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THE
PENTATEUCH.

ITS
ORIGIN AND AUTHORSHIP.

BY

H. L. Hastings
Editor of The Christian

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THE PENTATEUCH:

Its ORIGIN AND AUTHORSHIP.

BY H.L. HASTINGS.

Some of the Critics of the present day have a quiet way of assuming as facts things which they do not undertake to demonstrate, and taking for granted what they cannot prove. For thousands of years the "*Five Books*" of the Jewish Law, called the *Pentateuch*, have been attributed to Moses, the Hebrew Lawgiver. Josephus states in his treatise *Against Apion*, (i. 8,) they had "twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times, which are justly believed to be divine. And of them, *five belong to Moses*, which contain his laws, and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death." The names of these five books are of Greek origin, and perhaps due to the translators of the Septuagint. They are separate divisions of one great work. The rabbinical writers call these books "the five-fifths of the law."

But Modern Critics, instead of discussing the question of the origin of the Pentateuch, have taken to discussing the origin of the "*Hexateuch*," the *six books*, thus including Joshua; and proceeding to argue for the late origin of all these books. Of course if they can add a number of books which no one ever supposed Moses wrote, and which make no claim to a Mosaic origin; and then can jumble and churn them all together as if they were of uncertain date, it helps them greatly in their effort to show that the Pentateuch is a late forgery by unknown Jewish writers; and so the whole matter is assumed so quietly, that before persons are aware of the fact, the ground is shifted, and half the argument is claimed as if it were conceded.

We do not assent to this re-arrangement. We are not discussing a "*Hexateuch*,"—of which no one ever heard till the Higher Critics invented it—but the *Pentateuch*, the *Five Books* of Moses, which have been known for thousands of years as "the Book of the Law," which was to be put "in the side of the Ark of the Covenant," (Deut. 31:26); "the book of the law of the Lord;" the code by which the Jewish nation was governed. "The law which Moses my servant commanded thee." (Josh. 1:7). "The Book of the Law of Moses which he wrote in the presence of the children of

Israel." (Josh. 8:31-35). "The commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you." (Josh. 22:5). "The statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel." (1 Chron. 22:13). "The book of the law in the house of the Lord." (2 Kings 22:8). "The Law of Moses the man of God." (2 Chron. 30:16). "The statutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment which God wrote for you." (2 Kings 17:31-37). "The Law of Moses which the Lord God of Israel had given." (Ezra 7:6). "The book of the Law of Moses which the Lord had commanded to Israel." (Neh. 8:1). "The Law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." (Mal. 4: 4).

The Law of Moses and these Five Books of Moses were entirely separate from the succeeding books, from Joshua to Malachi. They furnished the basis for the commonwealth of Israel; they were the organic law of the nation. Later books contain history, genealogy, prophecy, theology, and ethical and practical instruction, but none of them are legislative or organic. The Jewish nation had no legislature; their laws were not enacted one year and repealed the next. Given at first in the wilderness, modified as they stood on the borders of Canaan, they henceforth remained the sacred heritage of the chosen people, who, clustering around them, have maintained their existence under most adverse circumstances till the present time. And the Mosaic authorship of the Jewish law has been expressly affirmed, not only by the Jews, and Samaritans, and Christians, but by numerous heathen authors, such as Hecataeus, Manetho, Lysimachus, Tacitus, Strabo, Juvenal, Longinus,¹ etc.

The man who had twenty reasons to offer for the non-appearance of his friend in court, was doubtless possessed of much logical power and acumen; but having stated as his first reason, that *the man was dead*, the court considerably waived the hearing of the other nineteen, and dismissed the subject. There are doubtless skeptical critics who could give us twenty reasons why the Law of Moses should not be received as of divine authority and inspiration, but they lay their axe at the root of the tree when they state at the outset that Moses *did not write the law*, and had little or nothing to do with it. This fact if once established, carries everything else with it, and stamps the whole as a fraud and a forgery.

¹ For references and proofs, see Remarks on the Mistakes of Moses, pp. 4-7.

It is a wearisome task to assail the Bible in detail, and to deny and contradict its declarations one by one; but the matter is greatly simplified if we can treat the books themselves as suppositious, legendary, and 'unhistorical.' Thus men save the trouble of discussing separate points and particulars, and throw the book overboard at once; for a man who would prove that the various books comprised in the Hebrew Scriptures were forgeries and fictions, and then attempt to cultivate reverence for these exploded legends, and found a religious worship upon them, might be expected to construct a school geography upon the basis of Gulliver's Travels, or found a system of religion upon the teachings of the Arabian Nights.

The question of the origin and authorship of the Pentateuch, or the "*Five Books*" of Moses, therefore becomes a primary question, to be considered before we greatly trouble ourselves concerning the character and contents of the books themselves. It is consistent thus to lay the axe at the root of the tree. If the work is a fraud, an invention, and an imposition, we need not discuss its contents or its character; if, however, it is found to be a genuine work, written at the time it purports to be, and substantially by the man to whom it is attributed, it will then be in order to examine its contents and discuss its merits.

In reading a book there is a natural interest to know its author. If it bears upon its title page a well-known name, we usually accept this testimony as conclusive evidence of its authorship. If, however, we learn that someone else *claims* to have written the book, we then enter upon an investigation to ascertain who is the rightful claimant. If a book is openly known and publicly read from the time of its origin, its authorship can hardly be a matter of dispute. There was a time when the book was unknown, and did not exist; when it came to be known there were persons who knew its authorship, and unless they were interested to conceal it, the facts could be easily ascertained. If a book purported to be recently discovered, after having been hidden and unknown for ages, of course the question of its authorship would be more complicated, but if a book had been written and published, and was generally read, and known, and accepted as the production of a certain author; and if no other person ever claimed the authorship thereof; then unless there were very cogent reasons for doubting the veracity of the claimant, we should regard the authorship of the volume as settled.

It is not easy to impose a spurious book upon any nation or

community, especially a book of laws, rules, and regulations, or even a book of histories dealing with matters known to them or to their fathers. A spurious book is liable to be criticized, and its defects are quite sure to be discerned. Literary deceptions do not usually long remain undetected. If a man succeeds in perpetrating a literary fraud, some sharp-witted investigator will pierce the disguise and expose the cheat; or possibly the author himself, through remorse, or from vanity, will voluntarily declare what he has done, and take to himself the honor or the blame due for his production.

A few years since there went the rounds of the papers a crude rhyme which purported to be the prophecy of a certain "Mother Shipton," who lived about 1448, and who in it foretold steam locomotion, the invention of balloons, revolutions in France, the career of D'Israeli, the erection of the Crystal Palace, etc. It had a considerable currency, and was sometimes cited by skeptics as a modern instance of prophetic foresight. It reappeared from time to time with certain slight additions, the work apparently of some "redactor" or editor, containing additional predictions corresponding to new developments of current events. At length the authorship of the prophecy was traced to one Charles Hindly, who wrote the Mother Shipton prophecy in 1802, and set it adrift to take its chances among the critics.

Toward the close of the last century a Tory Parson, Samuel A. Peters, concocted and published that farrago of nonsense and absurdity known as the "Blue Laws" of Connecticut; and there are probably on earth today a few benighted skeptics and editors of Sunday papers, who really believe that the legislature of the New Haven Colony, Connecticut, did enact laws "that no husband should kiss his wife, and no mother her children on Sunday or on Fast Day; that a beer barrel should be whipped if the beer in it worked on Sunday; that on that day no one should cook food, make beds, sweep house, cut hair, or shave himself; and that every male in the colony should have his hair cut round by a cap, or, if a cap was wanting, then by the scooped-out shell of a half-pumpkin!" And hence, when legislators and philanthropists, seeking to protect both man and beast from the exactions of tyranny and greed, by the enactment of laws securing to weary toilers that weekly day of rest which is demanded by physical law and is essential to the physical and moral well-being of

mankind;² these fomenters of irreligion, anarchy and disorder—who seem to regard a man as only a cog-wheel in a great money-making machine, to be ran till it breaks, and then flung away and replaced by another—set up their periodic wail about the abridgment of personal liberty by “Connecticut Blue Laws,” and “Puritanic legislation.”

