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his studies in a philological community. And the chief point is, that such as could not avail themselves of a long residence in a transatlantic country, would find here a place where they could, by means of theoretical and practical exercises, improve the classical learning acquired in the colleges. Study and the recitation room alone may raise to excellence the one who is sincerely and cordially attached to classical studies, and this has been the case here, though it must be allowed that such remarkable men are at any place or time only exceptions. On the other hand, it is obvious, that a circle of students preëminently devoted to philology, and of professors bound to promote the learning as such, and not to teach it as an instrument of liberal school education, would soon become the hearth, from which the flame of classical studies, once kindled and continually fed, would be likely to light and to warm the whole country.

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## ARTICLE VIII.

### COMMENTARIES ON THE SCRIPTURES.

It is our principal object, in the following Article, to communicate some information in regard to a few of the more important and recent commentaries on the Scriptures. It will not be necessary to refer to expositions by English and American authors, e. g. Henderson and Alexander on Isaiah, Henderson on the Minor Prophets, Stuart on Romans, Hebrews, and the Apocalypse, etc., which are well known and highly esteemed. We shall confine ourselves, for the most part, to commentaries written in Germany, and in the Latin and German languages. Of these in respect to size, there are three classes, 1. The commentaries which are compressed into a narrow compass, by rejecting all superfluous words, by using many abbreviations, and by giving only the substance of the thought, an example of which is De Wette's work on the New Testament; 2d. The exhaustive commentaries, in which all important topics and sometimes those which are not, are handled at length, and with all fulness of learning, of which Tholuck upon the Sermon on the Mount, Hengstenberg on the Psalms, Baur on Amos, and Delitzsch on Habakkuk, are instances; 3d. Commentaries of an intermediate size, where no special effort is made to compress the materials on the one hand, or to exhaust every topic on the other. Meyer's Commentary on the New

Test. hits perhaps this happy medium. The first and second classes are the most useful to the experienced critic and scholar, the last to the general reader.

## I. OLD TESTAMENT.

### *Extended Commentaries.*

1. The Compend of E. F. C. Rosenmüller. The full title is, *Scholia in Vetus Testamentum in Compendium redacta*, Vol. I.—VI, 8, Lipsiæ, 1828—36, published by Barth. Vol. I. contains the Pentateuch, II. Isaiah, III. the Psalms, IV. Job, V. Ezekiel, VI. the twelve Minor Prophets. The author was born Dec. 10, 1768, and died in Leipsic, Sept. 17, 1835. He was professor in the university of Leipsic from 1795 till his death. He was the author of numerous writings in relation to the Old Testament and the eastern world generally. His larger Scholia, from which the Compend was made, consist of eleven parts or twenty-three volumes, 1788—1835. The portions not embraced in the Compend are Jeremiah, the writings of Solomon, Daniel, Joshua and Judges. It is presumed that there will be no further effort to abridge the larger work. The retail price of the six volumes of the Compend in Germany is about \$16. A deduction, however, of twenty-five per cent is made from this sum. It can sometimes be found at the antiquarian bookshops at a still cheaper rate. We procured a copy of the volume on Job, well bound, at eighty cents. The characteristics of this author are so well known that it is hardly necessary to refer to them. The commentary may be regarded as a valuable compilation from the earlier interpreters, both ancient and modern, made in general with sound judgment. How much he is indebted to other authors does not appear from his pages. It has been stated that a considerable part of his comments on the Minor Prophets are a translation from Jerome. His extensive knowledge of eastern antiquities enabled him greatly to enrich his works from this source. These illustrations well expressed and pertinent, constitute one of its most valuable features. In power of combination and happy arrangement, he has been excelled by few. The principal defects of the work are these. Since 1836, when the last volume was published, an immense amount of light has been thrown upon scriptural topography, antiquities, etc., and any commentary printed before 1836, especially on the Old Testament, must be quite deficient. The work is also wanting in thorough analysis of the contents of the books, in the comprehension of them as a whole, in the exhibition of the mutual relations of the parts. The author exhibits no profound insight into the great questions which are constantly occurring,

