variants Ammurabi and Ammirabi side by side with Khammurabi. Also that the confusion into which the whole text has fallen, from verse 17 onwards, taken in conjunction with the presence of so many obscure and archaic expressions, is the best possible proof of the antiquity of the whole chapter. "Probably," he says, "the original, which seems to have been written in Babylonian, was rescued from the archives of the pre-Israelitish kings of Salem, and preserved in the Temple at Jerusalem." This theory, however, does not conflict with the higher criticism, as expounded by Canon Driver, which does not deny the antiquity of any of the sources of the Old Testament, but asserts that "the Hebrew historiographer is essentially a compiler of pre-existing documents, and not an original author." This chapter (Genesis xiv) is put apart by Driver as coming from a special source; he also points out that, although the four names in verse 1 correspond more or less exactly with those of kings discovered in the inscriptions, at present (up to June, 1909) there is no monumental corroboration of any part of the narrative which follows. Some poetic fragments discovered by Dr. Pinches narrate inroads of Kudur-dugmal or Kudur-luggamal into North Babylonia, Khammurabi being his opponent. (In Genesis they are described as coming together against the King of Sodom and his allies.) Also a mention is made of a certain Tudkhula identified by Hommel with the Tidal of Genesis. Another inscription mentions Iri-Aku, the King of Larsa (corresponding to Arioch of Ellasar in Genesis); and also Kudur-Mabug his father is called the Prince of Martu (the West).

Professor Hommel is also of opinion that the dynasty to which Khammurabi belonged was South Arabian; and that it had introduced into Babylon a doctrine of monotheism which was of great antiquity, and superseded the polytheism of Babylonia; and that consequently Abraham carried with him to Canaan this higher conception; and he explains the fact that Khammurabi's father bore the Babylonian name of Sinmuballit, and his grandfather that of Apil-sin, by the fact that it was customary to adopt the personal names of the country ruled over. But I am not aware that Hommel is supported in this theory by any distinguished archaeologist. And to my mind his arguments appear forced and unreal.

As regards Deuteronomy, the completion of this book is put by Canon Driver as before 621 B.C., and possibly at about 630 B.C. But he adds that "the bulk of the laws contained in

Deuteronomy is far more ancient than the time of the author himself." Critics agree that neither the J. nor E. portions of the Hexateuch are later than 750 B.C.; most are of opinion that one if not all are decidedly earlier. Driver considers that both may be assigned with the greatest probability to the early centuries of the monarchy.

David reigned about 1000 B.C. Petrie puts the Exodus at 1230 B.C.

As an instance of the higher critical method I may mention here two passages, which show a somewhat late date for some J.E. portions of the Hexateuch. In Genesis xii, 6, Abraham is said to have passed through the land when he came out of Haran unto the place of Sichem; and it is added, "the Canaanite was then in the land." So this passage must have been written after the Canaanite had ceased to be in the land. Genesis xiii, 7, speaks of a strife between Abraham's and Lot's herdmen, adding, "that the Canaanite and Perizzite dwelled then in the land." And in Genesis xl, 15, Joseph in Egypt says to the butler and baker of Pharaoh, whose dreams he interpreted, "For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews." Shechem could hardly have been called by this name in Joseph's time.

I have dwelt on this critical question only so that we might be able to frame some conception to our minds, taking the theory of the Higher Critics as a working hypothesis (and certainly the evidence they produce is extraordinarily convincing), of the periods and modes by which the Babylonian ideas permeated the Hebrew literature. And to make that more clear I now propose to examine the question as to which of these sources (P., Deuteronomy, J., E., or J.E.) contain the greater resemblances to Babylonian writings, so as to guide us in guessing in what way they became appropriated.

In the Priest's Code we find in Genesis i, 2, the word *Tehom*, the deep, corresponding to the *Tiamat* of the Babylonian account. In chapter ii, 2, etc., we read, "God rested on the seventh day, and God blessed the seventh day because he had rested on it." A great part of the story of the flood is also in P.; the story of making the ark, of bringing in every living thing, two of every sort—that the rain began in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month; that it continued on the earth one hundred and fifty days (the forty days of chapter vii, 17, not being a part of P.)—the going out of the ark—the placing of the bow in the cloud.

The Jehovah portion of Genesis contains the second account of the creation, beginning chapter ii, 4, in which man is said to

have been first formed, out of the dust, and placed in Eden, and then afterwards out of the ground God is said to have made every beast of the field, and fowl of the air, and the woman out of man's rib (instead of as in P. both apparently together). In J. (chapter vii, 1-5) clean beasts go into the ark by sevens.

In this account man was said to have been created before the plants or herbs existed. The vegetable and animal world are represented as coming into existence to satisfy the needs of man. Whereas in the P. account (in chapter i) the order is the plants first, then animals, then man. This is more scientific, and doubtless later, if the completion of P. was exilic. Could it have been that during the exile Babylonian and Hebrew traditions were compared; and the former inserted by the later compiler side by side with the older Hebrew one. Both apparently sprang from a common original. But were developed in parallel lines, and then apparently were written in, side by side, without any attempt to harmonize, which certainly speaks highly for the honesty of the compiler.

In a bilingual text—one version being Sumerian, the date of which Professor Hommel puts back to the fourth millenium B.C.—published by Dr. Pinches in 1891, the order of creation agrees with the J. account in Genesis ii—creation of man in it preceding that of the plants and animals. It seems possible that the J. account may have been derived from this early Babylonian tradition, and that the later tradition current at the time of the exile may have originated P.

As regards the Babylonian stories of the flood preserved in Asur-banipal's library, they seem to agree in some particulars with the P. account in Genesis—in others with the J. account. With the former as to the building of the vessel in stories, and using pitch to make it watertight, as to the resting of it upon a mountain, as to a kind of promise that mankind should not so again be destroyed. With the latter as regards the seven days' warning before the coming of the deluge, as to sending forth birds to find if dry land had appeared, as to the offering of a sacrifice with a sweet savour. The story of the garden of Eden in Genesis is a J. story. So is the story of the tree of life, with its resemblance to the Adapa story.

But the question arises, do we not lose our faith in revelation when we admit the derivation of Scriptural stories from Babylonian myths, or traditions. Assuredly not, if we realize what revelation really means. It means the conveyance to the mind and soul of man of spiritual and moral truths, conceived and expressed in terms of man's limited and imperfect knowledge of scientific and historical events.

