A HANDBOOK

OF

BIBLICAL DIFFICULTIES.

UNIFORM WITH 'SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY BIBLE DIFFICULTIES.'

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OR,

Reasonable Solutions of Perplexing Things in Sacred Scripture.

Edited by Rev. ROBERT TUCK, B.A. (Lond.), author of 'First Three Kings of Israel,' 'Age of the Great Patriarchs,' etc.

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FACTS AND SUGGESTIONS HELPFUL TOWARDS THE SOLUTION OF PERPLEXING THINGS IN SACRED SCRIPTURE, BEING A

SECOND SERIES

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EDITED BY

ROBERT TUCK, B.A. (LOND.),

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'Now we see through a glass, darkly.'—ST. PAUL.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

GENERAL PREFACE 1
GENERAL INTRODUCTION 4
1. THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE 4
2. RECENT VIEWS ON INSPIRATION . . . 8
INTRODUCTORY NOTES:
PECULIARITIES OF SACRED HISTORY . . . 15
PECULIARITIES OF SACRED HISTORY, SUMMARY AND REVIEW 159
HISTORY A SECONDARY FEATURE IN NEW TESTAMENT . 168
PECULIARITIES OF BIBLICAL SCIENCE . . . 231
GENERAL NOTE ON HEBREW SCIENCE . . . 238
GENERAL NOTE ON SCIENTIFIC FACT AND THEORY . . 241
UNCERTAINTIES IN BIBLE NUMBERS . . . 401
PROGRESSIVE REVELATION OF RELIGION . . . 417
PECULIARITIES OF HEBREW AND GREEK WRITINGS . . 477

SECTION I.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO ANCIENT HISTORY.

OLD TESTAMENT 18
NEW TESTAMENT 168

SECTION II.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO MATTERS OF SCIENCE.

SUB-SECTIONS:
1. DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO ASTRONOMY, ASTROLOGY, AND MAGIC 243
2. DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO MEDICAL SCIENCE . . 277
3. DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO GEOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, AND TOPOGRAPHY 305
4. DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO NATURAL HISTORY . . 337
5. DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO ETHNOLOGY AND ARCHÆOLOGY 361
6. DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO NUMBERS AND CHRONOLOGY 406

371547

SECTION III.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO MATTERS OF RELIGION OR THEOLOGY.

PAGE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS 417

SECTION IV.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO THE USAGES OF LANGUAGE.

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS 477

GENERAL PREFACE.

THIS book is not presented to the reader as containing final judgments on any of the topics introduced in it. It contains only the material, more or less complete, for forming good judgments. A dogmatic tone is carefully avoided, and a suggestive tone is anxiously and constantly sought. The Editor's opinions are but contributions towards the consideration of a subject. It is not a controversial work, and it has no precisely-defined theories to uphold. Fairly, and without prejudice, the views of writers of very different schools are represented; and even the effort to guide the reader to a final judgment is kept within careful restraint.

The aim set before the Editor is a very simple one, but a practically useful one. Fresh information relating to Bible subjects has largely accumulated during recent years, and new additions are being made every month. But this information comes to us in a variety of ways. It is often locked up in books that are only accessible to the learned: and the thousands of Bible readers, Bible students, and Bible teachers, have neither the time for research, nor the ability to select, from the mass of material at command, what may be of real value in the elucidation of Bible problems. The Editor has endeavoured first to select special topics of interest to thoughtful Bible readers; keeping in mind that a subject may interest one student, and altogether fail to interest another. Then he has endeavoured to quicken inquiry, and impel to research, by suggesting questions. And, finally, he has sought to provide, and set forth as succinctly as possible, what is known, and what is thought, in relation to the matter treated.

This volume is the continuation and completion of a scheme, of which the first portion has been published under the title, 'A Handbook of Biblical Difficulties.' The scheme proposed to deal, in a representative way, with all the *classes* of difficulties which an intelli-

gent reader might be expected to find in the Bible. The early volume was confined to the treatment of difficulties connected with moral questions, Eastern sentiments, and the miraculous element. This volume treats of the difficulties relating to History, Science, Ancient Religions, Language, and Doctrine.

In treating so many Bible questions under the term 'Difficulties,' the Editor is conscious of an objection that may fairly be urged. It may be said, that it is not wise to produce the impression that there are so many difficulties in God's Word. The disposition to find excuse for not believing the Bible is strong enough without being encouraged by those who are the friends of the Bible. To that objection it may be replied, (1) That it is necessary for us to follow closely on the heels of those who suggest that there are errors and mistakes in the Sacred Word. The Christian must be at least as quick and skilful in defence as the unbeliever is in attack; and the Christian need never be afraid for the whole truth to be known. (2) The more of these so-called 'difficulties' we gather together, the less importance is seen to attach to our inability to explain any *one* of them; because we find out that they belong to *classes*, and then we can get principles of explanation that are quite satisfactory when applied to the *class*, though we may not be enabled to apply them to some one particular case. (3) Though the subjects introduced are called 'Difficulties,' the term is more correctly used of what men think and feel who read the Word, than of the Word itself. The difficulties may be, in part, due to the incompleteness of the record, which so seldom tells us all we want to know; but they are chiefly due to the insufficiency, or the incorrectness, of *our knowledge*, and to the blinding influence of *our prejudices*. These, so often, first put things into the Word for us, and then persuade us that the difficulties we find belong to the Word itself.