e. g. the Hebrew idea of the soul, the nature of God's moral government as exhibited to the Hebrews, the nature of prophecy, etc. In other words, the theological element is nearly wanting in his writings. Consequently, the exposition of the profounder and more spiritual portions of the Old Testament are superficial and unsatisfactory. He is, indeed, more sober and evangelical, e. g. in his Messianic interpretations, than many of his countrymen; yet, it is to be feared, that he had but little congeniality of spirit with the truths which he attempted to illustrate. Still, his Compend will doubtless, for a long time, retain much of its value. It contains an excellent summary or condensed report of a vast amount of reading. The style of the work is worthy of high commendation. For further remarks on Rosenmüller, see *Bibl. Repos.* III. p. 151, and *Bib. Sacra*, I. p. 361.

2. *Commentary of Maurer.* This commentary, as that of Rosenmüller, is in Latin. The full title is: "Commentarius grammaticus criticus in Vetus Testamentum in usum maxime Gymnasiorum et Academicarum, Lips. F. Volckmar." Vol. I. contains all the historical books from Genesis to Job, and also Isaiah, Jeremiah and Lamentations, 8vo. 708, and was published in 1833. Vol. II., including the remainder of the prophets, Ezekiel—Malachi, was published in 1838—40, pp. 745. Vol. III., embracing the Psalms and Proverbs, pp. 530, was published in 1838—41. Vol. IV. Section I, containing Job, pp. 288, was published in 1847. Section II, completing the Old Testament, i. e. Ecclesiastes and Canticles, was printed in 1848. Maurer is a Leipsic scholar, and is known by his "*Practischer Cursus über die Formenlehre d. Hebraisch. Sprache*," 1837. The last volume of the commentary is by Augustus Hilgstedt, a pupil of Prof. Tuch and Fleischer of Leipsic, Maurer having been unable to complete the work, on account of some private reasons. The fourth volume, if it does not exhibit equal tact and ability, is constructed on the same plan, and carried through in the same spirit with the volumes by Maurer. This commentary has the advantage over Rosenmüller's Compend in the following particulars; 1st. It embraces the entire Old Testament; 2d. The latter part is brought down almost to the present time, and avails itself of recent investigations; 3d. In exact grammatical knowledge. Perhaps this is its most marked characteristic, and it greatly adds to its utility, not only for the beginner, but for the advanced student. All true interpretation is founded on grammar, and the genuine scholar delights to see these numerous syntactical references to Gesenius and Ewald; 4th. greater independence of judgment, less reliance on his predecessors, and more exact weighing of evidence, adducing the results rather than the process of inquiry. In this last particular, he followed the rule of G. Hermann: "*Quid prodest enim enu-*

merare quae tu quidem pervestigare debueris, sed pervestigata cognoveris ad propositum inutilia esse;" 5th in price. The whole sett costs in Germany from five to six dollars. Unhappily the book is less evangelical than that of Rosenmüller. We oftener meet with statements, which we are compelled to reject. No one would look to Maurer for exposition in its practical and profounder sense. Baur on Amos, p. 162, commends Maurer, as having exhibited in his comments on that prophet, grammatical accuracy and clear exhibition of the sense of the words, though he neglects the critical element, and sometime makes the explication of difficult passages too easy. It should also be said that the commentary on the historical books from Genesis to Esther, is far too brief to be satisfactory, the whole being embraced in 250 pages.