If we had reason to believe that real spiritual truth could not be conveyed except through the medium of perfect human knowledge, then the discovery of derivation from myth or imperfect tradition might spoil our faith. But this is a wrong conception. Our Lord himself must have been limited in his historical and scientific knowledge, for, if not, why did He sit at the feet of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions: but if His human knowledge was imperfect, much more that of the ancient writers of the Jewish Scriptures. Inspired they were, doubtless: and yet not so perfectly as was the Perfect Man. But as in His case, so in theirs, their inspiration was of things concerning the soul and spiritual life, not of matters which concern the intellect and material things.

But we may go further, and hold that in Old Testament records the writers showed their special and higher inspiration by framing their record into a form which taught nobler and higher truth.* This was notably so with regard to the oneness of God, which comes out clearly in the Hebrew and very dimly, and only occasionally, in the Babylonian records. If men would only clearly perceive and grasp this fact that revelation and inspiration do not convey certain knowledge of any kind to man except that which directly acts on human will, desires and life, many misconceptions would be cleared away. We should no longer seek for the impossible and unrealizable attainment of infallible truth of a non-spiritual kind, the search for which has led into divisions and strife and false pretensions all through the history of the Christian church, and now divides the Christian world. But we should attain that real unity which our Lord prayed for, based upon a common acceptance of common truths, which, however, contain no element at all in them, but that which acts directly on spiritual life.

A clear grasp of this principle would also aid in solving a question now exercising the minds of those in authority in the Church, viz., when and how far is it their duty to inhibit

* In saying this, however, I do not mean to imply that the Babylonian myths and legends were not also a form in which revelation was conveyed. I do not think we have any right to assume that revelation or inspiration are limited to Jewish and Christian writers. Through history, myth, and legend, all nations have expressed truths revealed by God's Spirit to man's spirit. But Judaism and Christianity were higher forms in which these truths were conveyed, as men had been prepared by other teachers to receive these higher truths.

clergymen from teaching and ministrations whose views of Christian dogma differ from those usually accepted as correct. The answer is perfectly simple to those who realize the above principle. Men's reason must be left free to act, reason being a divine gift to man. But if they are led or mis-led by it to believe and teach things *which degrade or spoil spiritual and moral life in man*, then it is the duty of authority to safeguard the deposit of spiritual truth, revealed through Judaism and Christianity. Where authority has so often blundered, and that it has done so was admitted by Bishop Talbot in his article in the *Nineteenth Century* of November, 1911, was in coercing men to accept beliefs which have no direct relation to spiritual life. A man may be quite as good a man if he holds with Galileo that the earth goes round the sun, as he would if he believed, as the Ptolemaic system taught, that the reverse was the case. The modern Roman doctrine of infallibility admits this, because its distinction between fallible and *ex cathedra* pronouncements is simply the same as that between scientific or historical and spiritual truth.

No right-minded churchman will complain of the exercise of authority in matters of dogma, if it is manifestly and clearly guided by this principle.

Another enormous gain following the admission of this distinction would be the confining of men's religious energies to questions of real importance.

It seems to me one of the saddest phases of our modern and mediæval Christianity that we magnify out of all due proportion questions which are comparatively unimportant, and, spending our energies on these, have too little time or strength left to do the real work of our Master, like the Pharisee of old. *E.g.*, the differences between different sections of Christians in dogma and in ceremonial drive out the thought of the duties in which all should join—the spreading of spiritual truth, so as to influence daily life. But the former is the human, the imperfect, the doubtful; the latter the certain, the divine, the important.

All these advantages may come as the direct result of the work done by archæology, science, and the higher criticism. Instead of injuring divine truth, they clear it from the mists of ignorance, superstition, and unreality. Christianity (seen as these sciences show it) is an infinitely nobler thing than it was before, *viz.*, what it was in the time of its Founder, before later accretions destroyed its beauty, reality, and purity.

Another point worthy of consideration is the question how

far the unsettling of old beliefs tends to destroy religion. It is true, no doubt, that much real piety has been built up on doctrines which are scientifically indefensible. But the destruction of these doctrines will not injure religion so far as it is real, *e.g.*, a man brought up to believe in eternal punishment for the individual who has not lived well on earth may be constrained to an unreal kind of religion through fear of consequences; and when he understands that eternal punishment for the individual is not believed by later teachers, he may relapse into worldliness. But if he does he only proves that his religion was not religion, but only an outward semblance of it, and is of no value to man's higher nature. True religion does not live on fear. Or again, if you tell men that God did not write with his own finger on tables of stone, but that Moses taught legal and moral truths which were known in less noble forms long before his time, it will not make the really religious man less religious nor the law of moral obligation less binding, but rather more so.

But one great boon comes from the investigation of these questions—it prepares the world for views which must come home before long, by which men may be led away from true religion.

Is it not better that those who are firmly convinced of the truth of religion should examine into scientific questions, and show how, though these alter the shell, they do not touch the kernel of vital truth, than that the investigators should be men of no belief, who use their science to destroy faith?

DISCUSSION.

Mrs. WALTER MAUNDER said: I have asked permission to speak because the private scientific work on which I have been engaged for the last eight or ten years has led me into the same field of enquiry as that covered by Archdeacon Potter's paper. My work of course had no theological purpose but the purely scientific one of comparing and so dating the astronomical conceptions of various ancient peoples. But in the course of this work, I could not fail to take account of how strong an influence Babylonia had on the surrounding nations; on the Jews among others.