In the former volume there was more of opinion than of fact. In this, by reason of the nature of the subjects treated, there must be more of fact than of opinion. But on no subject connected with Bible History, or Science, or Criticism, can it be affirmed that the 'last word has been spoken.' The monuments, and the buried cities, are still yielding the materials for new judgments. Learned men are still applying, as skilfully as they may, the latest critical apparatus; and all that can be attained by any of us, is a good, reasonable, workable, but temporary, conclusion. *That*, however, is a sufficient basis of faith, and it should be a sufficient incentive to duty.

Advanced students will find this work little more than a reminder of points of interest which they have met with in the course of their

researches. And those who wish to pursue further any topic that is introduced in this volume, will readily find the works of great thought-leaders in every department.

One large class of probable readers the Editor has endeavoured constantly to keep in mind. The Teachers of Senior and Bible Classes require to be ready with an efficient answer to every inquiry that may be made by any member of their classes. The reception of the former volume by this particular class of readers has been very gratifying; and it has made quite clear that these volumes will meet a distinctly recognised want, and materially aid our Senior Class Teachers in guiding intelligently the questioning, and often the half-sceptical thoughts, of the young people.

The Editor has in no case set down anything that would imperil the sense of authority in God's Word. While endeavouring to keep abreast of all the latest information, he regards very many of the results of modern criticism as tentative; and even thinks that some of the conclusions from monumental relics have been hastily drawn, and will come under revision. But he considers that nothing is gained by hiding from the general view all that is known, and all that is thought, in relation to the Word of God. The truest safety is found in the free ventilation of all subjects. Men's minds are variously constituted, and through the strife of opinion, the satisfactory settings of the truth may be won. Fear for the Word of God is a feeling which the Editor has never cherished. To gain the fuller, worthier, and wiser knowledge of the Word, and of all related to it, and of all that can throw light upon it, has been the great aim of his life, and the constant endeavour of long, hard-working years.

May those who use this book find it as helpful in the confirmation of their faith, and in the enlargement of their Bible Knowledge, as the Editor has done who has compiled it! Concerning the literature, and history, and science of God's most Holy Word, we may unite in saying—

'Let knowledge grow from more to more.'

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

I.

THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE.

WE are now becoming familiar with the statement that our Bible has its place in the world's *Literature*. But many persons are yet unable to admit that it may be studied as one of the world's books, apart from its higher purpose, as the authorized revelation of the will of God, and the duties of man. There are multitudes who have studied it as the Sacred Book; there will always be *some* who can find in it no more than one of the World's Classics; an ordinary book of Ethics, and History, and Poetry, and Philosophy. But why may not those who regard the Bible as the inspired book of morals and religion, willingly learn all they can from those who study the Word from a strictly literary point of view? If we say that it is literature, *and much more*, we may surely be willing to learn all we can from those who are skilled in literature. Writers like Renan do not occupy our standpoint, nor can they see what we can see; but we should be foolish indeed if we refused to learn all Renan, and similar authors, can teach us, so far as they can go.

Dr. H. M. Thompson, Bishop of Mississippi, states in plain and significant terms the position which is now commending itself to intelligent and educated persons. 'If God is to give a revelation of Divine knowledge to man, it must begin, being what man is, under limitations. It must be given in human speech. There is, therefore, the Divine Essence—the revelation; and the human clothing of the revelation—human words. The Divine Essence is always the same. The human expression must necessarily vary. Also, the human expression may be inadequate, or even erroneous.'

Now the term *literature*, as applied to the Bible, concerns only the *human form* in which the Book comes to us. It is, we know, in a special and unique sense, a Book by itself; but it is also a Book taking

rank among other books, the product of human minds; composed according to the knowledge and literary skill of different times and national conditions. It may surely be subjected to examination according to ordinary literary rules. Why should we fear to submit it to such testings? It has pleased God to employ human minds with their particular furniture of knowledge; and we are only following along God's own line when we try to ascertain the limitations of human faculty, and the extent of human knowledge, as found in the Sacred Book.

Our minds are often confused because the distinction between Revelation and Inspiration is not precisely drawn. 'The word *Revelation* stands for the Act of God in making truth known to men, and then, in a secondary sense, for the truth itself which is thus made known. *Inspiration* is the name of the special Divine influence under which the writers of the Bible worked. We speak of the Revelation of God in the Bible, and of the Inspiration of the writers of the Bible. In order to understand the questions which have been raised on these two subjects, it is important that we should discriminate between them in thought, but in fact they are closely connected. It is the association of the two that gives its supreme value to the Bible. This is recognised as a book of unique character, because it is *an inspired record of a Divine revelation.*'

Without in any sense denying or limiting the inspiration of the Bible writers, we may recognise the further truth, that such Divine influence as may be called 'inspiration' rests upon the *readers* of the record as truly as upon the writers of it. If God was pleased to speak to men through *lives*, He can speak to us through the *records* of lives as we read them.