But though an intelligent believer in the “Connecticut Blue Laws” fiction, might fitly claim a place as a fossil in a dime museum, yet there are other specimens which seem equally worthy of preservation.³ And the man who can now believe that a few centuries hence the Blue Laws of Connecticut will be *adopted* and *enforced* as authoritative in that ancient commonwealth; and that the prophecies of Mother Shipton will also be received as a divine revelation; and that both together will be read in all the synagogues of Connecticut every Sabbath day, would be justly entitled to a preservation as an unnatural curiosity, beside a stuffed specimen of Parson Peters’ wonderful “Whapperknocker.”

Such a man would probably be credulous enough to believe that within the space of a very few hundred years, the laws, prophecies, and sacred writings of the Old Testament could have been forged, imposed upon the people, accepted by them, placed among their sacred records, and handed down through successive generations as holy writings inspired by the Spirit of the living God. And the men who are able to

² For facts concerning the importance of the weekly rest day, consult “The Wonderful Law,” “Remarks on the Mistakes of Moses” “Dividends,” etc., by H.L. Hastings.

³ “The true origin of these ‘Blue Laws’” says the N.Y. Observer, “is that they were written by the Rev. Samuel A. Peters, a renegade Tory, who was driven from the colony, and who, in anger and spite published these laws in 1781. According to the historian Trumbull, he was known as the greatest falsifier in the colony, telling such incredibly absurd stories as that of the ‘Windham Frogs,’ and of those unearthly and fearful quadrupeds, the ‘Cuba,’ and the ‘Whapperknocker;’ and that the Rev. Thomas Hooker of Hartford spread the poison of small-pox on the leaves of Bibles which he sent to the Indians, and so swept away the great sachem Connecticote—an imaginary person—and his warriors, and no laid waste their kingdom; and, climax of all, that in the Connecticut river at Bellows Falls, Vt., ‘the water is consolidated without frost, by pressure, as it swiftly passes between the binding, sturdy rocks, to such a degree of induration that no iron bar can be, forced into it; here iron, lead, and cork have one common weight; here steady as time and harder than marble, the stream passes as irresistibly, if not as swiftly as lightning.’”

believe that so many different writers, capable of producing laws like those of Moses, prophecies like those of Isaiah, poetry like that of Job, and psalms like those of David; who in their life-time were scattered over a tract of hundreds of years; would all, in an excess of modesty, conceal their names, deny the authorship of their own writings, and attribute them to certain men long dead, who had written nothing, said nothing, and done nothing which should make them specially famous,—the men who could believe all this, and could believe that such laws and prophecies, so produced and sent forth, would remain for centuries with their authorship unknown, and the imposition undetected, until they were accepted and enforced as genuine, authoritative, and divinely inspired; would seem to be endowed with many of the qualities which enter into the composition of the Higher Critic of the present day, to qualify him to sit in judgment upon “the oracles of God.”

CHANGES IN STYLE AND LANGUAGE.

It is held by some critics that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses, because it agrees in style with the later Jewish writings; for it is held that the Hebrew language must have been greatly modified through the centuries of their national existence. But in answer to this it is said, that the later books of the Minor Prophets *do* differ in style from the Pentateuch, as well as from the earlier prophetic writings, by reason of the introduction of the Chaldee element, during the seventy years captivity in Babylon. But as regards changes in the ancient Hebrew tongue, the question arises, *What chance was there for change?* This language was the legal, social and ecclesiastical language of the nation, used in daily life, in law, and in worship. The literature of such a nation could not have been extensive. The Mosaic law was to be read to the people publicly once in seven years, and as the people were homogeneous, having one common organization, and as their males were required to assemble three times a year in Jerusalem, and as the Israelites were commanded to meditate in this law, and diligently teach it to their children, it is not easy to see how their language could be corrupted or broken up into tribal dialects. They were not a company of petty nationalities and principalities; they were one nation, children of one father, bound by one law, and ruled from one center. They were not a commercial people, and had little communication with outside nations: they were separated from other races by their faith, their customs, their

religion, and their government, all of which were prescribed and fixed by the Mosaic law. They were taught to abhor and avoid the surrounding idolatries; and the literature of other nations, so far as they had any literature, can have had very little effect upon the Israelites, Carried captive to Babylon, of course they learned the language of their conquerors; but till the Babylonish captivity their language was substantially unchanged.

We are not to draw a parallel between things which essentially differ. The changes in the English language, springing from such diverse sources—Aryan, Roman, Scandinavian, Teutonic, and Norman; broken up by internecine convulsions and external invasions, by changes in government and religion, by the spread of literature, by the discovery of printing, and the wide acquaintance thus gained with the languages and writings of other nations; can afford no criteria for estimating the modifications in the laws and language of a quiet, isolated, homogeneous, secluded people like the Israelites during the lapse of passing centuries.

The testimony of competent scholars leads to the conclusion that nations do not change their languages so readily as some imagine. Other influences besides the mere lapse of years must contribute to such changes, as can be shown by many illustrative examples. Between the times of Plautus, (b. c. 254-184), and Gregory the Great, (A.D. 550-604), stretched a period of seven or eight hundred years, during which the Latin was a living and ever changing tongue. During that period wars had convulsed the nations, revolutions had rocked the world, Christianity had appeared, Rome had reached the acme of her glory, and had gone far down in decay, and yet these two writers used the same language. New words are introduced, old words become obsolete, but the language as a whole was the same.

So down to the year A.D. 530, the Greek was a current language with the people, and it was as nearly identical with the Greek of seven or eight hundred years before, as the Hebrew of the Jews when they went into captivity was with that of the Pentateuch. Specimens of Egyptian papyrus of widely different eras show that, though separated by an interval of a thousand years, they are of the same stamp and general character, and their grammar has not undergone the slightest change; and the language of Asiatic nations, like their customs and usages, still shares a similar permanence, notwithstanding the flight of time.

Arguments of this kind of course depend upon the judgment of experts; but it is not altogether certain that expert testimony is absolutely unimpeachable, or that expert judgment is entirely infallible. We have not yet had the verdict of half a dozen experts *writing independently of each other*, and in utter ignorance of each other's views and conclusions; and the consensus of a number of critics *after comparison and consultation*, may not be absolutely convincing to the average student, who makes no claims to expert critical ability, but who still is not disposed to yield to the unsupported assertion of one or two collusive critical authorities. Indeed if these scholars would win our unquestioning confidence, it behooves them to test their critical abilities in some manner which shall be tangible, and within the reach of the ordinary student.

Dr. Franklin Johnson in an article in *The Watchman*, has proposed the following very sensible method of

TESTING THE HIGHER CRITICS ON SHAKESPEARE:

"Some of the statements of the Newer Criticism are so incredible in themselves that they should be supported by mighty evidences before we give them credence. We are asked to believe, for example, that the critic, working in an ancient and dead language, can not only determine that a given book was written by four or five different authors, but can assign his part accurately to each one of them, running the dividing line at times through the middle of a sentence, thus 'distinguishing a hair 'twixt north and north-west sides.' This claim of the critics is so astounding that we may well demand the most cogent proofs before admitting it. We are told that it is a question which can be settled only by experts, and that since all the experts agree, we should believe on their testimony. But *the experts themselves need to be tested* before we can believe in their ability to do this thing. *The test is easily applied*, and if their claims are just, may be easily met. Let the critics do in their *own language* what they profess to have done in a foreign and dead language. There are the mixed plays of Shakespeare, partly his work, and partly the work of his associates. Let the critics solve this problem before they demand too much of our

faith. Indeed they have tried to solve it, and have failed, as they themselves confess. Coleridge was, perhaps, the last of the students of Shakespeare to believe that he could separate the work of the great poet from the rest; and Macaulay pronounces his pretensions pure nonsense. The failure of the critics in this case is the more instructive for us since the style of Shakespeare is so peculiar, so different from that of every other writer, so entirely his own. Let the critics of art tell us what part of the frescos of the Vatican were painted by Raphael, and what part by his pupils. Until these lighter tasks have been accomplished by the experts, we may be slow to believe that they have accomplished the heavier."