What is the true scientific method of conducting an inquiry into

the influence exerted by one body upon another? Surely it is to take as many instances as we can find wherein that influence is known, and well established, and from them to argue to more difficult and doubtful cases. Now we have the material for making a definite determination of the character and amount of the Babylonian influence; and as it happens, it is with that material that my work has been concerned. First of all, with the cuneiform references to the heavenly bodies, early or late. Next with the works in Greek, written by a contemporary of our Lord, the Great Mage, Teuchros the Babylonian, who exerted a profound influence both on his own countrymen and on the surrounding nations, and through them on the Middle Ages, and so on even down to our own time. Then—in the order of my study—the astronomical references in the Talmud; then similar references in the Apocrypha, and lastly in the Bundahis, that is to say, the Zoroastrian work on the creation. Now these last are of the same epoch as the New Testament writings—and the Apostolic writers were Jews, born, brought up like other Jews, subjected, like them, to the *Zeitgeist*, or Spirit of their Age. Now the spirit of Babylon is the same from the earliest time that has given us any cuneiform inscriptions, right down to Berossos and Teuchros. And also the Spirit of the Old Testament is the Spirit of the New Testament. If then the spirit of Babylonian conceptions inspired the Old Testament, the same spirit should be apparent in the New Testament. But now we can determine what the Babylonian influence should be, for it is not only clear, but paramount in the Jewish and Persian writings contemporary with the Apostolic writings. The Talmud, II Esdras, and the Bundahis, all bear the hall-mark of Babylon, and this hall-mark is incantation and the magic power of number. In cuneiform literature, if we put on one side the business contracts and political annals, then the rest mainly pertains to magic; the very Epic of Creation itself is but the preamble to an incantation. Nineveh is called by the prophet “the mistress of witchcrafts,” and the same is even more true of Babylon in all ages. And this magical element is not incidental to Babylonian conceptions, it is fundamental. In the Creation epic, Marduk himself got his power over Tiamat by the magic spells with which he was equipped by the other gods. And just in the same way, in Zoroastrianism, Ahriman, the evil spirit, is thrown into confusion for 3,000 years when Auhamazsd, the supreme deity, recites the

Ahunavar, that is the twenty-one sacred Avesta words, which begin "When a heavenly lord is to be chosen." This is neither a prayer nor a creed, but a formula, or incantation; so that in the purest religion outside Judaism, an incantation is nevertheless counted as having greater power even than God Himself. The Talmud simply reeks with incantations.

In the Apocryphal book of Tobit, perhaps from a literary view one of the best books in the Apocrypha, we are introduced to both demons and spells. The author of II Esdras, being more intellectual, is great on mystical numbers. But from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of the Revelation there is not an incantation nor a reference to the power of a magic number. The whole of the Bible is clean as driven snow, clean from the Babylonian imprint. To speak of these writings as being influenced by Babylonian conceptions, when there is no trace of Babylonian sorcery in them, is to speak in ignorance of what Babylonian conceptions really were.

The Rev. W. H. GRIFFITH THOMAS, D.D., said: I am afraid the differences between the writer of the paper and myself are too fundamental to allow of any proper detailed criticisms of his paper, but the following points seem to call for special notice:—

1. His view of revelation is seriously open to question and does not seem consistently expressed. On p. 300 he speaks of the conditions under which religion "took its rise," and he distinguishes between the historical setting and the religious conception. This, at once, raises the question as to the origin of religion. Did it "take its rise" from above or below? Is there such a thing as primitive revelation, or are we to assume that religion emanated from man? When all the possibilities have been exhausted it seems essential to contend that Genesis i is either a divine revelation or a human composition. The precise form or channel of the information is unimportant; the real question is as to its *source*. So also on p. 315, revelation is said to mean "the conveyance to the mind and soul of man of spiritual and moral truths . . ." Does not this confuse between *substance* and *form*, between source and channel, between revelation and inspiration? We are not really concerned with the precise conveyance or method; what we need to know is the reality of the spiritual and moral truths conveyed.

2. On p. 300 f. we are rightly told of the remarkable correspondences between Babylonian and Old Testament records. But the differences

have also to be accounted for, and we must endeavour to discover the most likely theory to explain the correspondences. It is impossible that Babylon copied from Genesis, and equally impossible that Genesis copied from Babylon, in view of the purity of the former, and the impurity of the latter. It is hardly likely, or even credible that the Jews copied from their captors, and so late as the exile, especially when other nations had their records of creation centuries before. Why may not both records have come from the same primæval source, with Genesis preserved in its purity by means of the divine superintendence associated with Abraham and his descendants? There is no insuperable difficulty against Abraham having brought the story from his Babylonian home. As to the fundamental differences, how is it that the Babylon story starts with the chaos of Genesis i, 2, and has nothing corresponding to the sublime statement of Genesis i, 1? How is it, too, that there are no ethnic traditions after Babel?

3. On p. 302 it is said that the great difference between the Babylonian and Genesis story is that the former was mainly polytheistic and the latter monotheistic. True, but the *cause* of this great difference needs to be emphasized. How are we to account for a man in Palestine writing as a monotheist amidst the polytheism of all the surrounding nations? Is not divine inspiration required here?

4. While it is not fair to attribute to Archdeacon Potter an endorsement of Eerdmanns' view that polytheism originally dominated all the narratives of Genesis, and that this is still apparent in some passages, it would have been well if some definite criticism of the view had been concluded, because we know how tenaciously the Jews clung to their monotheism and how they scorned every form of polytheism. It is difficult to understand how any trace of polytheism could have been allowed to remain in the Genesis narrative in view of the Jewish belief in that book as part of their sacred scriptures.

5. The note on p. 303 quoting the Rev. H. T. Knight is a familiar illustration of the misconception of the Critical School as to David's exile and its consequences. A reference to Robertson's *Early Religion of Israel*, written twenty-five years ago, ought to have been sufficient to show that David did not conceive himself when outside Palestine as in a land belonging to other gods.

6. From time to time Archdeacon Potter seems to endorse the documentary theory of Genesis, and in particular he discusses the Flood story in this connection. Professor Sayce has long ago shown that the Babylonian Flood story, written ages before the times of J. and P., exhibits marks of both, and hence that the documentary theory utterly breaks down when tested in this way. Dr. Sayce rightly alleges this as a crucial test of the theory. There are other points connected with the Archdeacon's discussion of the Flood which are equally open to question.

7. On the subject of Deuteronomy, the Archdeacon seems to favour the critical view which places the completion of this book as dating from the time of Josiah. This is frankly admitted by both conservative and critical schools to be a crucial and vital issue in the controversy, and the conservative school gladly accepts the challenge, believing that on grounds of pure scholarship alone, apart from all else, the essentially Mosaic date and character of Deuteronomy is beyond all question and the Josianic date is absolutely impossible. This has been recently proved by the Rev. J. S. Griffiths in his *Problem of Deuteronomy*.

8. On p. 314 Archdeacon Potter speaks of the evidence produced by the Higher Critics as "extraordinarily convincing." I can only speak for myself when I say that as a result of reading of critical books of importance I find their position extraordinarily unconvincing, and I have been confirmed in the position of conservative scholarship very largely through the reading of critical works.