3. The Condensed Commentary. This is in German, and the full title is "Kurzgefasste Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament." The following have appeared; vol. I, containing the Twelve Minor Prophets, 1838, by F. Hitsig, professor in Zurich: II. Job, 1839, by L. Hirzel, formerly professor in Zurich; III. Jeremiah by Hitsig, 1841; IV. Books of Samuel 1842, by Otto Thenius, Diaconus in Dresden; V. Isaiah, 1843, by A. Knobel, professor in Giessen; VI. Judges and Ruth, 1845, by E. Berthean, professor in Göttingen; VII. Proverbs by Berthean, Ecclesiastes by Hitsig, 1847; VIII. Ezekiel by Hitsig, 1847; IX. Books of Kings by Thenius, now in press. The retail price in Germany is about 11 Thaler for the nine volumes. The customary discount being deducted, the cost in Germany would be about \$7. Five or six additional volumes will probably complete the Old Testament. Coming from a variety of sources, this work is of course characterized by various degrees of merit. Knobel's Isaiah, so far as philology is concerned, is probably the most thorough and satisfactory of the many works which we have on that prophet. Hitsig remarks that he has earnestly sought to give an objective exposition. To that end he has kept his eye, before all things else, on the usage of the language, without becoming a slave to it, and has consulted etymology only when without its aid he could not expound the meaning. The main characteristics of this series may be stated as follows; 1, Exact historical knowledge or a reproduction of preceding scenes and events bearing on the topics in hand. "I have taken earnest pains," says Hitsig, "to make myself at home in the circumstances and views of a world lying far back and from these, in accordance with a moral analogy, to seize on the author's mode of thinking, and then to search out, exhibit and estimate the value of his words." Of the same tenor are the remarks of Berthean, Knobel and Thenius. 2. A careful attention to the state of the text; this is particularly true of that of Jeremiah and of the books of Samuel. Thenius speaks of having compared the Masoretic text of Samuel four

times, word for word, with that of the Seventy. 3. A careful exhibition of the argument or general course of thought, the mutual relations of the parts, etc. This is a marked characteristic of Knobel. 4. Sound lexicographic and grammatical knowledge. Special pains are taken to investigate the meaning of particular difficult words and phrases. The authors were thoroughly trained in the best critical schools of Germany. There is, however, so much effort at condensation that we are sometimes left in doubt in regard to the author's meaning. This exceeding brevity tends also to make the style hard and repulsive. If the compressing process is carried too far, the book becomes a dry skeleton, fit only for a syllabus or text-book for the teacher. We think too, that none but Germans would print the details of various readings, and discussions on text-criticism in the body of a commentary. They would be reserved for a special work or for an appendix. We need hardly say that these commentators, though professing independence, are more or less infected with the critical tastes and opinions which characterize many of their countrymen. They are advocates, more or less, of the theories in regard to the origin of the sacred books, their inspiration, etc., which, we think, all men of sober views and of true science will regard as rather specious than solid. Sometimes, however, they allow the spiritual and Messianic element, and even vindicate it with ability; e. g. Hitsig on Micah 5: 1, remarks, "Though Micah gives expression to obscure, and mysterious matters, yet by 'She that is to bear,' he can only mean the mother of the Messiah."

4. The Commentaries of Ewald. Die Poetischen Bücher des Alten Bundes, are in four volumes, Göttingen, 1836—40. Vol. I embraces a treatise on Hebrew Poetry, and remarks on the Psalms; II. a translation of the Psalms with notes; III, the book of Job; IV. Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Die Propheten des Alten Bundes, are in two volumes, and include the Minor Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

It is hardly necessary to characterize the works of Ewald, as they are ill fitted for popular use, having had but a small sale even in Germany. No one will deny that he has a profound acquaintance with the Hebrew language, large stores of oriental knowledge, much experience as a biblical critic, power of original investigation, a better taste and a more appreciating imagination than many of his countrymen. He is less skeptical too, than some of the recent critics. Baur on Amos, p. 162, commends Ewald for his "vivid representation of the prophets in their entire, manifold nature and works and by the clear exhibition of the whole *organism* of their writings." We must, however, add that, to a foreigner at least his style is very involved and difficult. Many of his theories are more remarkable for acuteness than solid judgment; his method of dislocating and rearranging many portions of the Old Testament seem to us to be

violent and eminently unscientific. His self-reliance and contemptuous treatment of almost all other biblical philologists are proverbial.

*Commentaries on single books.*

1. Tuch on Genesis. The author is professor of theology in the university of Leipsic, and has the reputation, as we learn from a friend who attended his instructions, of being a very accurate and accomplished Hebrew scholar. Ewald speaks of him as "possessing learning in the Old Testament sciences in the highest degree fundamental and independent." His commentary on Genesis, so far as philology, antiquities, etc., are concerned, is perhaps the best which we have on the book. His theology, general principles of criticism, etc. would find few advocates in this country.