If half a dozen of these Higher Critics could be separated and secluded, and set at work sorting out Shakespeare; and then if the results of their studies could be printed without comparison or collusion; we might by comparing their work judge of their infallibility as critics, and the exactness of the science of Higher Criticism; and we might then be ready to have them undertake to reconstruct the Bible in the same manner and under the same conditions and restrictions. Are they ready for such a test? How would they endure it?

The editor of *The Watchman* vouches for the following instance illustrating the uncertainty of this style of criticism:

"A certain editor was interrogated by Prof. A., an eminent critic, as to the authorship of an article, and as soon as the question was asked, he said: 'Of course you do not care to say, but I know that B. wrote it; it is full of his peculiarities of style.' A few days later the editor fell in with Dr. B., the man to whom Prof. A. had referred. 'By the way,' he said, 'that was a pretty good article that you had the other day,'—mentioning the one of which Prof. A. had spoken. 'I know it was written by Prof. A. It is just like him.'"

Such instances might be multiplied. It is not easy for persons to pronounce with infallible correctness concerning the style of persons who live in their own time, and write in their own tongue, and with whom they have personal acquaintance. What dependence then can we place upon their critical judgment concerning the authorship of

documents thousands of years old, written in foreign tongues, and under unknown circumstances, and so brief that they afford but very limited data for the exercise of critical judgment concerning their origin ?

THE GERMAN CRITICS TESTED.

In the year 1843 there issued from the German press a volume entitled *Die Bernstein Hexe*, or "The Amber Witch," which was edited and had an introduction by Pastor Johann Wilhelm Meinhold, of the Island of Rugen in the Baltic, who related that some time after he was appointed to his cure in the Island, in a chest in his sacristy he found a number of old documents; parish registers, bills, records of marriages, deaths, and other parish matters; and among them a Roll, written in *Old German*, in a style now disused, which proved to be a narrative, by one of his predecessors, of the trial of a woman for witchcraft, in the Island of Rugen. This manuscript he deciphered, and thus introduced to the world. It caused a great sensation. It gave much information concerning the period after the death of Luther and his associates, and learned critics indulged in many conjectures regarding its authorship. The German reviews took it up, and discussed it for about twelve months, and were as delighted with the light it cast upon an obscure period, as they were with the critical evidence produced by Strauss that the gospel story was a myth, and the history of Christ a series of cunningly devised fables.

At length Meinhold wrote thus to the reviews and newspapers: "Reliable critics you are of the Greek of the New Testament Books! The book you have been reading and praising is the production of my own brain in my own study in the last five years. You were not able to discover the deception and detect the forgery *in your own language*. You may be dismissed as critics of the Books of the New Testament."

The critics were enraged, and assailed him as a lying impostor. But he was the author of "The Amber Witch," and proved that he was; and criticism had another illustration of the infallibility of the learned critics, who expect the common people to accept their assertions as the end of both law and gospel; and who are as confident of their ability to assign dates to manuscripts of whose origin they can have no positive knowledge, as the Cape Cod skipper was of his ability to tell his location in a fog, by smelling of the sounding lead as he hauled it up from the bottom of the sea!

TIME NOTES AND FOOT NOTES.

Undoubtedly there are certain notes of events contained in the different books of the Bible which indicate the time in which the author wrote. Thus we are told in Joshua 15:63, "The Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto *this day*." Then we read in 2 Samuel 5:6-9, that David took the stronghold of Zion, notwithstanding the resistance of the Jebusites. This shows that the book of Joshua was written before the time of David's conquest of Jerusalem. So in Joshua 16:10 it is written of the Israelites, "they drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto *this day*, and serve under tribute." But we read in 1 Kings 9:10, "Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. And Solomon built Gezer." This was in the time of Solomon, about a thousand years before the birth of the Savior, and the book of Joshua must have been written before that time. But there are doubtless other instances where suggestive or explanatory expressions occur, which are the marginal notes or comments of later writers, students or transcribers.

Nothing is more common than the appending of necessary supplementary notes to important books and documents. The works of most great writers have been issued with annotations by various authors, The productions of Shakespeare, Milton, Gibbon, Homer, Herodotus, Plato, and most of the ancient philosophers, historians, and poets, have been published with comments and explanations, needful for the elucidation of obscure passages, the explanation of obsolete words, and the information of readers unfamiliar with the subject of the writings or the circumstances under which they were written. Such notes, comments, and explanations, are sometimes bracketed in the text, but are more usually placed in the margin, or at the bottom of the page, and are distinguished from the text by certain marks of reference, and by being printed in smaller type.

There are also books in almost every library, which have, in addition to such appended annotations, manuscript notes, inserted by thoughtful and attentive readers, making needful explanations, alluding to related facts, or giving references to other sources of information. It is the constant practice of many persons to thus annotate the books in their

libraries, and so prone are readers to do this, that in public libraries stringent rules are necessary to prevent readers writing on the margins of books which do not belong to them. All such annotations being in manuscript, show for themselves that they were appended after the volumes were published.

No books have ever been so largely annotated and commented upon as the different books of the Bible. Multitudes of ponderous tomes of these annotations have been written and published. Every translation of the Bible, or any part of it, includes more or less of paraphrase, annotation, and explanation. We have in our times scores of Commentaries on the Holy Scriptures. When we go back to past ages, we find volumes and volumes of annotations and comments in the early Christian church. Going still further back, we find the Jewish Talmuds and Targums, and the Chaldee Paraphrases, which were greatly esteemed and served very important purposes among the Jews.

Now it would be natural to suppose that at still earlier dates, notes and explanations might have been added to the text of Scripture by anyone who chanced to be the possessor of a manuscript copy, and who might wish to define a locality the name of which had been changed, explain something which would otherwise be obscure to the uninformed, or place on record some connected fact which ought not to be forgotten. And as books were few, and writing materials were not always accessible, unless such memoranda were written then and there, they might never be recorded. We must bear in mind that these books of the Bible which would thus naturally be annotated were not printed; so there were no different kinds of type in use to distinguish notes from text. There was no proof-reading, or careful editing, as is now the case when such books are issued, and any comments written upon the manuscript might be in the same hand-writing as the body of the book. What then would be more natural than that a future transcriber, who might not be intellectually acute or critical, and might have no knowledge of the special facts in the case, and no other copy of the manuscript roll for comparison, should fail to notice that certain sentences were comments and additions, and should copy them into his manuscript as if they were a part of the original work.

Such considerations as these, it is believed, very reasonably explain some of the few passages which are quoted as indicating a non-Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch,—an explanatory phrase or sentence being

added here or there by some thoughtful reader, and embodied in the text by some subsequent transcriber, and thus being transmitted to later ages as a portion of the original text.

But if, in consideration of these difficulties, we are led to admit the non-Mosaic and recent origin of these books, we are speedily confronted with ten-fold greater difficulties than those we escape by such admission.

The Pentateuch has not been hidden in a corner and recently discovered. It was not transmitted by oral tradition for hundreds of years before being written down, like the sacred books of the East. It does not claim to have been revealed in a single night like the Koran, nor dug out of a hole in the ground like the book of Mormon; but it is a book which has been publicly known and read in an open and above-board manner for thousands of years.