9. On p. 315 the Archdeacon regards the so-called creation stories of Genesis, placed side by side without any attempt at harmonization, as speaking highly "for the honesty of the compiler." He does not, however, say anything about the capacity of the editor, still less of the capacity of the readers, to have left these two (alleged) discordant passages side by side. It surely reflects very seriously upon the capability of the editor, who is admitted by all to have brought our present Genesis into unity. Either this, or else the editor must have thought that his readers in all ages would never be able to discover what had been done.

10. The reference on p. 316 to the limitations of our Lord's knowledge is another instance of what seems to me to be the writer's lack of thinking out a subject to its conclusion. Surely limitation or imperfection of knowledge does not imply error. What our Lord

knew He *knew*, and His testimony to the Old Testament involves not only His own power, but the authority of the Father behind Him, Who gave Him every word to speak (John xii, 49).

11. On p. 316 the Archdeacon says that "Revelation and inspiration do not convey certain knowledge of any kind to man except that which directly acts on human will, desires, and life." But he does not tell us how we are to distinguish knowledge of this kind from the other elements of knowledge contained in Holy Scripture. If a Biblical writer is proved to be inaccurate on points where I can verify him, how can I trust him on points where I am unable to verify him? There is much more in the same paragraphs on pp. 316 and 317 on this point which seems to me seriously open to question.

12. Some few years ago Dr. Burney of Oxford argued very forcibly, and, as many thought, conclusively, in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, for the Mosaic authorship and date of the Decalogue. Whereupon Dr. Hastings of the *Expository Times* admitted that if Dr. Burney's contentions were right the critical view of Israel's religion would necessarily fall to the ground.

13. Dr. Sellin of Vienna in one of his recent works said that it is time for the masters of the Wellhausen school to write at the top of their copy-books that there is no valid argument against the Mosaic date of the Decalogue and its religion.

14. Archdeacon Potter refers to Canon Driver's words to the effect that the age and authorship of the books of the Old Testament can only be determined by internal evidence since there is no external evidence worthy of credit in existence (p. 311). I venture to think, that this, to put it mildly, minimises, if it does not overlook, the external evidence of archæology, as well as quite a number of internal features which are not explicable on the critical theory. Does it not count for something that in view of the mass of archæological discoveries during the last sixty years not a single "find" has gone to support any of the fundamental theories of the critical position, while discovery after discovery has gone to support the conservative view? And is it not at least noteworthy that many leading archæologists, like Sayce, Hommel, Halevy, and others have become convinced of the untenableness of the documentary theory, some of them after having endorsed and advocated it? In Genesis x, 22, Elam is associated with Shem, and this is used by Dr. Driver as an instance of the inaccuracy, or at least the

imperfection of the information of the writer. Dr. Driver admits that there is monumental evidence that Elam was associated very early with the descendants of Shem, but considers that this is a point which the writer of Genesis was not likely to know! But as the text clearly implies, this is exactly what the writer really did know, and when Genesis and the monuments agree it seems impossible to maintain the critical position simply for the purpose of justifying the general documentary theory. Again, in Genesis x, 19, we have a reference to Sodom and Gomorrah used to describe a geographical location, and the *prima facie* view of the verse is that it dates from a time when Sodom and Gomorrah were in existence. Now it is well known that these cities were blotted out beyond all knowledge in the time of Abraham, and yet on the critical theory, this verse, which is attributed to J., dates from at least a thousand years after the time when the location of Sodom and Gomorrah was lost beyond recall. Is such a position credible? Does not this, and much more, as adduced by Rawlinson, imply that in Genesis x, we possess materials far earlier than the time of Moses?

15. The fundamental question at issue between the two schools is the historical accuracy and trustworthiness of the Old Testament as it stands. Can we rely upon its presentation of the history of Israel and of Israel's religion? If it is not trustworthy from the standpoint of history it seems unnecessary and futile to discuss its divine authority and inspiration. But if we may assume that in some way or other the Old Testament is divinely authoritative, it is difficult to understand how we can accept this if we maintain that its historical pictures are untrustworthy on matters of fact. Herein lies the fundamental difference between Archdeacon Potter's view and my own. He appears to favour the well-known theory of Wellhausen, but he seems to me to be unconscious of the fact that the world of scholarship has been moving very far and very fast since that theory was propounded. This is abundantly evident from such works as Wiener's *Studies in Biblical Law*; *The Origin of the Pentateuch*; and *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*; Griffiths' *Problem of Deuteronomy*; Beecher's *Reasonable Biblical Criticism*; to say nothing of other works issued in Germany and Holland. Until these and similar conservative works are carefully met and answered we have ample warrant for rejecting the Wellhausen position.

(The Editor has kindly given me the opportunity of carefully

considering, revising and amplifying the remarks I actually made.—
W. H. G. T.)

Rev. J. J. B. COLES, M.A., said: From what sources were the
Babylonian myths and traditions derived?

In the comparative study of ancient religions an all-important
point is the question of origins.

The origin of the religious faith of Abraham and the Patriarch
was the revelation of God which he communicated to them person-
ally and by the Mouth of His prophets since the world began.

Genesis contains the written record of these earlier revelations,
and the oldest signs and symbols of the human race corroborate
these direct revelations and the subsequent written records of
them.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Hebrew believers after them, had
no need to accept Babylonian traditions, and there is no evidence
whatever to show that they were indebted to them for their religious
conceptions, but on the contrary they knew that they were
surrounded by peoples who had corrupted primitive revelation and
who had debased and perverted the true meaning of the earliest
religious signs and symbols through their false system of astro-
theology.

The similarities between Babylonian and Hebrew writings are to
be accounted for by the perversions and corruptions of an earlier
faith—on the part of those from whom Abraham and Isaac and his
descendants were instructed by God to separate themselves.

The promised "Seed of the Woman" would eventually spring from
that Olive Tree of Promise, and to the descendants of Abraham,
Isaac, and Jacob were committed "the living oracles of God."

Abraham doubtless saw through the astrotheology of the
Babylonians and Accadians, as Moses later on saw through the
Egyptian Osirian myths—for he was "learned in all the wisdom of
the Egyptians."

The most fruitful source of Babylonian mythology was the early
perversion of the symbols of the cherubim and the constellation
figures which the patriarchs had mapped out in the heavens before
Babylon became a nation.

These early symbols embodied the prophecies of the Coming
Redeemer and to the perversion of these signs may be attributed
most of the myths and legends of antiquity.