2. Hengstenberg's Contributions. Beiträge zur Einleitung ins A. Test., Vol. I. on the Genuineness of Daniel and the Integrity of Zechariah; II. and III. on the Authenticity of the Pent. This work is one of the ablest and most important which has ever appeared on the authenticity of parts of the Old Test. They are about to be translated and printed at Edinburgh, in Clark's Foreign Theological Library. The substance of his treatise on the Prophecies of Balaam, may be found in the B. Sacra III. pp. 347, 669. These works are largely of an apologetic and polemic character, a vigorous protest against rationalism and, for the most part, successful vindication of the divine authority of the portions of Scripture in question. Hengstenberg has not that candor and fairness towards opponents which the reader desires. His arguments sometimes have more of acuteness and a lawyer-like dexterity than of solidity and force.

3. Keil on Joshua. Commentar über das Buch Josua, von K. F. Keil, Erlangen, 1847, 1 vol. 8vo. pp. 411. The author is professor of Exegesis and Oriental Languages at the imperial university at Dorpat in Finland. His general principles may be learned from the following extract from his Preface: "The historical books of the Old Test. in general have been unhappily too much neglected, so that every effort in this field must first and specially contend with false and perverted views, which are directly at variance with the spirit of the biblical revelation, must clear away the many errors widely spread in consequence of the spiritless handling of the Old Test. history; and hence can but pave the way for a theological and practical interpretation, rather than furnish a complete one. With the rejection of the revelation of the Old Test., rationalism has been compelled also to reject its history, since this history is, and declares itself to be, nothing else than the narrative of the Divine Revelation unfolding itself in the course of ages. To the rationalist, the historical books of the Old Test., as writings which lay claim to historical truth, have lost all value, all signifi-

cance, so that now only criticism can busy itself with them and resolve their historical contents into myths and *sagas*. In this process, a small residuum of inorganic historical material remains as a muddy sediment, which cannot be removed, but defies all attempts to construe from it a connected history of the Israelites, and at best allows only of a fancy picture, without truth and life, as the last of these attempts, undertaken by Ewald, strikingly shows." "To break up the reign of rationalism in the Old Test., to confute the wide-extended prejudices which have become formal articles of faith, and to help to promote the true understanding — quickened by faith — of the Old Test. is, accordingly, the aim and design of this commentary, as it was of my earlier one on the Books of the Kings, which shall be followed, God willing, by a similar work on the remaining historical books of the Old Test." The commentary on Joshua is prepared with much care, and with the advantage of the latest geographical and other helps on Palestine, and is highly commended by competent judges, as an able and satisfactory book.

4. Hengstenberg on the Psalms. This work is contained in five volumes, in the original German; price for the whole, about \$7.00; and in three thick octavo volumes in the English translation, published in Clark's Foreign Theological Library, price about \$8. The characteristics of this writer are well known to our readers. His commentary on the Psalms is one of the latest, and is doubtless the best which has ever appeared on this portion of the Bible. If any proof of this were needed, it may be found in the fact that Lengerke of Königsberg, a distinguished rationalist scholar, in his Commentary on the Psalms, is largely indebted to, and in not a few places has almost servilely copied, Hengstenberg. The greatest fault of the author is his prolixity. The commentary might have been included in two, or at the most in three volumes. Much of this copiousness is caused by large quotations from Luther, Calvin, and other well known authors. We understand that it is the intention of two American scholars to condense the substance of Hengstenberg's commentary and publish it in one volume, adding such philological and exegetical notes as may be desirable. In making this abridgement, they will use the new German edition, the first volume of which has just appeared. Thus the results of the latest philological inquiries on this most interesting part of the Bible will be laid before the public in connection with a commentary which is eminently in keeping with the spirit of the original.

5. Hävernick on Ezekiel. This is in German, and comprised in one volume, pp. 757, price, \$2. Prof. Tholuck mentioned to the writer that he considered it the best commentary which we have on this difficult prophet. Hävernick was one of the most eminent men of the evangelical school in Germany, and spent many years in an earnest and successful



study of the Old Testament, some of the fruits of which have appeared in his Introduction to the Old Testament, his Commentaries on Ezekiel, Daniel, etc. In connection with his exposition of Ezekiel, that of Hitzig, before mentioned, may be profitably used.

6. Stuart on Daniel. The long promised commentary of Prof. Stuart on Daniel is passing rapidly through the press. It will be comprised in one volume, and will be anticipated with much satisfaction by the student of the prophecies.