It has been brought down to us in the guardian care of three distinct and antagonistic classes of people, the Jews, the Samaritans, and the Christians. There has not been a week for thousands of years when it has not been publicly read in various places and in the ears of multitudes of people; and through all these ages *no person has ever laid claim to the honor of its authorship*, for himself or anyone else. Such presumptive evidence of the genuineness of the Pentateuch should be met by distinct and authentic traditions, and ancient historical records, showing who really did write the books, if they were not the work of "Moses, the man of God."

It may not be needful to assert that every line of these five books was personally written by Moses' own hand. He may have embodied quotations from pre-existing writers, and genealogical records, which had been carefully preserved and handed down by previous generations. The books may have been partly written by an amanuensis from dictation, or by a secretary or recorder, who kept the journal of the days' doings as they came; and yet such books, written by the authority, and under the dictation of Moses, may have been really his books, for whose contents he was entirely responsible.

Often internal evidence determines questions concerning the authorship of a work. A book full of grammatical blunders would not be regarded as the work of a finished scholar, even if it bore his name. In the autumn of 1880, a letter purporting to have been written by a candidate for the presidency of the United States; which, for political purposes, was

scattered in facsimile through the length and breadth of the land on the very eve of the election, by some of those politicians who are especially frugal in their use of truth on such occasions; was found to contain certain words so *mis-spelled* as to indicate clearly that it could *not* have been from the pen of a literary gentleman like General Garfield, whose name had been villainously appended to it; but must have been rather the production of some politician or office-seeker, who evidently had neglected to study his spelling-book, as well as to learn the Ten Commandments.

A book full of the abstrusest learning would not be easily accepted as the production of an ignorant boor or clown. A comprehensive treatise on common law would not be expected from a police court shyster, or a country Dogberry; and a treatise on hygiene, furnishing the best code of health possessed by any nation, and reducing the death-rate of those who observed it to one-half the death-rate of the people around them, could not be supposed to have emanated from the mind of a rude, uncultured barbarian. But there is nothing in the character of the five books of Moses which is inconsistent with the claim that they were written by a man learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, brought up in the court of the Pharaohs, skilled in the conduct of civil and military affairs, and trained and fully experienced as a commander and judge, in the management of a great people. Who else can be named in the history of the Hebrew people so capable of producing such a code and such a record, as he of whom it is said, "There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses whom the Lord knew face to face?"

It is claimed that there are differences in style in the different books ascribed to Moses, and that he could not have been the author of those books. But there are differences of style in different works on various subjects, produced by any man of flexible intellect, and wide and varied culture. A mechanical, narrow-minded, and comparatively ignorant man, possessed of few ideas and limited vocabulary, can only write in one style; but a man acquainted with law, medicine, history, politics, poetry, archaeology, ethnology, and geography, as he treats upon these various subjects, deals with them in varied styles of diction.

Besides it is more than possible that in preparing the book of Genesis, Moses examined and made use of documents, records, and traditions, that were written, preserved, and handed down by patriarchs and prophets who preceded him, and some of these may have been

incorporated in his writings without essential change of diction.

When we remember that eleven chapters in Genesis bring us down from the creation unto the calling of Abraham, it will easily be seen that the recollection and preservation of such a brief record was a slight task, compared with the transmission of the 15,677 lines of the Iliad which was handed down for generations and perhaps for centuries before it was ever written; or 1,017 hymns of the Rig Veda, a work about four times as large as the Iliad, which was not only memorized, but has been brought down by word of mouth, independent of books and manuscripts, for thousands of years, by a class of priests in India, who are required to know the whole of it by heart.

We must remember that though the time from the creation to the flood, a period of about 1650 years, would cover nearly fifty generations at the present time, yet of this period Adam lived more than half, or 930 years. At Adam's death Methuselah was 233 years old, and he lived till 1655,—the year before the flood. Thus two lives covered the antediluvian period; and Noah and his house connect the old world that was destroyed with the new world that succeeded it.

As Adam lived 930 years, and Noah was 600 years old at the time of the deluge, there were only 120 years between the death of Adam and the birth of Noah. But Noah's father was 182 years old at Noah's birth, and he, having been cotemporary with Adam fifty-six years, lived with Noah 595 years, dying five years before the flood. Therefore Noah during 595 years, had the opportunity of learning all that was known by his own father, who had lived fifty-six years the cotemporary of Adam, and was besides, cotemporary with Enos, Cainan, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah. Shem, Noah's son, was ninety-eight years old at the time of the flood, and was thus for ninety-three years cotemporary with Lamech, his grandfather, who was fifty-six years old at the death of Adam. Living 500 years after the flood, Shem was for 150 years the contemporary of Abraham: hence between Adam and Abraham were *only three* witnesses, Lamech, Noah, and Shem; Abraham being removed by only *four lives* from the creation of the first man.

Abraham lived 175 years; and Jacob was fifteen years old when Abraham died, and lived 147 years. At his death Joseph was fifty six years old, and Joseph lived to the age of 110, in the midst of the splendors of Egyptian civilization, with literature, records, and inscriptions which may

be seen to-day upon the walls and pillars of Egyptian temples, palaces, and tombs.

The writer has trustworthy *unwritten* traditions of *words* spoken and *acts done* by his father, grandfather, great grandfather, and great, great grandfather; besides written records of preceding generations, and these traditions have come down casually, charged with no important message, but bearing every evidence of truthfulness. Now through the long reaches of antediluvian and patriarchal ages it would require but *six lives* to cover the space from the creation of man to the establishment of the Israelitish nation in the midst of Egyptian civilization and literature. Hence there was nothing difficult in the transmission of uncorrupted traditions and authentic records, from the time of the creation of Adam down to the days of Moses and the giving of the Law.

It is sometimes objected that the recorded longevity of the patriarchs is incredible: though no man can tell why a person who increases in strength every year for forty years, might not under favorable conditions live on indefinitely; nor why humanity, fresh from its Creator's hands, untainted by vices and excesses, and with the energies of divine life yet unspent, should not continue to live on for centuries. Indeed, such ancient writers as Manetho, who wrote Egyptian history; Berosus, who wrote the history of Chaldea; and the Grecian writers, Hesiod, Hecataeus, and Ephorus, testify that in the earliest ages of the world men lived to be nearly a thousand years old.

There are also traditions and records of great longevity in the ages succeeding the times of Noah. Eratosthenes, the astronomer and geometer, who was born B. c. 276, and lived some eighty years and who, during the reigns of Ptolemy Euergetes, and his successor, was for many years superintendent of the great library at Alexandria,—the largest collection of ancient literature the world has ever seen,—in his account of the kings of Egypt, compiled at the request of Ptolemy, and drawn, of course, from the boundless stores of literature at his command, which he compared with the original records kept at Thebes; states that Menes,—who is believed to be identical with Mizraim, the son of Ham,—the first king of Egypt, reigned sixty-two years, and died at the age of 252, being lamented by the Egyptians as having been cut off in the flower of his age. His successor, Thoth reigned fifty-nine years, and lived to the age of 276 years; he was cotemporary with Arphaxad, who lived 438 years. A later king, Amachus, reigned seventy-nine years, and Apappus, the twentieth

king, reigned one hundred years.⁴

The Chinese chronology also gives us similar information. Beginning with Fohi, the first king of China, who is believed to have been the same as Noah, and of whose great age the Chinese records make mention: it is said that he reigned one hundred and fifteen years. His successor Zinnun, reigned one hundred and forty years, Hoanti reigned a hundred years, and died at the age of a hundred and eleven. Zaohao reigned eighty-four years, and died at the age of one hundred. Chuenhio reigned seventy-eight years, and died at the age of ninety-one. Tico reigned seventy years, and lived a hundred and five years. Yao, who is believed to have been contemporary with Moses, reigned one hundred years, and died at the age of a hundred and eighteen. Zun reigned fifty years, and lived a hundred and ten years.⁵ These long reigns and long lives correspond quite closely with the lives of the patriarchs of the same date.