There is not, therefore, the slightest necessity to "admit the derivation of scriptural stories" from Babylonian myths or traditions. It is an anachronism.

The comparative study of religious origins, both from the exoteric and esoteric standpoint, can never be complete unless it includes a knowledge of the origin and migration of the religious symbols of antiquity.

Dr. THIRTLE took the chair on Sir Henry Geary's having to leave and said: It has been suggested that the Hebrew scriptures embody Babylonian traditions, and this has been declared to be possible (1) Through Abraham, who came from Ur of the Chaldees; (2) Through the contact of the Israelites with the aboriginal inhabitants of Canaan, who had previously come under Babylonian influence; and (3) As a consequence of the Jewish exile in Babylon in the sixth century before Christ.

Against this suggestion I raise a bar, at once historical and psychological. Knowledge and reason conspire to render such theorising out of the question. (1) True, Abraham was from the Chaldees' country, but he was not only an emigrant in a physical sense, but one who *came out morally and spiritually*. This fact is on the surface of the story; at the call of God he became "a stranger in a strange land," in order that he might be the progenitor of a special and peculiar people.

(2) As to the aboriginal inhabitants of Canaan, it is quite clear from the history that those of them who were allowed to live were not permitted, as heathen, to share the social and religious privileges of the people of Israel. They were not accorded the rights of citizenship, and intermarriage with them was accounted a sin (1 Kings ix, 20; Ezra ix, 1, 2).

(3) As to the exile, though it was a time of national bondage and sorrow, yet it was an experience which did not subdue the spiritual consciousness of the nation. With eyes stretching toward their own land, the Jews were *in* Babylon, but not *of* Babylon. We have every reason to conclude that, at that time, even as since then, though receiving all and sundry ideas from the Gentiles, the Jews resolutely set themselves against absorbing the *religious* ideas of other nations; that then, as since, they exhibited a spirit of conservative exclusiveness such as no other people has been known to exemplify. It is a trite remark that, while in Babylon, the Jews

were effectually cured of all tendencies to idolatry. True: but what follows? Assuredly this—that at such a time they could not be docile learners in the school of heathen mythology, and so digest such things as, at length, to give them a place in their sacred literature—the most precious possession of the monotheistic nation.

I am constrained to add that both Old and New Testaments make it clear that the Jewish nation stands alone. The Jews are the people of the Book; and it is difficult to believe that they could have played their divinely-ordained part if Babylonian influences had mingled with the springs of their national life. As pointing to Christ, the Old Testament in the providence of God has been invested with a dignity suited to its high purpose and vocation; great honour has been put upon it. In such circumstances we ask, "What can the mind of the flesh in Babylon yield for the service of the Spirit of God?" Having regard to the relation of the Old Testament to Christ, we answer, "It can yield nothing—nothing Prophetic, nothing Priestly, nothing Messianic, as these functions were consummated in Him whom we call Master and Lord."

The CHAIRMAN then put the resolution of thanks to Archdeacon Potter for his interesting paper, and it was carried unanimously. The Lecturer replied and the meeting closed.

(Archdeacon Potter has, on receipt of the following written communications, kindly revised his reply so as to cover the additional points raised.—EDITOR).

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

The Rev. CHANCELLOR LIAS writes:—

The Institute is indebted to Archdeacon Potter for giving it an opportunity of discussing a most interesting and important question.

After claiming the right to criticize the critics, Chancellor Lias complained of their disregard of replies and proceeded:—I once read a critical treatise on the Old Testament by a distinguished critic, which proceeded on the following lines: *This*, we were told, "may be," *that* "must be," something else was "probable" and from these uncertain data a conclusion was triumphantly deduced. So largely is this extraordinary mode of demonstration practised that a man of scientific training once said to me that the stages of critical argument appeared to him to be these: "may be, probably,

must be, was." I have studied modern methods of Biblical criticism from Wellhausen downwards for nearly thirty years, and I have found this description, as a rule, to be perfectly true. The utmost theoretical ingenuity, the utmost industry, is displayed. But seldom have I found anything approaching to a demonstration. And the fact, to which I have already referred, that criticism of results, which is the very breath of the life of scientific research, is regarded rather as an insult to the intelligence than as what it really is, the most necessary road to the establishment of truth.

The present paper is no exception to the rule. In the time allotted to me I can give but a few instances. In p. 301 we are told that "from" the "body of Tiamat were made the sky and heavenly bodies, like the firmament in Genesis and the lights in it." But the firmament and the lights in it are never said to have been made "from the body" of Tehom. Then we repeatedly have such remarks as "this has been attributed" to something or somebody, somebody "thinks" this or that. But with respect, I would point out that we don't want to know what this or that authority "thinks," but how he can prove what he "thinks" to be true.* We are told what "Eerdmanns thinks" in p. 303. But we are not told that Eerdmanns (a more "advanced" critic than Wellhausen) also thinks that the J., E.D. and P. theory of Wellhausen must be given up. Then (p. 306) we are told, *in italics*, that Professor Hilprecht's flood fragment "contains" no parallels with the P. portion of Genesis *as distinct from the J. portion*. But if we are told this, we ought to be told, also *in italics*, that the "Babylonian story of the flood as contained in Mr. George Smith's version of it described in pp. 300, 301, shows us portions of "P.," supposed to be indisputably a post-exilic version of that story, embedded in the J.E. version at a period

* Thus we are told that the Rev. H. T. Knight "considers that it was not until the time of Isaiah that the higher conception (of God) was reached." Jephthah never says that he thinks Chemosh "had a real existence." He only argues with the Moabites on that assumption. Ruth, the Moabitess, at that stage of her existence, was hardly an authority on Israelite beliefs. And it is never said that David "conceived himself" when in exile, "as in a land belonging to other gods." What is stated (1 Sam. xxvi, 19) is that "the children of men" allowed him no share in the inheritance of Israel, but practically bade him go and serve other gods, since he could never worship his own as he was commanded to do.

declared by some competent archæologists to have been *before the time of Abraham*.* For "may be" or "might be" see pp. 309, 310.

Into the question of the priority of one or other of the documents I cannot enter at length. But competent authorities on Theism have lately assured us that the general trend of opinion on that question at present leads to the conclusion that Monotheism preceded Polytheism. And there is also the unquestioned fact that religions, as a rule, tend rather to *decay* than to *develop*. It is not, therefore, open to Biblical critics to take any theory for granted on such a subject. Their contention must be proved by the most rigorous methods of logic.

