

ARTICLE VII.

CRITICAL NOTES.

"THE SOURCES OF THE HEXATEUCH."

It is impossible to do justice to this book¹ without making large allowances for the extraordinary mentality of the advocates of the documentary criticism. No careful and impartial person who examines their work critically can fail to be impressed with the fact that they stand on a different plane from ordinary mortals, and that their initial assumptions exclude the methods by which in all scientific inquiries truth is sought and established. The rest of us would not dream of taking up definite attitudes on disputed points without satisfying ourselves of the soundness of what we proposed to state, but a higher critic feels himself absolved from any such duty. Indeed, he will go further, and make statements that are entirely contrary to fact on matters where there is no dispute. This must be the explanation of the paragraph on page 15:—

"Specific mention should be made of Wiener and Dahse, who hold that the analysis is impossible on account of the uncertainty of the MT (Hebrew text of the OT) as compared with the LXX (Greek translations). They insist that the LXX proves the use of the divine name to be no safe criterion for the separation of the sources (which critics would generally admit). But Wiener and Dahse have not published a systematic study of the analysis, so that their views are not accessible for the present purpose."

How far is the last sentence true? "The Origin of the Pentateuch" was translated into German by Dahse, and con-

¹The Sources of the Hexateuch, J, E, and P. in the Text of the American Standard Edition, according to the Consensus of Scholarship. Edited with Introductions and Notes. By Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Ph.D., Professor of Ethics and Religion in Wesleyan University. New York: The Abingdon Press. 1918. \$3.00, net.

sequently represents in large measure the views of us both. This is entirely ignored, as are, also, my "Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism," "Pentateuchal Studies," "Studies in Biblical Law," and all my papers in the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* and other Reviews to which Dahse refers so frequently in his writings. So, too, are all my articles in "Murray's Illustrated Bible Dictionary" and "The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia," except only the article "Pentateuch," which Brightman quotes. If he has read the whole of that article he has had ample notice of the existence of a body of writings which would have made it impossible for any impartial seeker after truth to write the paragraph cited.

A volume of this kind ranges over too many points to be dealt with exhaustively in the course of a critical note, and it is the less necessary to treat them in detail because Brightman will find that the foundations of his positions have been utterly demolished in the writings named. His light-hearted ignorance of my work is so thoroughgoing that he apparently thinks that I have published nothing about Skinner's "Genesis" or Driver's 1914 edition or McNeile's "Exodus"¹ or Sellin or Steuernagel! With Skinner's reply to me and my rejoinders he is, of course, equally unacquainted. His attitude, therefore, is chiefly interesting for two reasons: On the one hand, it shows how completely writers of his type allow themselves to be dominated by a few authors and technical journals without ever attempting to consider any other side of a case. On the other, it proves that, given a sufficiently resolute policy, even they can be made to hear some faint echo of the truth; for, though he is unacquainted with the controversy in which Skinner was the protagonist and of the part played in it by the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA*, he has somehow managed to discover that it is dangerous to rely any longer on Astruc's clue. He even quotes with approval a German suckling-scholar who 'calls dependence on this criterion the "baby-shoes" of criticism that need to be taken off.' Considering the rôle it has played in Biblical criticism, the posi-

¹ See the *Churchman*, 1908, pp. 664-675 (London: Elliot Stock).

tion now taken up by the documentary theorists is sufficiently gratifying. The truth is that they were unanimously and irretrievably wrong for a century and a half, and dare not face the consequences. Another pleasant feature is the fact that for the first time we are presented with a definition of what is meant by "scholars" and an admission that not all "scholars" are agreed.

"There are many intelligent and educated Christians—even some scholars—who do not accept the critical analysis, with its denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. How, then, can it be said that 'all scholars agree' on the results?"

"By a scholar or a critic in this book is meant one who (1) has made an expert and intensive study of the problem of the Hexateuch, being familiar both with the Hebrew text itself and with the range of scholarly discussion on all sides of debated questions; and (2) has published his results in monographs that have been recognized by scholars in general as worthy of attention. Practically no such monographs have been recently published by scholars that do not accept the critical standpoint.