In like manner the story of the deluge finds confirmation in the records and traditions of all nations ancient and modern. The account of the confusion of tongues at Babel, furnishes the only explanation of the existence of thousands of languages in which people of one blood express the same thoughts, ideas and affections; and the account of the dispersion and genealogy of the race (Genesis 10, 11) helps us to trace all nations to their origin.

It has been claimed that the Mosaic law was written, compiled, and published by Ezra, or someone about his time. The book of Ezra records the fact of Ezra's *reading* the Law of Moses, and giving the sense distinctly, in the presence of the assembled people who had returned from Babylon, some of whom were so old that they remembered the temple at Jerusalem which had been destroyed seventy years before; but the record says nothing about Ezra *forging* the Law of Moses, or inventing the ritual; nor could such a forgery have passed unchallenged before such an assembly. On the other hand the people hearing this law repented of the sins which it condemned, lamented their violation of the Mosaic precepts, and made haste to renew their covenant with God, and keep the commandments which their fathers had disobeyed. And the

4 Arthur Bedford's Scripture Chronology, page 62.

5 Arthur Bedford's Scripture Chronology, pp. 76-82.

prophet Malachi, who lived very near the time of Ezra, and who might be supposed to know as much about what was done in Ezra's time as modern critics who lived thousands of years later, and thousands of miles distant; knew nothing about the invention of the Pentateuch by Ezra or any of his contemporaries, but the Word of the Lord which he uttered, was, "Remember ye the Law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." Mal. 4:4.

The prominence given to Egypt in the Hebrew Scriptures, is utterly inexplicable unless great wonders were wrought "in the land of Ham" in the days of Israel's early history. Egypt is mentioned in the Old Testament 683 times, and the Egyptians thirty times; and the references to the land of Egypt, its cities, rulers, customs, sins, and idolatries, are unnumbered. Egypt was the background of Israel's history, which fact alone can explain the Hebrew Scriptures, which shine on every page with the light of the flaming pillar and the guiding cloud. The Hebrew prophets and teachers were not all of them masters of the art of realistic fiction; and the scribe with his weary and yet persistent pen could offer no such golden temptations to the inventors of religious fictions as are held out by the enterprising publishers of the present day. The countless references to Egypt would have baffled the skill of the most astute inventor of history and prophecy; and yet lynx-eyed criticism, after searching for a century among tombs, temples, pyramids, obelisks, and inscriptions, though determined to find contradictions, only finds confirmations; and confesses the accuracy and genuineness of the Hebrew Records.

Wilkinson's *"Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians,"* in its three volumes, has references to Scripture on more than 330 pages. Dr. Brugsch in his *"History of Egypt under the Pharaohs,"* quotes more than one hundred passages of Scripture, illustrating and confirming its statements; and says: (vol. ii. p. 330), "any one must certainly be blind who refuses to see the flood of light which the papyri and the other Egyptian monuments are throwing on the venerable records of the Holy Scripture."

The spade of the explorer exhibits to us not only "The Castle of the Jew's Daughters the ruined palace of Pharaoh-hophra, at Tahpanhes, whither the daughters of king Zedekiah fled for asylum (Jer. 43); but also disinters Pithom the treasure city which the Israelites built, and exhibits the bricks they made and laid there. From the walls of the Temple of

Shishonk at Karnak there still look down upon us the Jewish profiles of the captives which Shishak took from Palestine in the days of Solomon's foolish son, Rehoboam; and the names of the cities he conquered are still inscribed upon those temple walls. 2 Chron. xii. 1-8. Each new discovery answers some skeptical cavil, or removes some honest doubt. And yet, after all this, the Higher Critic asks us to believe that these books are a series of "cunningly devised fables," that they are fictitious, legendary, and unhistorical; and that they were invented by men who knew little or nothing about Egypt, and who, out of a few vague, mythical legends, have constructed this marvellously compacted mass of history and prophecy, on which has beat the burning light of scrutiny and investigation for two thousand years, but which is now expected to evaporate in the crucible of the Higher Criticism of the nineteenth century, notwithstanding the fact that every year new discoveries, coincidences, and confirmations more firmly establish the truthfulness of these ancient documents.

One fact worthy of notice is the measurement of time given in the Mosaic account of the flood. The flood is described as having lasted one hundred and fifty days, from the seventeenth day of the second month to the seventeenth day of the seventh month. This would make five months of *thirty days each*. The only known calendar which had twelve months of thirty days is the ancient Egyptian calendar, which had twelve months of thirty days, and then five intercalary days to fill out the year. During the time of the second temple the Jews used months of thirty and twenty-nine days, and the fact that the book of Genesis reckons months of *thirty days each*, indicates that it was written soon after the Exodus from Egypt, and while that method of counting time was fresh in the minds of the people.

Time and space would not admit the presentation of a tithe of the facts which confirm the statements and indicate the antiquity of the Pentateuch, but it seems proper to cite:

ONE INDEPENDENT WITNESS...

...to the authenticity and great antiquity of these venerable writings.

On the walls of the fallen palace of Khorsabad, among the ruins of buried Nineveh, Austen Henry Layard about the year 1815 discovered a sculptured representation of the siege of Samaria, which was pictured as

a fortress around which mounds had been erected, from which soldiers assailed and captured the city. The account of this siege is recorded among the exploits of Shalmaneser, who commenced it about 724 b.c., two years before his death. The siege continued three years, the city finally falling in the first year of the reign of Sargon,—who succeeded Shalmaneser, claiming to be the descendant of “the three hundred and fifty kings of Assyria,” and reigned from 722 to 705 B. C.

In Dr. Eberhard Schrader’s *Cuneiform Inscriptions of the Old Testament*, Translated by Owen C. Whitehouse, are found the following statements from the Great Triumphal Inscription of Sargon, corresponding with the Scripture account in 2 Kings 17:

“The city Samaria I besieged, I captured; 27,280 of its inhabitants I carried away; 50 chariots of them I took [for myself], their remaining effects I caused [my subalterns] to take; my viceroy I placed over them, the tribute of the former king I imposed on them.”—Vol. I. p. 264.

Another inscription, much mutilated, apparently recounts the same events:

“In the beginning of the Samaritans I carried away; 50 chariots I took as my royal share...in the place of them [the deported] I assigned abodes to the inhabitants of countries taken [by me]. I imposed tribute on them like Assyria.”—p. 266.

The Annals of Sargon for the first year of his reign record that:

“[Merodach Baladan], whom since he, not according to the will of the gods, the rule over Babel [had seized for himself, I overcame in war and smote] seven inhabitants—together with their property I transported and settled them [in the land] Chatti.”—i.e. of the Hittites—the land of Israel. p. 208.

Another Cylinder Inscription reads:

“[Sargon], who the people of Tamud, Ibadid, Marsiman, Chajap, the remainder of whom was carried away, and whom he transported to *the land of Bit Omri*”— i.e. the land of Omri, in Palestine, p. 209.