Canon S. R. DRIVER writes :—

I read your paper with interest. I hope it was well received. Your concluding remarks on the general subject seem to me particularly just, and I hope that their force was generally recognized.

The Rev. R. M. CURWEN writes :—

As regards inspiration, I gather you preclude from its sphere historical truth, facts of science, etc. But this seems limiting the field of inspiration. Is there not an artistic inspiration? Is not the inventor inspired in the application of physical laws? Was not the discovery of evolution an inspiration?

I am quite in agreement with and full of appreciation of your paper.

The Rev. A. IRVING, D.Sc., B.A., writes :—

On p. 300 the author says :—"The Old Testament *teachings* correspond with Babylonian conceptions." They do nothing of the kind. The Old Testament is *monotheistic* in its *teaching* from first to last, as the author recognizes in the second half of the Paper. Here, surely, he confounds the "teachings" of the Old Testament with the *literary materials*, which have served as the medium for conveying those teachings; quite a different thing.

In contrasting the monotheism of the Genesis Story with the grotesque polytheism of the Babylonian myths, the author might

* Sayce, *The Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 33. In pp. 107-113 he shows how P., as separated by the critics, is as distinctly embedded in the Babylonian Epic as J.E. For the date see also p. 301 of the present paper.

have given fuller weight to the *purging process*, in adapting what we may call the "human" materials found ready to hand. It is here that some of us see the "Inspiration of Selection" at work. On this point the writer might do well to make the acquaintance of what Dr. Wace, the Dean of Canterbury, has said in his lecture at University College in 1903; and it is no straining of language, surely, to see this in that pouring into the name of Jehovah that "flood of attributes" referred to on p. 304.

On p. 311 Professor Driver is made to contradict Professor Sayce's assumption "that the belief of the Higher Critics that the Mosaic law was posterior to the prophets was based on the denial that writing was used for literary purposes in the age of Moses." Dr. Wace has dealt incisively with this point in the lecture already referred to. We scarcely need Dr. Driver's assurance that critics have not the hardihood (*after* the discovery of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets and the Hammurabi code) to "deny that Moses might have left materials behind him." So that it comes to this—that Moses may after all have been *substantially* the author of the Pentateuch, although the *literary form*, in which it has come to us, may bear the "cast" of a later age. This is all, I think, that serious research needs to demand. But this reminds one of the stern strictures of Professor Sir William Ramsay, of Aberdeen, on the *methods* of the Higher Criticism, in his most able paper in Vol. xxxix of the *Transactions of the Victoria Institute*.

As regards the general question we may do well to refer to what the Rev. J. Urquhart says in the concluding paragraph of his very able essay, for which the "Gunning Prize" was awarded (*Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, Vol. xxxviii):—

"It is not too much to say that *within the sphere of genuine science* which has concerned itself with scripture statements there is to-day a higher appreciation of the antiquity, veracity, and historic value of the Bible than was to be found in any previous period since the march of modern science began."

The weakness of the author's position seems to display itself in the two concluding paragraphs of the paper, where he (1) falls back upon the unscientific process of *prophesying* what we shall know before we know it, apparently forgetting that "views" are only working hypotheses liable to be corrected by fuller knowledge; and (2) shifts the ground of debate as to the validity of *revealed religion*

(as contained in the Bible) to the question of "religion" in general.

No one, however, can fairly find fault with the Victoria Institute for allowing this matter to come up for discussion, even though the present rather laboured effort may be felt by some of us to be but a very lame apology for the "Higher Critics."

Mr. JOHN SCHWARTZ, Jun., writes :—

Our able lecturer has clearly enunciated the main point at issue (on p. 300) "Unless we were to assume that the historical and scientific setting in which religious conceptions are enshrined was directly and infallibly revealed to men by God;" and this assumption it is increasingly difficult to hold with an ampler knowledge and broader point of view.

He deals on p. 303 with that difficult problem that in Manephtah's reign (the reputed Pharaoh of the Exodus) Israelites were conquered in Canaan; and again on p. 310 to the Tel-el-Amarna tablets which record Amenhetep III.'s conquest of the Abiri or Hebrews in Palestine 150 years earlier. This king married a Semitic princess Thi, and his son introduced a pure monotheistic worship, probably inherited from his mother. Lieut.-Colonel Conder, in his interesting book *The Hittites*, argues very forcibly that the Exodus took place at this earlier date, about 1480 B.C., which agrees with the Babylonian, Assyrian and Hebrew chronology, 1 Kings vi, 1, and asserts that the Sosthic year Egyptian calculations are inconclusive.

Canon GIRDLESTONE writes :—

I have read Archdeacon Potter's paper with surprise. Whatever its object, its effect would be to reduce the historical character of the Bible, which it is the desire of the Victoria Institute to uphold. Its sting is in its tail, for we are told (p. 316) that Christ must have been limited in his historical and scientific knowledge because HE questioned the doctors!

Going back to the beginning, the narrative concerning Eden is dismissed as a J. story (p. 315), and the text of Genesis 2 is read in such a way as to produce the impression that man was made before the animals, the words "first" and "afterwards" being calmly inserted to prove it. Petrie's date for the Exodus is apparently accepted (p. 314), although it is, in the judgment of Canon Cook, Colonel Conder, and others, quite inconsistent with the scripture, and then a reference to Israel lately found, and inconsistent

with Petrie's date, is made to prove that "there were Israelites in Canaan before the Exodus" (p. 303).

The numerous passages about the Flood ignore Mr. Maunder's important view in his *Astronomy of the Bible*. A futile attempt to make Deuteronomy inconsistent with Leviticus is fortified by the words "*vide Driver*." Dr. Driver must be thankful that this formula was not used to support the Archdeacon's astounding derivation of *Sabbath* (p. 309, as "*Sar*, a heart, and *bat*, to cease.") Personally, I decline to be driven from the view (which 50 years' study has deepened) that Bible history is composed by prophetic men from autobiographical and official documents. May I add (i) that we must always allow for transliteration and annotation, (ii) that the later writers used the earlier all the way through, (iii) that there is stratification in the use of Hebrew words and names which will repay examination, (iv) that the books contain a record of what God has said and done, and that they were intended to prepare the way for the manifestation of the Son of God.