Perhaps one greatest hindrance is found in the notion that prevails among us, that God is more present in what we regard as *superhuman* events than in what we regard as *human;* more present in the extraordinary than in the ordinary; more present in miracle than in history. And yet this notion will be easily dispelled by careful thinking. The child-times of the world make much of wonders and portents. The manhood of the world finds God in daily life; sees Him to be far greater when He gives to every living thing its meat in due season, than when, for a purpose, He satisfies 5,000 with five loaves. It would be wise for us to culture quickness of observation, so that we may see God in Nature, in Providence, in history, in life, and then this God-awakening attention, and illustrating Himself *sometimes*, in miracle and wonder.

If we could fully accept the idea that our Bible is *literature*, we

should be able readily to settle the difficulties that are connected with science. We should then see that literature can do no more than reflect the ideas of the age in which it is produced. We can see how strange, *to us*, would be the scientific setting of a thousand or two thousand years ago; but we do not so readily see how strange, how ridiculous, to the people who lived two thousand years ago would have been books written in the scientific setting of this nineteenth century. How useless, how mischievous, how subversive of the Divine order, would have been Bible references to the earth going round the sun, to protoplasm, evolution, gas, or telephones! Science means the knowledge of a material world which man's faculties enable him to gain, and it is necessarily a progressive thing; its characteristics vary in different ages and climes. The most universally-received conclusions of to-day may be dispelled by the enlarged knowledge and keener criticism of to-morrow.

What things, then, are in evidence concerning the literary character of the Old Testament? In the appendix to a Teachers' Bible may be found these sentences: 'The Old Testament consists of the sacred literature of the Jews.' 'The Bible is a work of literature, not a manual of scientific theology.' We need not, then, be afraid to say that the Old Testament, from the Pentateuch or Hexateuch onwards, is simply the literature of the Jews; sacred because the Jews were a sacred people, sacred because God was pleased to make that literature conserve the primary principles of natural religion for humanity, preserving them as the foundation on which the spiritual religion of Christ could be reared when the fulness of times had come.

This volume is prepared with the prevailing idea that the whole world is God's; science is God's; history is God's; philosophy is God's; art is God's; literature is God's; the Bible is God's; man is God's; and every faculty and endowment of man's is God's. In place of finding God *only* in the Bible, we would find God there and everywhere; and wherever He is, we are sure He will be supplementing or correcting men, setting men straight, sometimes leaving man to his free experiment, and sometimes helping him by revelations.

We shall also take this view. What we call a man's *errors* may be but the limited range of knowledge of his age. If a man is true to his times God does not interfere with him, and give him the knowledge which will be gained by men in some later time. A man can only serve his generation aright by being *en rapport* with it. Each age is a step; from it the world gets power to step up higher. And it is quite enough if it be a *true step at the time.* We learn by seeing

exactly what men thought, and felt, and knew, and did at each stage; we are helped by seeing how kin these Bible men and women were even to the moral sentiments of the ages in which they lived.

It is true that, in the spheres of morals and religion, we find Divine *corrections;* but they were only corrections within the limited spheres and capacities of the times in which they were given. No teacher would think of correcting the mistake of a boy by giving that boy the very highest knowledge that the teacher had himself gained. He corrects the boy by giving knowledge that is *just beyond* the boy's present attainment. In many things Moses carries on Arab and Egyptian notions and customs; but God secures a higher tone and character for Moses' adaptations, raises such things, and makes them serve spiritual purposes.

What, then, do we propose in this our treatment of literary and scientific Bible difficulties? The constant and close relation of God to all the contents of the Bible will be jealously preserved. We shall reverently inquire, by a careful consideration of the facts, what God has been pleased to do, and how He has been pleased to do it. Common-sense is God's, and we shall bring it to bear on the Bible records, and on the solution of Bible difficulties; and so we may hope to bring the Sacred Book into closer and more human relations with us.

As confirming and illustrating our position, we give the following passage by Dr. R. Heber Newton, of America:

'The Bible is a series of books, the extant national literature of the Jews, the Apocrypha being included, and the literature of the Christian church in its creative epoch. As literature, these books are, most of them, noble, and worthy of immortality, and have been the chief sources of inspiration to the mental and moral life of Christendom; worthy to be called Sacred Books.

'They are in a still deeper sense our Sacred Books—as the literature of the people of religion, the race to whom God gave the unique mission of evolving ethical religion, whom He had endowed with a specialty for religion and trained by singular experiences for its normal development, and from whom, as an historical fact, has issued the one religion which may claim to have the future in its hands, the religion bodied in the Divine Man.