"By the expression 'all scholars agree' is meant that the scholars whose works have been consulted (except Eerdmans and his school) are at one in support of the opinion in question save perhaps for possible variations in minor matters that do not affect the significant content of the documents. Practically all the important critics since Wellhausen have been consulted" (pp. 10 f.).

The statement about the supposed non-publication of monographs on the conservative side is, of course, untrue, as is shown by the published work of Troelstra, Pope, Dahse, Orr, Möller, Griffiths, Kräutlein, Kyle, and the present writer, and the "International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia" and "Murray's Illustrated Bible Dictionary." But the paragraphs quoted represent a great advance on the haughty attitude adopted by the higher critics ten years ago.

It will, however, be noted that Brightman is still largely under the influence of the old fallacy that makes scholarship and philology interchangeable terms. It is of course ridiculous to suggest that, in the Semitic field any more than in any other, philology can make a man competent to express opinions on involved questions of law or history without first

acquiring the necessary special training; but as yet our author knows no better. And so he is to be found joining the goodly band of hapless theologians who have sought to pin the ear of a slave to a mound of earth or stones, miscalled a sanctuary and then mistaken for a house. Exodus "xxi. 6 probably refers to the local sanctuary" (p. 161). He could not have written this had he taken the trouble to master the following articles in the "International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia," together with the literature cited in them: "Altar A," "Asylum," "Sacrifice," and "Sanctuary." Of these he should begin with the article "Altar," because it is illustrated, and gives pictorial assistance in the task of realizing the conditions with which every contemporary was familiar. Let him then proceed to the longer discussions to which those articles refer him; and if he makes a really conscientious and intensive study of the subject, he will certainly not remain a follower of Wellhausen's.

But the note I have quoted goes on to suggest, as an alternative, the view of Eerdmans that the verse of Exodus refers to "the household gods." He will find this demolished in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA for 1908, pp. 108 f.

I take one or two other instances of the way in which even in small details Brightman has been answered by anticipation in the studies he ignores. On page 210 we are told that "only three items of Dt unnamed by JE are found in P." He will find four more on pages 202 f. of "Pentateuchal Studies." Or again let him compare what he has written about J and E with the portions of the same volume that deal with Genesis and the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA for January, 1915. Or let him take the result of which he is most confident, the dating of P "shortly before Ezra, that is, about 500. This result of the Graf-Wellhausen school is accepted by all critics to-day" (p. 211). Then let him study the arguments on pages 118-133 of the "Origin of the Pentateuch," looking up the references and examining each point *seriatim*, to see if he can meet it. And when he finds, as he inevitably must, that he himself cannot answer these points, let him remember that

for many years now they have been pressed on the attention of the leading higher critics of all the principal countries, and always, with the same result — that no answer could be produced. If he will honestly and earnestly undertake these tasks, the outcome of his volume will certainly be the more intensive scientific and religious study of the Hexateuch that he desiderates.

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BISHOP GORE'S MISSION TO THE UNITED STATES.

As we go to press, the leading centers of thought in America are being thrilled by the impassioned appeals of the Bishop of Oxford for an increased interest of the churches in the establishment of a league of nations to protect the world from future wars. The plan for such a league and the difficulties attending it were clearly presented in the January number of the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* by Mr. Raymond L. Bridgman in an article, entitled "A World-Unity Conference," for which he had prepared the way by two previous articles.¹ The object of the Bishop's visit to America is to interest the general public in the questions, and to get them to see the supreme importance of continuing the present "war upon war" until the power of Germany is humbled, and of following it with a league of nations such as that advocated by Mr. Bridgman, and later by President Wilson, and by the League to Enforce Peace, of which Ex-President Taft is the foremost exponent. We are glad to give prominence to the Bishop's statement of the grounds of hope that may encourage and inspire us. These he considers under three heads:—

"1. The first is the despair of the future which fills the minds of the people of all kinds when they contemplate the tendencies of national rivalry as they existed before the war and led to its outbreak, unless they can be profoundly modified or effectively restrained. We simply cannot bear to think of making a peace, however just a peace, and then leaving the nations, after a period