7. Baur on Amos. "Der Prophet Amos, erklärt von Dr. Gustav Baur, Giessen, 1847, pp. 452," is one of the most copious and exhaustive expositions which we possess. The author is now, we believe, professor of theology at Giessen, and is not to be confounded with the famous Dr. von Baur of Tübingen. An Introduction of 162 pages discusses the nature of prophecy, its historical development, the personal relations of Amos, his times and contemporaries, style, state and history of the text, commentaries upon the prophet, etc. Then succeed a translation, the commentary, and two indexes. The author speaks of having been employed on his labor half of Horace's nine years, and of having several times handled the prophet, in various aspects, in exegetical lectures. He also speaks of having paid particular attention to the Rabbinical commentators. "In this labor," he says, "the conviction has fastened itself on me anew, that to the dividing and perplexing question, which at present is often propounded with great confidence: "Free science *or* firm Christian faith?" the only true answer is: "Free science *and* firm Christian faith." "The severest historical investigation, even in apparently external and small matters, shows ever more clearly, how all things must serve to prepare the way of the Lord." The author appears to have performed his work with great conscientiousness and ability. It will be found eminently useful for the discussion of the difficult passages in this prophet, and for the care with which many words and phrases are historically and philologically investigated. At the same time, on some of the less difficult passages, it is unnecessarily prolix.

8. Delitzsch on Habakkuk. "Der prophet Habakkuk. Ausgelegt von Franz Delitzsch, Leipzig, K. Tauchnitz, 1833, pp. 208." This belongs to an "Exegetical Manual of the Prophets of the Old Testament," by Delitzsch, now professor in the university of Rostock, and Paul Caspari, professor in the university at Christiania. The only volumes yet published are this by Delitzsch, and one on Obadiah, 2d edition, and part of an Introduction to Isaiah, both by Caspari. These commentators are Leipzig scholars and decidedly evangelical. Delitzsch has written a History of Hebrew Poetry, and Caspari an Arabic Grammar. The Commentary on Habakkuk is beautifully printed in a thin octavo, crowded with matter. The price is about \$1. An Introduction considers at length the

following topics : name of the prophet, biographical relations, times of the prophet, and list of commentators. Then follow the translation, a copious commentary, and an appendix. The author, we believe, is of Hebrew descent. He has made extensive and often very happy use of the Jewish expositors. As a specimen of a thoroughly philological, historical, exhaustive, and evangelical commentary, it is worthy of the highest commendation.

We may subjoin in our next No. some remarks on the New Testament commentators.

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## ARTICLE IX.

### NOTICES OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

#### I. THE GORGIAS OF PLATO.<sup>1</sup>

It is a fortunate circumstance for the influence of classical education in our country, that such a book as Plato's *Gorgias* should be introduced into our college courses. It is well in our teachers to deviate from the beaten path of the English schools and universities, and to choose from the abounding treasures of ancient wisdom, such portions as are best suited to our own peculiar condition and our educational wants. For instance, in our country, as in the republics of Greece, our young men need to be guarded against the specious sophistries of expediency in politics, of pleasure in morals, and of skepticism in religion. We have among us treacherous guides in the conduct of national affairs, false teachers in philosophy and morals, who tempt the passions, as did the Sophists of old, by proclaiming the sovereignty of the instincts, and doubters and deniers, who are doing their best, under cover of a deceptive theological science, to undermine the foundations of Christian faith. The two former are exactly analogous to the political and sophistical lecturers of ancient Greece ; and the latter are strikingly like them in the leading features of their character, and in the general principles upon which they proceed.

The *Gorgias* of Plato meets all these assailants, except the special foes of Christianity, better perhaps than any other ancient or modern work. Nothing in antiquity rises to an elevation so nearly approaching that of Christianity. In the reasoning of Socrates on justice, temperance, and judgment to come, we almost seem to hear an apostle preach ; and we cannot help imagining to ourselves, with what joy so earnest a soul would

<sup>1</sup> The *Gorgias* of Plato : chiefly according to Stallbaum's text ; with notes. By T. D. Woolsey. Cambridge : James Munroe & Co. New edition. 1848.