Mr. M. L. ROUSE writes :—

The favourite theory of Higher Critics that a monotheistic school was first developed in Babylon and then passed on its tenets to the Hebrews is contrary to the fact that the further back we go in the history of pagan nations before they submitted to Christianity the fewer are their gods, while in some cases it can be proved that they had a belief in one supreme God before they became polytheistic.

The Romans added to their few gods, among others, the Grecian Apollo and Hercules, the Sabine Hercules (*Semo Sancus, i.e., Samson*) also, and the Lydian Cybele. The Egyptians multiplied their gods until they were as numerous as the beasts, birds, and reptiles of the country whose figures they took; and the Indians from simple impersonations of sunshine and storm have now swollen the number to untold thousands.

But further, the earliest large edifice of the Egyptians—the Great Pyramid—contains no idolatrous symbols whatever; yet strange to say the name of one god who was afterwards worshipped has been found combined with that of the builder written upon a stone in one of the relieving garrets as *Khnumkhufu*; and the blending of *Khnum* with other words to form proper names has been found in the Fourth and Sixth dynasties: and ages later, Plutarch tells us that

the Thebans honoured Khnum as the being "without beginning or end," and on that ground refused to pay a tax for the festival of Osiris, while in the inscriptions at Philæ, he appears as the potter-god who had made mankind (Plut. De Is. et Osiris a. 21; Budge, *The Mummy*, p. 182).

Again, whereas from the Fifth dynasty downwards the Egyptian kings all called themselves sons of Ra (the sun-god), and besides, often bore a name compounded with Ra's, before that dynasty, none bear a title in which Ra occurs; while Ra appears in only four out of nineteen names of the Fourth, Third, and Second dynasties, and occurs in no royal name before (cp. *Proc. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, 1908; F. Legge's *Titles of Thinite Kings*, and Petrie, *Hist. Egypt*).

And, lastly, as regards Hommel's argument from the many names ending in *ili* in Arabia, and *ilu* in Babylonia in the time of Khammurabi's dynasty, it was not that Arabia produced monotheism but that the Shemites preserved longer than the Cushites or Accadians the belief in one supreme almighty God. The recent discovery by Delitseh of the name of Ya' Wa coupled with Ilu, God,* upon Babylonian tablets of the same date leads to the same conclusion.

LECTURER'S REPLY.

Most of my critics seem strongly opposed to liberal lines of thought; but Mr. G. P. Gooch writing to me says: "Your address is a cautious and moderate statement of undeniable facts. There is some loose thinking in Delitzsch, Jeremias, and Winckler, but you keep on terra firma." Mr. J. Schwartz, junr., says: "You have clearly enunciated the main point at issue on page 300. It is indeed inspiring to hear one proclaiming the truth rather than the prejudices of a caste." Mr. Curwen, I think I may also look on as in the main on my side.

The object of my paper was (1) to point out certain agreements between Babylonian and Jewish conceptions, and (2) to suggest modes in which these may have occurred. No one has denied the coincidences, but the second point is the one at issue. Dr. Thomas suggests that "both records may have come from the same primæval source," that is a fair alternative, but it hardly accounts for the fact

* See Pinches, *Old Testament in the Light, etc.*, p. 535, 2nd edition.

that these Babylonian conceptions must have been known to Abraham and the inhabitants of Palestine before the Exodus. I suppose they might have come to the Hebrews independently of Babylon, but it is difficult to see how. Others of my critics seem to rely on the belief in a "primitive revelation." I suppose that means that God chose out certain persons on the earth to convey to them certain truths regarding the matters I referred to: viz., the creation of the world, the flood, the eating of the apple, and so forth. I confess I cannot picture the process; nor can I conceive when it occurred. Are we to take Adam's date as 6,000 years ago, or to accept some million years for man's existence on the earth? And if God infallibly revealed these matters in olden time does he infallibly reveal scientific facts now? Butler's argument from the known to the unknown suggests that we may judge the past from the present. Does the eternal God change his ways so vastly at different periods of human life? Then if Gen. i is the record of an infallible revelation why does it state that the stars and sun were created *after* the earth?

One critic says I shake faith in the historical truth of the Old Testament. Nothing can be further from my purpose. I believe entirely in the historical veracity of our sacred books, but not in their infallibility; inspiration is one thing, infallibility another.

Mrs. Maunder rightly contrasts the nobler beliefs of Judaism with the inferior Babylonian ones: yet she somewhat mars her point by omitting reference to the nobler Babylonian expressions which I quoted, and also to such Old Testament passages as "blessed shall he be that taketh thy children and throweth them against the stones."

I agree that it is difficult to understand the Jews adopting the traditions of their captors. But I rather fancy cosmological conceptions may not have appeared to them so important from a religious point of view as to some of us.

I also agree that retrogression is a tendency in religion—an instance of this seems to me to be the burning of witches and of heretics, which really came from the worship of the letter of scripture and tradition. If science leads us back from the letter to the spirit, from barren dogma to living faith, it is doing a great work. Faith surely is not knowledge, but believing in the good, where we do not know.

Mr. Curwen rightly asks for a distinction between the inspiration, *e.g.*, of Tennyson or Darwin, and that of St. Paul and Isaiah. It is difficult to define. Yet I fancy both are real, but one being moral and spiritual stands on a higher platform.

As regards the higher criticism, I gave a few instances of its arguments on pp. 312 and 314, beginning "the pre-exilic period," and "as an instance"—no one has attempted to refute these, so I must still consider them and others "extraordinarily convincing."

Dr. Thomas accuses me of attributing error to our Lord, while he admits "limitations or imperfections of knowledge"; the words I used were: "Our Lord himself must have been *limited* in his historical and scientific knowledge, etc., if his human knowledge was *imperfect*," etc. These are Dr. Thomas's own words, which apparently he accepts. How then does he make good his charge of "lack of thinking out a subject to its conclusion."

I entirely agree with Chancellor Lias's claim to a right "to criticize the critics," and fully appreciate his desire to find the truth. May I again remind him that his belief "that religions tend to decay rather than develop" is an argument for investigation into twentieth-century beliefs.