'The literature of such a people forms plainly the classic books of religion, which are, as our fathers believed, the records of a real revelation, though that revelation lay in the historic and organic evolution of Israel's consciousness, the coming on of light into the race. These

books are the works of a real, Divine inspiration, though that inspiration was wholly ethical and spiritual, and in nowise scientific or philosophic, and differs from other inspirations only in degree, not kind.'

II.

RECENT VIEWS ON INSPIRATION.

The various theories of inspiration were fully treated in the introductory note to the previous volume. Since then, decided advance has been made in the more liberal treatment of this subject. As characteristic utterances, we quote the following from a bishop of the American Episcopal Church: 'The doctrine of a verbal inspiration was never that of the Church Catholic'; and this passage taken from the writings of Professor Elmslie: 'It is undoubtedly true that we possess no early Hebrew manuscripts; that the ancient translations depart in the most surprising fashion from the received Hebrew text; that very many passages of the latter cannot be construed so as to give a reasonably likely sense; that nearly all scholars admit in numerous passages the existence of uncertainty as to the actual original, or even the certain loss of what the inspired penman wrote. In a much less degree, the same things are true of the New Testament manuscripts, versions, and text, as the unlearned reader may see in part by comparing the Authorized English Version with the text and margin of the Revised Version. On the other hand, it is confessed alike by believing and unbelieving scholars that all this, at first sight, formidable mass of uncertainty as to a few passages of moment, and innumerable verbal details, has not, in any appreciable degree, touched or modified the Scriptural basis on which rests our belief in the grand doctrines of evangelical faith.'

We are now invited to deal with the question of Bible inspiration after a *new method;* and we must candidly admit that the proposed new method is in every way wiser, safer, and more reasonable.

The old and long-established method has been to decide first of all what the Bible is, and then treat it as being what we have *beforehand* decided that it is.

The new method is to reserve all making of theories about the Bible until we have carefully and reverently examined and studied it; and then, when the facts are fully before us, we may venture to form a decision as to what it is, and a theory about its inspiration.

We shall have no difficulty in saying which is the more reasonable course, if the alternative be put before us in this form: Which is the

wiser plan, to take a theory that men have made, and judge God's Book by the *man-made theory*, or to take God's Book just as He has given it to us, and only when we know it well venture to make a theory about it?

There is much in the Rev. R. F. Horton's recent book on 'Inspiration and the Bible' which we should have to criticise somewhat severely. We more especially object to the magnifying, and even creating, of difficulties and contradictions, through unwillingness to recognise common-sense and familiar explanations. In the treatment of a composite book, such as our Bible is, everything depends on the bias of mind with which it is approached, and it is at once truer and healthier to approach it with the expectation that its variations, and apparent contradictions, have some natural and simple solution.

But the general position which Mr. Horton takes is that which is taken by reverent thought-leaders both in England, the Continent, and America; and it will receive general acceptance from Christian people as they become familiarized with it. It is the modern form in which devout minds will apprehend the Inspiration of Holy Scripture. It is subversive only of that particular form of the truth of Inspiration which is known as '*Verbal*,' and which can only be held in face of facts which abundantly disprove it, and are patent to every unprejudiced student.

Mr. Horton says: 'To the question, then, What is Inspiration? we have to answer, Precisely that which the Bible *is*. But when once this simple truth is realized, and cleared from all the illusions of false ideas which have been the growth of centuries, we find the task which lies before us is, though arduous and long, yet full of hope and promise. Relieved from the incubus of a big falsity, we can turn joyfully to the discovery of the truth. To find out what is the content of the term Inspiration, we must set to work earnestly and diligently to find out what the Bible actually is. Instead of being hampered in all our inquiries by a foregone conclusion, and frightened from a candid investigation of fact by the fear lest the fact should shatter our theory of Inspiration, we go to form our theory of Inspiration from an examination of the facts. To use the language of Logic, our inquiry becomes Inductive instead of Deductive; it is Positive instead of Metaphysical. The time, then, to formulate a doctrine of Inspiration is when we have fairly and freely and fully investigated all that the Inspired Volume contains; only then can we draw together the varied phenomena, and attempt to give an idea of the term, not merely by example, but by definition.'

It is impossible to object to this way of presenting our duty in re-

lation to the question of Inspiration. Nothing can honour the Bible more than to shake ourselves free from *men's opinions* about it, and consult it ourselves, and see what it has to say for itself. It is precisely *this work* which this volume on 'Bible Difficulties' seeks to aid. It confidently offers guidance in some of the *by-ways* of Scripture, in the assurance that its help will move some hindrances out of the way of an intelligent and reverent apprehension of the fact, that 'no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost.'