Again, in the Annals of Sargon's seventh year b. c., 715, he says:

"They of Tamud, Ibadid, Marsiman, Chajap, the Arbaeans, the distant who inhabit the land of Bari, whom no scholar and messenger-sender has known, who to the kings my fathers never had offered their tribute; in confidence on Asur, my lord, I subjugated them, their remnants I transplanted, and settled in the city Samaria." p. 270,

In the words of Schrader:

"Thus the inscriptions place the fact in the clearest light that Sargon settled subjugated tribes in Samaria. Now, in the passage first cited from the Annals, Babylonians are represented as being deported to the *Land of Chatti*, which, as we have seen already, included Northern Israel; while the Bible represents Babylonians as being quartered in Samaria. There cannot therefore be any doubt that the settlement of the Babylonian population to which the Bible refers, is that which is reported in Sargon's Annals as having occurred in the first year of his reign, i.e. 721 B. C. This deportation, however, was subsequently followed by later detachments, perhaps on several occasions, at all events in the seventh year of Sargon's reign, 715 b.c. We find Sargon also in other instances carrying out repeated deportations of population to one and the same place." p. 270.

The counterpart of these Assyrian Records taken from the walls of the palaces of Nineveh, may be found recorded in the Jewish Scriptures, in the seventeenth chapter of the second book of Kings, which thus refers to the same transactions:

"Hoshea reigned in Samaria over Israel nine years, and did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." "Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents." (II Kings 17:1-3).⁶

Afterward Hoshea conspired with the king of Egypt, and sought to

⁶ Note: all Scripture quotations in this work come from the English Revised Version, 1880.

throw off the Assyrian yoke. Then the king of Assyria took Hoshea captive, and shut him up, and bound him in prison; and invaded the land of Israel and besieged Samaria three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, "the king of Assyria," whose name is not here given, but who was Sargon, who had succeeded Shalmaneser, "took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." (II Kings 17:6). This was declared to be in punishment for their sins, for:

"The Lord testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my *commandments* and my statutes, according to *all the law* which I *commanded your fathers*, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected His *statutes* and His *covenant* that he made with their fathers, and His *testimonies* which He testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them. And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of His sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept *not* the *commandments* of the Lord their God, but walked in the *statutes of Israel* which *they* made." "So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and *placed them in the cities of Samaria*, instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof." (II Kings 17:13-19, 23-24).

This portion of the land of Israel was thus stripped of the bulk of its own inhabitants, who had sinned in disobeying *the law which God had given them*, and whose national unity was thus broken up by deportation and dispersion. Their territory was then re-peopled from other regions, by other races who had been conquered, who, in accordance with this same policy, were carried from their own homes to the land of Israel and planted there. Of course they brought with them all the superstitions, errors, and idolatries of heathenism, which they continued to practice in the land of Israel.

From some cause calamities overtook them. The author of the book of Kings says:

“And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them.” (II Kings 17:25).

This state of things led them to consideration,

“Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, *know not the manner of the God of the land*: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and behold they slay them, because they *know not the manner of the God of the land*.” (II Kings 17:26).

This was quite in accordance with the general opinion of those times, when men believed that certain gods were the special protectors of certain kingdoms and nations. The Assyrian king was disposed to consider their condition, recognized the justness of their conclusions, and speedily devised a remedy.

“Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, *Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence*; and let them go and dwell there, and let him *teach then the manner of the God of the land*. Then *one of the priests* whom they had carried away from Samaria, *came and dwelt in Bethel*, and *taught them how they should fear the Lord*.” (II Kings 17:27-28).

But these inhabitants of Samaria were not Israelites, nor did they propose to abandon their hereditary idolatries. They simply added the God of Israel to the list of deities which they worshiped, and while “every

nation made gods of their own," they still gave a partial recognition to the God of Israel. And so they:

"made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. *They feared* the Lord, and *served* their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away." (II Kings 17:29).

They thus continued their idolatries and their mongrel worship, and the writer declares that "Unto *this day* they do after the former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their *statutes*, or after their *ordinances*, or after the *law* and *commandment* which the Lord *commanded the children of Jacob*, whom He named Israel; with whom the Lord had made a covenant, and charged them, saying,—Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them: ... And the *statutes*, and the *ordinances*, and the *law*, and the *commandment which he wrote for you*, ye shall observe to do for evermore, and ye shall not fear other gods."

About half a century later, there seems to have been another deportation of foreigners into Samaria by Esar-haddon King of Assyria, the son and successor of Sennacherib. (Ezra 4:2). At this time the worship of the God of Israel, doubtless in a corrupted form, seems to have predominated, if we may believe the Samaritans themselves, who claimed to have offered sacrifices to the God of Israel "since the days of Esar-haddon." (Ezra 4:2).

We thus gather from the ancient monuments of the Ninevites, confirmed by the parallel records of the Jewish people, these facts;

(1) that the Ten Tribes prior to 722 b. c., had the Lord's "statutes," "ordinances," "law," and "commandments which he wrote," (2 Kings 17:37); by which they were taught the fear of God;

(2) that they disregarded this law, and for their neglect of it were doomed to captivity;

(3) that their nation was overthrown, and that they were carried into distant lands, their places being filled with heathen nations;

(4) that in consequence of the troubles which these heathen encountered, they determined to seek the protection of the God of Israel;

(5) that one of the priests of Israel was brought back to teach these untrained heathen how to fear and worship the Most High God;

(6) that as they retained their idolatries, and refused to submit wholly to the law of God, a mingled and corrupt form of worship prevailed among them;

(7) that from the days of Esar-haddon they offered sacrifices to the God of Israel.

About a hundred and thirty-four years after the conquest of Samaria by Sargon, Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Jews themselves were carried away captive to Babylon. After seventy years they returned to undertake the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem, in which work this mixed community of Samaritans, in whom Idolatry seems to have decayed under the influence of the law of God, desired to unite with them. (Ezra 4:1-2). Their assistance being refused, they then exerted themselves to prevent the rebuilding of the temple and the walls. Josephus (*Antiq.* Bk. 9. ch. 8), informs us that they welcomed criminals or refugees from Jerusalem, which of course would be displeasing to the Jews; and, repelled from worshiping at Jerusalem, they finally erected a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, where Mannasseh, brother of Jaddua the Jewish high priest, and son-in-law of Sanballat the governor of Samaria, presided,—he having refused to dissolve his unlawful marriage, and having thus left the Jews and joined the Samaritans. This temple remained till it was destroyed by John Hyrcanus, 130 BC.

Now as “unto *this day*,” when 2 Kings 17:34 was *written*, the Samaritans retained their heathenish ways of worship, is evident that 2 Kings 17:34 was written before the days of Ezra, at which time the Samaritans were anxious to unite with the Jews in building the second temple and in worshiping the God of Israel to whom they had offered sacrifice “since the days of Esar-haddon.” (Ezra 4: 2).

The worship of the ten tribes had been corrupted by “the statutes of Israel which they made.” (2 Kings 17:19). For this apostasy “the Lord removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets.” (2 Kings 17:23). And as the captive priest was brought back to teach the Samaritan colonists “the manner of the God of the land” (2 Kings 17: 26), that they might escape the calamities which had overtaken them in their idolatry, it cannot be supposed that he would instruct them in the calf worship of Bethel for which Israel had just been carried into

captivity, and so plunge them into still deeper troubles; but rather that he would teach them the law and commandments and statutes which had brought peace to the souls of Israel so long as they obeyed them. But to teach these statutes and laws and judgments, he *must have had a copy of the Pentateuch*; and the fact that before the time of Ezra this mingled people had been won from their idolatries to the worship of the one God of Israel, shows that they must have been instructed out of the Mosaic Law, which had subdued their idolatries and powerfully influenced their lives.