The following communication from the Rev. JOHN TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S., was received after the foregoing was in print, but at the request of the Council and with the consent of Archdeacon Potter is now inserted:—

Were I to reply fully to this paper I should require not five but fifty minutes; I must therefore put what little I am permitted to say in as few words as possible. Manifestly, if the author is to present to us correct views of "The Influence of Babylonian Conceptions on Jewish Thought," he must have correct views of Babylonian conceptions. As I happen to have read through the whole of the Creation Tablets, the Bilingual Story of the Creation, the Deluge Tablets and many others in the original cuneiform, let me point out a few of the mistakes which the author has made by quoting from prejudiced or untrustworthy sources:—

i. It is not correct to say (p. 301) that Tiamat is "the personification of chaos and darkness." In Tablet I, 4, she is called *Muummu Tiamtu mu-umma-allida-at*, "the Raging Ocean, the female-producer." The idea of "chaos" is neither in the Hebrew nor the Babylonian. It is a Greek word and conception. In the Hebrew, especially,

there is no chaos, but an orderly evolution from a primitive condition of matter.

ii. It is incorrect to say that "from her body were made the sky and heavenly bodies." Her body was said to be cut in two "like a flat fish," one part being used to keep up the waters above, and of the other part no account is given. Merodach is not even said to have "created" any of the heavenly bodies. He is only said to have "fixed the constellations," "established the year," "caused the Moon-god to shine forth," etc. (Tablet V, 1-18).

iii. It is not correct to say that "the Tablets and Genesis agree in putting *the deep as the first existence*." Genesis says that "In the beginning God created the *heaven* and the earth." The tablets contain no such conception as this, and in recording the development of our globe Genesis begins it by saying "The earth was without form and void"—a statement which applies to its nebulous or gaseous condition. The statement that "darkness was upon the face of the deep" applies to an entirely different condition. The Babylonian Tablets speak of Tiamtu, but say nothing about darkness.

iv. It is incorrect to say that "Merodach was originally a solar deity." Merodach was more probably the deified Nimrod and with the imperial ascendancy of Babylon became the chief of the Babylonian pantheon. He had some of the attributes assigned to him of Enlil, who is sometimes called "the older Bel." The fact that he armed himself with the net, the hunter's weapon, to catch the old goddess, Tiamat, confirms this identification with Nimrod, "the mighty hunter before the Lord." There is not a single sentence in the whole of the tablets which justifies his identification with the Sun-god. He asserts his authority over the heavenly bodies which already exist. If he is the personification of anything at all it is of the "firmament," dividing the waters above from the water beneath as in Gen. i. But the attempt to explain Babylonian religious conceptions by astronomical myths has by M. Jastrow and others been carried to an excess not warranted by the records.

v. I do not know where our friend got the idea (p. 301) that "Another tablet describes the *gods* calling forth mighty monsters, the cattle and wild beasts by Ea." In Tablet II, 26-30, Tiamat is described as creating monstrosities such as "the monster serpent," "the raging dog," "the scorpion-man," "the fish-man," etc. In the bilingual tablet Marduk is said to have created domestic cattle such

as "the cow and her young, the steer, the ewe and her lamb, the sheep of the fold," etc.

vi. It is at least misleading to say, "In the sixth tablet, which was published, I think, for the first time by Mr. King, the creation of man is narrated," etc. A portion of the contents of the tablet, as the author admits, has been long known from the writings of Berosus. But what we owe to Mr. King is the publication of a fragment which does not even contain half-a-dozen complete lines, but with fractions of about twenty more lines—a very different thing from saying, "the tablet has been published." Fortunately this fragment confirms the statement of Berosus that it referred to the creation of man, but it adds nothing to our knowledge.

vii. There is no foundation whatever for connecting anything in these tablets with the Fall of Man (p. 302). The author has followed an old mistranslation of a fragment which was at first thought to refer to the Fall, but was afterwards identified by Dr. Pinches as constituting lines 130–138 of Tablet III, and describes a feast of the gods which seems to have ended in their intoxication. The lines are imperfect, but this is certain, "Bread they ate, they produced wine . . . greatly did they linger (?), their spirits rose."

viii. In quoting the inscription of Meren-ptah, "Yisrael is desolate, its seed (which may be read 'crop') is not," he adds, "this is a description of this king's victory over enemies in Canaan," and concludes that "probably there were Israelites in Canaan before the Exodus." But the allusion to "Yisrael" is preceded by the expression "Devastated is Trhenu," or Libya, which was not in Canaan but Africa. Moreover, the inscription was not dated until the fifth year of the king's reign, and the name "Israel" might well have been used for other Hebrew-speaking people. The Canaanites and Moabites spoke Hebrew, and Joseph speaks of himself as "stolen out of the land of the Hebrews."

ix. May I point out another mistake? On p. 309 the author says, "the Sabbath apparently was of Babylonian origin," and proceeds to quote a translation from tablets published in *W.A.I.*, Vol. IV, pp. 32 and 33, though he does not tell us this. By these tablets we learn that the division of days into seasons is of very ancient origin. But the quotation he gives us has nothing to do with the Babylonian *shabathu*, which was the name of the fifteenth day of the month

only. His quotation refers to the *seventh* day of the month. By the Semitic Babylonians the seventh, fourteenth, nineteenth, twenty-first and twenty-eighth days of the month were named *umu limnu*, "an evil day." But there is no evidence that business was suspended. We have contract tablets dated on all these days. The fifteenth day of the month was sacred, but the restrictions the author quotes appear to have been imposed on the king only by the priests. The name *sha-bat*, meaning "middle rest" or "heart rest," appears to indicate that the word was originally astronomical and was applied to the day when the moon was at the middle of her course through the heavens, and after waxing was supposed to rest before waning.

These are by no means all the mistakes the author has made. On p. 314 he does not appear to perceive that "the Canaanite was then in the land," Gen. xii, 16, means that the Canaanite had then settled in the land, and therefore is no proof that it was written after the Canaanites had been expelled. His statement, also, that the latter part of Gen. xiv is in confusion "from v. 17 onwards" he makes no attempt to prove. The supposed confusion I have never been able to discover.

The author confesses that he has no expert knowledge of the subjects with which he deals—subjects which needed very exact expert knowledge. It is unfortunate also that whilst abounding—indeed, consisting almost entirely of quotations, excepting when he quotes some fifteen or twenty times from Professor Driver, who is not an archæologist, and cannot read a line of cuneiform inscriptions, he so seldom tells us whence his quotations are taken. Some of them I happen to know come from sources of very little value in the light of more recent discoveries.

Time and space will not permit me to add more. I can only say how greatly I regret, with all my respect for the author, to be able to say little or nothing in favour of his paper.