As we have still to combat the rigid theory of 'Verbal Inspiration,' which has gained so firm a hold on the Christian mind, and still to try and replace it with the more Scriptural and truthful view, we may remind our readers of certain calm, judicious, and suggestive sentences, penned by the late *Frederick Myers, M.A.*, of Keswick. 'The more rigid Theory, which is more popularly received, and which holds that there is no separable human element in the Bible—that its several books not only contain the Word of God, but are constituted of the Words of God, and of them alone, and that all, therefore, is throughout of equal and supreme authority—this is a belief which involves in it many difficulties and disadvantages. By disallowing any human element, or any condescending adaptation, we are deprived at once of much feeling of sympathy with the writers of the Bible—as in such case they become but as mere Instruments rather than Agents of the Supreme—and we are put out of harmony with what we think we see to be the condition of God's dealings in all other parts of His influence on man that we know of; we find broken that chain of analogies which we appear able to trace throughout the varied economy of His educational processes; and thus a preliminary difficulty—the source of other consequent difficulties in detail almost innumerable—is introduced, which, if gratuitous, is certainly unwise. But not only this: we are henceforth exposed to attacks of criticism quite countless and endless: and our faith is ever liable to rude shocks, if not more, at each fresh difficulty which can be raised as to any sentence, or even word, throughout documents extending over a period of the ancient history of man for fifteen centuries and more. The Literalist depending much on particular passages and on certain expressions being of one form and not of another, is in continual danger of having the large inferences which his system allows and even requires him to erect upon them brought to the ground by a progressive scholarship. The fearful anxieties which have been caused to those who maintained such opinions, even in our days, by the Progress of Science, ought not to be readily

forgotten by themselves, and will not be so by others: and though now gradually these are subsiding everywhere, they ought not to be allowed to do so wholly, without leaving us the lesson of the fallibility of even the devoutest dogmatism.

'And what have been historically the advantages of the more rigid Theory? Has the result which has attended the assertion of it been such as to satisfy any thoughtful mind, or to gratify any religious one? Has it prevented controversies? or, rather, has it not given rise to them more abundantly? Does it solve any of those great difficulties which have been common to all ages? Has it not introduced new ones? Does it not rather ignore the anxieties of the most earnest, and contradict the acquisitions of the most enlightened? Has it even secured to the most simply devout any theoretic unanimity? or what result is there which it has accomplished which might not have been accomplished by a less rigid theory, and may not yet be? Almost every difficulty which is presented by the less definite Theory is presented also by that which is the most so, and the history of Exposition testifies most clearly that there are very few who hold the strict theory, who are not compelled to make practical relaxations of exposition which impair the consistency of their principles, and who do not transfer to their Rules of Interpretation a licence which amounts to an equivalent for what elsewhere they are anxious to deny.'

It is hardly possible to find what we regard as the true theory, or view, of the Inspiration of God's Word, more soberly, more concisely, or more satisfactorily stated than by Mr. Myers, toward the close of his Third Book of 'Catholic Thoughts.'

'Such persons are here assured by one who has studied the writings of both volumes of the Bible, long and often—under various conditions of mind, and from points of view as wide asunder as possible for the same object to be retained in sight—that he believes there is no moral truth more certain than that the Bible is as a whole generically different from all other books—and that it has been given by the special Providence of God to be to men an indispensable and sufficient Guide for them to the Knowledge and Love of Himself. The New Testament appears to him, after every fresh examination of the criticism which has been brought against it, to be substantially a self-authenticating Revelation of God; and the Old Testament, after the same, to be a Divinely-provided Introduction to the New—truly prophesying and testifying of Christ, and being as a Schoolmaster to lead us unto Him. Some portions, indeed, of the Scriptures, when taken separately, may appear imperfect, but when

carefully considered in their due relations, they will be seen to form the terms of a series which the Providence of God has surely superintended. To one thus viewing them, there will eventually disclose itself a Unity of Plan and of Spirit pervading the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelations—binding both volumes into one, and developing a scheme which surely, yet naturally—with continual apparent frustration indeed of immediate processes, but with certain progress towards the accomplishment of its ultimate aim—proves itself Divine: for nothing can well be conceived more self-evidently under more than Mortal Governance than that which equably develops itself, and forms itself into one living and growing Whole, during a period which includes within it some fifty generations of mankind. Viewed as thus unfolding itself, with perpetual fresh increase of vitality for so long, and when ceasing to grow, giving birth to a Dispensation of things, the full significance of which we feel to be yet inexhaustible, the Bible cannot but appear, notwithstanding the fullest recognition of its human elements, a Book emphatically Divine—such as there is not elsewhere on earth; different not only in degree, but in kind from all others; and one which, when rightly read, can do what none other can—make men wise unto salvation.'

Careful attention to these wise words should convince us that a full and reverent recognition of the Inspiration of God's Word is not in any way dependent on our acceptance of a hard and fast theory, which has never been more than the dogma of a school: never the belief of the Catholic and Universal Church.

Such a Divine presidency over the formation of the Sacred Book, and such a Divine direction of all its contents to the securing of predetermined moral and religious ends, as Mr. Myers thus devoutly recognises, we also admit, and commend to the serious consideration of our readers. With such an apprehension of Divine Inspiration they may reasonably be satisfied. Such Inspiration will be found underlying our treatment of the various perplexities of the Word in this book on 'Bible Difficulties.'