The refusal of the Jewish rulers to allow so large an alien element as the Samaritans to incorporate itself in the Jewish nation, which thus must have lost its racial purity, resulted in much bitterness of feeling, which was increased by other circumstances, until the Jews had “no dealings with the Samaritans.” (John 4:9). Matthew in his Gospel, written especially for the Jewish converts, notes the fact that at their first going forth Christ said to his disciples, “Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.” (Matt. 10:5). Yet the Savior himself was not unwilling to enter “into a village of the Samaritans,” though “they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.” (Luke 9:52-53). The Savior had no prejudice against the Samaritans. He visited Sychar, a city of Samaria, and there told the woman of Samaria of the water of life which he gave, and revealed to her first the secret of his Messiahship. (John 4:26). And yielding to the entreaties of the Samaritans “He abode there two days, and many more believed because of his own word,” saying: *We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*” (John 4:42). He took note of the fact that of the ten lepers cleansed, only one, who returned to give glory to God, was a “stranger.”—a Samaritan. (Luke 17:11-18). He taught the catechizing, quibbling Jewish lawyer his lesson concerning love to his neighbor by the example of “a certain Samaritan,” whose kindness he has embodied and embalmed in the story of the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves. (Luke 10:29-37). Indeed his friendliness for the Samaritans seems to have provoked the criticism of the Jews, who said, “Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?” (John 8:48). The last sentence that He spoke to his disciples was, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in *Samaria*, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8). And his disciples when persecuted “were scattered abroad throughout the

regions of Judea and Samaria," and "preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans," (Acts 8:1, 25). There Philip preached, and Samaria "received the word of God;" and thus a portion of that people were called out into that new fraternity, the church of the living God. The Samaritan people, however, retained their existence as a nation or tribe, distinct alike from Jews and Christians, Greeks and Romans.

In the time of the Roman Emperor Vespasian they revolted, and 11,600 of them were slain; and from that time they maintained a troubled and contentious existence, being equally at variance with Jews and Christians. In 1099 they came under the power of the Crusaders, remaining under Christian domination most of the time to 1244, when they passed under Mohammedan rule. Since 1517 they have been subject to the Turks.

Near the close of the fifteenth century Joseph Justus Scaliger (A. d. 1540-1609), the tenth of the fifteen children of the learned Julius Caesar Scaliger,—a man who if not learned in all the wisdom of modern times, was yet able to speak thirteen languages, read many others with facility, and repeat the Greek poets from memory,—remembering some of the references to the Samaritans in earlier writers, addressed letters to the two Samaritan congregations at Nablus and Cairo. Answers to these letters were returned after Scaliger's death, and were translated into Latin by John Morin, and given to the public. This long-forgotten people was thus brought to public notice, and they have since been repeatedly visited. They dwell nearby Jacob's well at Shechem, or Nablus, a corruption of Neapolis or New-Town, which was built by Vespasian a little west of the older town, that was then in ruins.

The Samaritans still number about one hundred and fifty persons. They are probably the *oldest community on earth* which has maintained its existence uninterruptedly in the same place. Israel has been scattered among all nations; Jerusalem has been trodden under foot of the Gentiles; Christians have been persecuted and dispersed; empires have risen and fallen; but the Samaritans still linger in their ancestral seat, and perpetuate the traditions that have come down to them from the far-off past. Why have they thus been preserved?

In connection with the reappearance of the Samaritans on the stage of history, it was remembered that some of the early fathers, as Eusebius, Jerome, Cyril, of Alexandria, Procopius of Gaza, and others, had

recorded the fact that these Samaritans were possessors of the Five Books of Moses. This fact had been lost sight of for a thousand years, but in 1616 Pietro della Valle obtained a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch from the Samaritans in Damascus. De Sancy, the French ambassador at Constantinople, sent this manuscript to the library of the Oratoire in Paris, in 1623, and it was published in Le Jay's Paris Polyglot of 1645, by John Morin, or Morinus. In addition to this there was discovered a Samaritan *version* of the Pentateuch, a different work, in the Samaritan dialect, which resembles both the Chaldee and the Syriac, and which is also of great antiquity. This also was first printed by Le Jay in the Paris Polyglot, and was regarded as older than the schism between the Jews and Samaritans. After this issue of the Samaritan Pentateuch in 1645, Archbishop Usher obtained six additional manuscript copies from the East, and by the aid of these and the Parisian Polyglot, Brian Walton printed a corrected edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch in the London Polyglot of 1657. In the time of Benjamin Kennicott, 1718-1783, other copies had been discovered, so that as many as sixteen Samaritan manuscripts were accessible, and were collated by Kennicott for his critical edition of the Hebrew Bible.

This Samaritan Pentateuch, while it has certain variations, often agreeing with the Septuagint, and shows some marks of alteration is to all intents and purposes essentially the same as the Five Books of Moses in the possession of the Jews. It is in the Hebrew tongue, but in an older style of letters than the Jews now use. Now where did the Samaritans get these Five Books? They did not get them from the Christians, for the Samaritan community was far older than the Christian church. They did not get them from the Jew's, for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. They did not get them in the days of Nehemiah, for at that time the two communities were at open variance, the Jews rejecting the overtures of the Samaritans, and the Samaritans exerting themselves to hinder the Jews in rebuilding their desolate city and temple. They could hardly have got them from the Jews while the Jews were in captivity in Babylon. Whence then did they derive these books? The book of Joshua was an ancient book, written before the time of David and Solomon, as we learn by comparing Josh. 15:63, with 2 Sam. 5:6-9; and Josh. 16:10, with 1 Kings 9:6. But the Samaritans do not have the book of Joshua, nor indeed any of the prophets, they have simply the *Five Books of Moses*; and those books, our critical friends insist, were invented, forged, or

manufactured somewhere in the time of Hezekiah, or Jeremiah, or Josiah, or Ezra, or somebody else, nobody knows when, or where, or by whom.

The Higher Critic tells us that “the original of the Samaritan Pentateuch” was “brought from Jerusalem by Manasseh,” “a copy of the Pentateuch that Manasseh carried with him.”⁷ It is much easier to assert this twice than it is to prove it once; and so the critic chose the easier course. Not a vestige of evidence is adduced for the assertion; though its truthfulness is essential to the existence of many of the modern critical theories; but ordinary Bible readers are expected to believe this statement solely on the bare assertion of a Higher Critic, who speaks “as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” What proof he has that not a single copy of the Pentateuch remained in the land of Israel, after the bulk of the Ten Tribes were carried away, he does not say; what evidence he has that the priest who was carried back to Samaria “to teach them how to fear the Lord,” had no copy of the Pentateuch, he does not state; nor does he inform us by what means the Samaritans, destitute of the divine law, had been led to sacrifice to the God of Israel for more than a century; nor has he told us why the Samaritans in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah should desire to unite with the Jews in the worship of a God whose law they had never seen, and which, in fact, was only a recent invention; nor why they, smarting under the rejection of their overtures made to the Jews, should now adopt the newly forged law and ritual of a nation which had spurned their friendship, and with whom they were at variance. Nor does he give a reason why Manasseh should carry with him to Samaria a copy of a law which he must have known was a recent forgery invented by lying priests,—a law which he himself had disregarded and refused to submit to,—and the provisions of which had already caused his exile from his own people; or why Manasseh, going from Jerusalem to Samaria three or four hundred years before Christ, did not take with him a “Hexateuch” instead of a “Pentateuch,” with all the other prophecies, forgeries, and fictions which had recently been trumped up and imposed upon the Jewish people. All such questions the Higher Critic discreetly overlooks. Hence we lose the assistance of his oracular utterances in setting these vital issues.

⁷ C. A Briggs in Jonhson's Cyclopedia, article, Samaritans.

From the sources of information at our command it appears that about two hundred and seventy-five years before the time of Nehemiah, the Ten Tribes were carried away into captivity for serving idols, and thus disobeying the command of God, who had said unto them:

“Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the Lord testified against Israel and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my *commandments* and my statutes, According to all the *law* which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, ... and they rejected his *statutes*, and his *covenant* that he made with their fathers, and his *testimonies* which he testified against them, ... and they left all the *commandments* of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.” “And the statutes, and the *ordinances*, and the *law*, and the *commandment*, which **he wrote** for” them, they disobeyed, “therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.” (2 Kings 17:12-16, 18).