¹ See *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1911, art. "The World Person," and October, 1913, art. "A Bureau of National Assistance."

of exhaustion, to watch one another with the old jealousy, and build up armaments, the one against the other, with more than the old lavishness of expense, and a scientific ingenuity sharpened tenfold by experience, and form alliances as of old, one against another, until another world-war breaks out. If this be all that can be looked for, I say, despair possesses us. Nothing less confronts us as the inevitable issue than the ruin of a civilisation which it has taken so many centuries to build up: both its economic ruin and the ruin of its culture and its freedom. I suppose that it is this dread that has made the greatest practical statesmen in many countries propound and support a project which seems to vulgar eyes so idealistic as the League of Nations. It does demand a vast change of mind in the sentiment of nations towards one another. But our practical statesmen recognise that nothing else than such a world-wide repentance can save the situation from ruin.

"2. Our second ground of hope is the progress and the international sympathies of democracy. In his splendid 'Complaint of Peace' Erasmus, in 1517, ascribes wars to kings and peaceful tendencies to 'the people, the ignoble vulgar.' 'If the military transactions of old time are not worth remembrance, let him who can bear the loathsome task only call to mind the wars of the last twelve years; let him attentively consider the causes of them all, and he will find them all to have been undertaken for the sake of kings; all of them carried on with infinite detriment to the people; while, in most instances, the people had not the smallest concern either in their origin or their issue.' 'As to the people; in all these countries the greater part of the people certainly detest war, and most devoutly wish for peace.'

"I cannot but think that this represents still the truth as it is in general. It is possible to imagine a militarist and bellicose democracy; and certainly where a nation has been robbed of its territory a republic will be as determined to recover it as a monarchy. But, on the whole, it remains true that if there were nothing but really democratic nations, whether republics or constitutional monarchies in form, the warlike tendencies of the world would be enormously reduced; and the more international sympathy and intercourse came to prevail among democracies, the less chance there would be of war. In England we believe that, on the whole, the working people will give the readiest welcome to the League of Nations, and will be the least afraid of what it involves.

"Now all appearances point to the progress of democratic feeling and the democratising of institutions as the tendency of the future. The violence of the Russian reaction is not likely to terrify

the masses of the people. Thus our second hope lies in the strengthening of the principle of democracy; and, if we cannot get rid of secret diplomacy, yet we can feel a rational confidence that, the more democratic nations become, the more afraid will their statesmen be of contracting any serious obligations on behalf of the people of which the people are not cognisant.

"3. But in the last place—we look with a profound hope to the Christian Church. True, there is no rapid road to heal the divisions of Christendom. But there is no reason why in welcoming and promoting the League of Nations the Christian Church should not even now act as if it were one. The same agreement to act together is feasible on all social and moral questions so far as they affect public policy. In the case of the League of Nations the heads of the Roman, the Anglican, and the chief Protestant communions, both in the British Empire and in America, either have spoken in assent already or are likely to do so very soon. Why should not all the portions of Christendom in every nation combine into a single body to welcome and to propagate the principle of the League? For, indeed, it is its own voice that the Church hears echoed back by the statesmen who propose it. True it is we are a long way off a reunited Christendom—such a supernational fellowship of men as the Catholic Church should be. True it is that the League of Nations will be on no professedly religious basis, and will exclude no nation on account of its religious beliefs. Nevertheless, there can be few practicable measures which would be so strong a witness to Christian principles as the formation of a League of Nations to promote and maintain peace, and nothing would make the peoples of the world understand what Christianity stands for better than the spectacle of a divided Christendom reunited at least to promote this purpose.

"Thus we can face all the grave difficulties involved in a League of Nations with resolution and courage, relying on the hope which springs out of the heart of despair and finds in the dissolution of the old order the promise of the new—on the sound instinct of democracy triumphing over dynastic ambitions—and on the reviving spirit of Christianity, the idea of catholic fellowship. It is the will of God."