Henry Ward Beecher represents a somewhat different school of thought. He says that the 'Divine Revelation, interpreted by Evolution, will free the Scriptures from fictitious pretensions made by men, from clouds of misconceptions, and give to us the Book as a clear, shining light, instead of an orb veiled by false claims and worn-out philosophies.' He thinks that the 'Bible has been held in captivity by an untrue and unwarranted theory of inspiration, which runs it against a thousand obstacles, and well-nigh leads the commentators into intellectual dishonesty. Men have ignored the actual method of

its growth, by laying wrong emphasis upon its external structure, and, above all, making its exterior framework—the historical mechanism—of more importance than the thing that has been secured within the Scriptures by means of that mechanism. Much that may have been needful for the evolution and production of the Bible ceases to be needful for our faith in it, when it has been produced.'

Mr. Wilson, of Clifton College, deals with the right Christian attitude towards *definitions* of Inspiration in a very striking way, in his volume of lectures. He begins by contrasting the extreme reticence not of one Christian Church only, but of nearly all the greater branches of the Christian Church, as to the true definition of Inspiration, with the desire of Secularists and Agnostics so to define it that they may confute the Christian revelation, as it were, out of its own mouth. He contrasts impressively the language of two different authorities on this question. One of these says, 'The purely organic (*i.e.*, mechanical) theory of Inspiration rests on no Scriptural authority, and, if we except a few ambiguous metaphors, is supported by no historical testimony. It is at variance with the whole form and fashion of the Bible, and it is destructive of all that is holiest in man and highest in religion.' The other authority says, 'It will not do to say that it [the Bible] is not verbally inspired. If the words are not inspired, what is?' And then Mr. Wilson explains that the former authority, who protests so strongly against verbal inspiration as inconsistent with historical testimony and fatal to what is highest in religion, is Canon Westcott, of Cambridge, one of the most learned of our living Biblical critics; and that the latter authority, who is eager to tie the Bible down to verbal inspiration, is the well-known American Secularist, Colonel Robert Ingersoll, who really contends for verbal inspiration as the only intelligible kind of inspiration, in order that he may explode all inspiration altogether. 'Do you, then, ask me,' says Mr. Wilson, 'can I become a Christian without having first believed in the Divinely-guaranteed accuracy of the Bible? A thousand times I answer, "Yes."' And then he proceeds, in a passage of great beauty and wisdom, to explain himself: 'The truth is, that the belief in inspiration is not the portal by which you enter the temple; it is the atmosphere that you breathe when you have entered. You may become a Christian—most men do become Christians—from finding in the life and sayings and death of Jesus Christ something that touches them, something that finds them, something that is a revelation of Divine love to the human heart. Men find that there is something in them dear and precious to God. And then love springs up in them, and a new life begins. They look out on the world with

larger and more loving eyes. They see God in their brethren, God in Nature, and God in their Bibles. In their Bibles they read of the Christ whom they love. Those pages are filled with power that moves the soul; never man spake as this man; never book spake as this book. And this, and this only, is the theory of inspiration that Christians must needs possess. It is primarily an internal question among believers, not an external question with the world. It has little or no relation to the convictions which make and keep a man a Christian. It is not a question which I or anyone would care to talk about to one who is not already drawn to Christ. It is premature to talk with others of the exact limits of inspiration. Let them first read the Gospels, read them as they would read any other book, with any theory of inspiration or with none, with the one aim of learning the truth about Jesus Christ, of finding in the book what is pure, and noble, and elevating; let them first learn to admire, to love, to copy, to serve Jesus Christ, and I care not what theory they may form of inspiration; they will have got the thing, and then they will not be over-anxious to define it.'

Bishop Goodwin says: 'Attention does not seem to have been duly given to the fact that the word Inspiration must, in the nature of things, be a word used to express a certain quality of a book, known upon other grounds to exist, and cannot rightly be regarded as a word from which, by a deductive process, the qualities of the book can be determined. A writer starts, for instance, with the principle that the Bible is inspired—is the Word of God—is the message of God to man—or the like; and from this principle undertakes to assert that certain propositions concerning it must be true. He says, for example, that it cannot contain any statements contrary to the truths of science, or that it cannot contain historical errors as to matters of fact, or that it cannot contain internal discrepancies. Now, I do not say that any one of these characteristics, declared to be impossible, does in reality belong to the Bible; but I wish to know upon what principle anyone can venture to assert positively that the discovery of their existence strips the Bible of its Divine character?'

Dr. D. W. Simon, of Edinburgh, writes: 'More or less distinctly—more distinctly of late—all candid inquirers have confessed that there was a human as well as a divine element in the Scriptures. The Scripture as truly as Christ is *divine-human*.'

It is proposed, in this work on 'Difficulties,' to recognise fully what is thus called the 'human element.'

HANDBOOK

OF

Literary and Scientific Bible Difficulties.

SECTION I.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO ANCIENT HISTORY.

OLD TESTAMENT.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In the selection of topics for treatment under this heading, a very comprehensive view of history has been taken. It is regarded as including the legendary matters which precede history proper, the identification of persons and places, apparent contradictions in historical statements, chronological complications, diversities in the narratives, significance of particular incidents, explanation of elaborate details, and the relations of the Sacred History to that which has long been known, and that which has recently been recovered, of the history of the nations surrounding Israel.