Having thus cleared the land of the people who disregarded the *Law* which God “*wrote*” for them, the Assyrian king replanted it with heathen captives from the East, who, being afflicted with wild beasts, presented their petition to the king; whereupon he commanded that one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria should be brought back, who “came and dwelt in Bethel, and *taught them how they should fear Jehovah*.” It would seem necessary that this teacher of the fear of the Lord should have a text book containing that written law, for disobeying which Israel had been sent into captivity; and as the only such book in existence was the Pentateuch, he must necessarily have carried that with him. He did not need the historical writings, nor did he need the ‘Hexateuch,’ nor do the Samaritans have it to this day. His people, the Ten Tribes, had revolted from the tyranny of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and had broken off all connection with the house of David; hence they had no interest in David’s Psalms or Solomon’s Proverbs; and when one of their number went back to teach these new settlers “the manner of the God of Israel,” he needed only a copy of the Mosaic law.

This was the only portion of the Jewish Scriptures which the Samaritans have ever received. This they *did* receive, and under its influence they were won back from idolatry, and from “the days of Esarhaddon” offered sacrifices to the God of Israel. And through all the vicissitudes of ages this unique little commonwealth, differing from all the nations and races of the earth, has guarded this sacred treasure, the Mosaic Law. They evidently had it in the days when Nineveh exalted itself in its splendor as the capital of the mighty Assyrian empire; they have it now when Nineveh is “empty, and void, and waste” (Nahum 2:10), and when the shepherds of Assyria slumber, her nobles dwell in the dust, and her people are scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them. (Nahum 3:18). They had it when Babylon was the glory of the Chaldees’ excellency, the lady of kingdoms, the most splendid city on the face of the earth; they have it to-day when Babylon is heaps, desolate, and forsaken. They had it in the times when Persia spread her power and built her palaces; they have it now when that power is broken, and those palaces and cities are in ruins. They had it in the days of Grecian dominion, when Alexander and his successors ruled; they have it still, when Alexander’s empire is but a dream of the past. They had it when Rome was the proud mistress of the world, and her eagle hastened like vultures to prey upon them; and now when mighty Rome has fallen, and the glory of the Caesars has forever passed, within the whitewashed walls of the tiny synagogue of Nablus, in a silver case, is still carefully guarded the age-worn manuscript of the Samaritan Pentateuch. The priests in charge of it know or care nothing about the squabbles of the Higher Critics, the forgeries of “post-exilic” scriptures, or the work of the dozens of “redactors” that the Higher Critics have discovered or invented. They are indifferent to the opinions of Jews or Gentiles; but they call themselves “the Shomerim,” or custodians of the Law; and they guard that old time-stained manuscript, which they declare has been handed down to them from Eleazar, the third son of Aaron; and while nations and empires have risen and fallen, decayed and perished, this little flock, guarding this Law of Moses, and paying heed to the precepts, has outlived races, and empires, and dynasties, and still retains its existence as a witness for this ancient Law.

The Higher Critics dissect this Law as the spurious production of Jewish priests and patriotic liars, who forged it after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; but they are met by *this copy of the*

Pentateuch providentially placed for safe keeping in the hands of the Samaritans some twenty-five hundred years ago; and when the Law of Moses, having fallen among the Higher Critics, lies stripped and wounded, and half dead, the Good Samaritan comes as of old, to bind up the wounds, and pour in oil and wine.

And we have not only the testimony of the Samaritans, but that of the scattered sons of Israel. In *Principles of Biblical Criticism*, p. 244, J. J. Lias says, "I have recently seen a communication from the Jews of Yemen, Arabia, to those in Jerusalem, in which the former state, that their ancestors never returned to Judea after the captivity. Yet their version of the Scriptures is precisely identical with that of their brethren." Who forged *their* Scriptures?

The criticisms of the Higher Critics are not entirely new. Many of them are simply Old Wine in New Bottles, the skepticism of the past masquerading as the Christianity of the present. Celsus and Porphyry, Voltaire and Paine, Astruc and Strauss have had their day and said their say. And whatever their personal characters may have been, any facts or arguments which they offer are entitled to fair, candid, dispassionate investigation. It does not disprove a man's argument to prove that he is a knave or hypocrite, he may be all this, and yet he may present difficulties which demand careful investigation. So the Higher Critics of the present day are entitled to a fair and candid hearing. If they were a trifle less oracular and omniscient in their attitude and tone, they might be more agreeable instructors, for humanity learns best of those who are "meek and lowly in heart." Nevertheless facts are facts, and facts will stand, however they are stated; truth will prevail however imperfectly it may be declared. But "he that believeth shall not make haste," and those who *do* make haste in such important matters, sometimes reach disastrous conclusions.

It is easy to cut a boat adrift from its moorings, hut who can tell what currents will bear it away, or on what rocks it may at last be wrecked? So it may be easy to unsettle the faith of honest but ill taught souls, but who shall answer for the results?⁸ Whether the Higher Critics of the present

⁸ "A statement has been widely circulated in the public press, that the number of persons in Germany who this year declared themselves to be of no religion is fourteen times as great as in 1871. Is there no connection between this fact and the manner in

day will ever follow their own premises to their legitimate conclusions or not we cannot say; but some of their disciples will be sure to do it; and though the inventors and disseminators of doubt and uncertainty are not likely to abandon their posts, sacrifice their salaries, or desist from praising the Scriptures whose authority they have so thoroughly undermined; yet many common sense readers will not be likely to long retain a reverence for exploded fictions, nor accept a volume of forged laws, priestly inventions, pious frauds, and old-wives fables, as a divine revelation and an infallible rule of faith and practice. And the amount of mischief which may result from the broadcast sowing of undigested theories and critical cavilings,⁹ no mortal can estimate. In closing a sermon before the students of Cornell University, Dr. J. M. Buckley, editor of *The Christian Advocate*, said:

“A series of sermons was published in Scotland, teaching that almost everything held to be fundamental to Christian faith had, by the researches of modern scholarship, been found untenable, and speaking of what remains in an indefinite way. These discourses were republished in the United States. Among those who read and accepted them was a woman in the city of New York, of great intelligence and intellectuality and of high culture.

“A year or two later she removed to a suburb upon the Hudson River, continuing to attend the Presbyterian Church, but frankly informing the pastor that she had lost faith, and attributing the change to those discourses. Afterwards she became ill and died of a lingering disease. During the months of steady but not rapid progress to the grave, the pastor frequently visited her, making every effort to re-establish her faith in the simple provisions of the gospel, but in vain. To the last she said that she knew nothing and was *not able to believe anything positively*. So much had been shaken that she was not certain there was anything that could not be shaken.

which German criticism has treated the Bible?” —*Principles of Biblical Criticism*, by J.J. Lias, p. 216.

⁹ Making objections that are uninformed, trivial, or unreasonable.—editor.

“Less than a year after her death, the author of those sermons was summoned to trial for heresy. When the charges were submitted he asked a little time for reconsideration, and submitted a statement that when he prepared those discourses he believed them, but further reflection had convinced him that he had erred in taking many things for granted that had not been proved, deducing conclusions that were not warranted even by his premises, and expressing himself in an unguarded manner, and that he desired to retract several of the discourses in whole, and in part all but one or two.

“But the woman who had given up her faith in the essentials of the gospel for faith in him, hath died in darkness.”

Those who watch for souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief, cannot shirk their responsibilities. They must meet hereafter those whom they have “nourished up in words of faith and sound doctrine,” or whom they have blindly misled into devious and dangerous paths. And the Master to whom we all must give account has said, “It is impossible but that offences will come, but woe unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea, than that he *should offend one of these little ones.*” Luke 17:2.