It may be helpful if the peculiarities of the Sacred History are briefly indicated. It is evident that the early portion of Genesis must be classed as legendary, and, as such, may be compared with the vague antecedents of the history of every nation. When history may be said to begin with Abraham, we need to remember that, at first, it existed only as narratives retained in memory, and told from generation to generation. And when history could be preserved in writing, it was still subject to the uncertainties of copying and editing.

We may regard Moses as the Divinely-guided compiler of the early history from legendary materials which had been preserved in memory as folk-lore. And for the later history we may find two

classes of writers—those who originally composed fragments on matters within their knowledge; and those who, in later times, threaded these fragments so as to form an almost continuous narrative.

It is singular that the Bible should never indicate any anxiety concerning the authorship of any of the portions of which it is composed. It even seems that pride of authorship is a modern invention. In ancient times it was judged useful to fix a great and well-known name to a composite work, and it was not meant to imply that the man so named was responsible for the whole of the contents. Thus David's name is put to the collection of national psalms, of which he only contributed a portion. Solomon's name is attached to the Book of Proverbs, though the book acknowledges the contributions of others. Isaiah appears to be the author of a book which covers too long a space of time for one human life. We must beware of taking our modern notions of authorship and composition as the basis on which we judge the origin and character of the ancient writings. Due account should be made of the uncertainty of copying, and of translation into other languages; and it must be admitted that the editors would exercise their judgment in the selection, arrangement, and fitting together of their materials. If attention is paid to such things, many diversities, discrepancies, and apparent contradictions, as well as many peculiarities of language and style, will receive a simple and satisfactory explanation.

There are some facts that demand consideration. If Moses wrote the Pentateuch, it is quite clear that he could not have had personal knowledge of the contents of the first book. There is abundant evidence that he had before him various legendary narratives, parts of which, suiting his leading idea, he threaded into a tolerably continuous story.

It is equally certain that the histories, from Joshua to the Captivity, *as we have them now*, are not original documents belonging to each age, but compilations from such documents as were preserved. Indeed, the histories give us the names of a variety of such original works, all of which have been destroyed. There was a collection of heroic poems known as 'The Book of Jasher,' of which extracts are given. There were books known as 'The History of Samuel the Seer,' 'The History of Nathan the Prophet,' and 'The History of Gad the Seer,' 'The Acts of Solomon,' 'The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite,' 'The Visions of Iddo the Seer,' 'The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel,' and 'The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah,' these latter being evidently State documents.

It is seldom noticed that the Books of Samuel extend beyond the life of Samuel, and so it is only in a limited sense that he was their author. The Books of Kings and Chronicles must have been written by someone who lived after the last incidents which they narrate, and, if so, he must have used previously-provided materials. And if this point be studied, it will be found that a space of some 400 years intervenes between the preparation of the earlier series, the Books of Kings, and the later series, the Books of Chronicles. It is not certain that the same original materials were used for the compilation of the two sets of works; and if two separate writers were now to attempt to form a history of English life 400 years ago from the various documents which might be at their command, they would be sure to produce similar diversities and apparent contradictions to those which we find in the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

As to chronology, it is quite plain that there was in ancient times no accurate system of dating events, and there is a remarkable absence of chronological exactness in the historical writings of the Bible.

These remarks, which will receive abundant illustration in the treatment of the several topics of this work, are intended to keep before the minds of our readers that the *moral* movements of the people of God are the real subject of Divine revelation, and that these are adequately and effectively presented in a history which, so far as its mere details are concerned, is encompassed with the ordinary infirmities of human histories.

If any should say, 'Is there, then, no inspired element in the actual writing? Is it, after all, only the ordinary record of an extraordinary history?' we may answer in the words of Mr. Horton: 'Whoever these unknown authors were, and we have seen that the historical books were all anonymous, we may say of them generally, apart from the indications in the quoted authorities, that they were prophets, and sons of the prophets. Indifferent as they were to historical consistency and chronological accuracy, they were keenly alive to the element of revelation in the events they were narrating; they, perhaps unconsciously, selected their materials, and arranged them in a didactic, an almost homiletical, way. It seems as if their purpose was not so much to tell us what happened as to emphasize for us the lesson of what happened. It is applied history rather than history pure and simple; and on this ground we can understand that tendency to irritation which critical historians sometimes betray in approaching it. It is, then, if we may so put it, history written in the prophetic method. And this remark, duly considered, explains

both the defects and the unique merits of the historical books of the Old Testament. On the one hand it explains the indifference to details. The prophetic historian would never dream, like a modern scientific historian, of writing interminable monographs about a disputed name or a doubtful date; he might even take a story which rested on very doubtful authority, finding in it more that would suit his purpose than the bare and accurate statement of the fact which could be authenticated. The standpoint of the prophetic historian and of the scientific historian are wholly different; they cannot be judged by the same canons of criticism.

'On the other hand, the above distinction explains the element which we instinctively feel marks this history off from ordinary history. To the prophetic eye the significance of all events seems to be in their relation to the Will of God. . . . Perhaps, after all, *the one fact* of history is God's work in it; in which case the scientific histories, with all their learning and with all their toil, will look rather small by the side of these imperfect compositions, which at least saw vividly and recognised faithfully *the one fact.*'

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO ANCIENT HISTORY.

Identification of Goliath.

1 SAMUEL xvii. 4: 'And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.'

Difficulty.—*Other persons are called by this name, and the death of a Goliath is elsewhere attributed to one Elhanan, a Bethlehemite.*

Explanation.—It will be well to have before us all the passages that can give light on this difficulty. The passage given above is the first reference to Goliath, and with verse 23, of the same chapter, is probably the only reference to the original Goliath. Whether we regard the Books of Samuel as made up from historical documents or not, we must give the writer credit for knowing what he was writing about, and not saying in one place that Goliath was killed by David, and in another by one Elhanan. In 2 Sam. xxi. 15-22, an account is given of four 'sons of the giant;' this could mean no other than the giant David himself had slain. Verse 22 reads: 'These four were born to the giant in Gath, and fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.' This is a succinct way of saying, 'Goliath and his four sons fell by the hand of David and his

servants.' If the account be given in precise detail, David slew the *father*, and his servants, on different occasions, slew all four sons.

Now we have the names, or the descriptions, of three of these sons, so that we can identify them without dispute. *Ishbi-benob*, 2 Sam. xxi. 16; *Saph*, v. 18; a nameless six-fingered man, v. 20. But the third name seems uncertain. It is given in verse 19, and in 1 Chron. xx. 5; these two verses may be set beside each other as given in the *Revised Version.*

2 Sam. xxi. 19: 'And there was again war with the Philistines at Gob, and Elhanan, the son of Jaare-oregim the Bethlehemite, slew Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.'

1 Chron. xx. 5: 'And there was again war with the Philistines, and Elhanan, the son of Jair, slew Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.'

There is certainly some confusion here. Let us see how much is clear.

1. Both the compiler of Samuel, and of Chronicles, distinctly affirm that all the persons they speak of as conquered and slain were sons of the giant, born to the giant in Gath. See 2 Sam. xxi. 22; 1 Chron. xx. 8. Whatever, then, may be the confusion of the names given, the four persons in Samuel, and the three persons in Chronicles, were all *sons* of the giant, and cannot be confused with their father.

2. This also is clear: the battle in which Elhanan conquered occurred at Gob (2 Sam. xxi. 19) or Gezer (1 Chron. xx. 4). Whether this name 'Gob' stands for 'Gezer' or 'Gath,' one thing is certain—it cannot be the same as 'Ephes-dammim,' where David fought Goliath.

In the passage as given in Samuel (A.V.) the words 'the brother of' are in italics, intimating that they are not in the original, but were inserted by the translators in order to make sense, and harmonize the passage with the one in Chronicles. They cannot be the proper ones to insert, because verse 22 plainly asserts that the man was a *son* of Goliath, whom David slew, and not a *brother*. There is evident error in the text 1 Chron. xx. 5; the same remark applies to it. The compiler is made to say, in verse 5, that Elhanan slew Lahmi, the brother of Goliath, and in verse 8, this Lahmi was one of the sons born to the giant in Gath. It is evident that the words 'Lahmi, the son of,' have slipped out of the text in Samuel; and 'brother' has taken the place of 'son' in the text of Chronicles. We then have the four sons of the original Goliath fully accounted for, Ishbi-benob, Saph, Lahmi, and the 'six-fingered,' and their

deaths were brought about at the hands of Abishai, Sibbechai, Elhanan, and Shimea.

All writers agree that the text of these two passages is imperfect, but there is difference of opinion as to which should be regarded as the corrective of the other. In favour of correcting Samuel from Chronicles, we have Michaelis, Kennicott, Dathe, Keil, and Thenius, In favour of correcting Chronicles from Samuel, we have Ewald and Bertheau. *Ewald's* suggested explanation is based on the purest conjecture, and is a good illustration of the way in which theories are invented when common sense would suffice to remove the difficulty. He says: 'We know from one of the earliest accounts that Goliath of Gath—the giant "whose spear-shaft was like a weaver's beam"—was really slain by a certain Elhanan, the son of Jair of Bethlehem; and, indeed, according to the same authority, this event did not take place until David had already become king. Since we cannot doubt that the giant so described is the same whose name is now introduced in David's early history, we must suppose that his name was transferred to the Philistine whom David slew (who is, moreover, generally called simply "the Philistine,") when his proper name had been lost. This would be all the more likely to happen, because Elhanan, like David, was a native of Bethlehem.'

Another attempt to get over the difficulty has been made. *Jerome* suggested that Elhanan may have been another and an earlier name of David. It is enough to reply that he is distinctly classed with David's generals Abishai, Sibbechai, and Shimea.

R. F. Horton, in his work 'Inspiration and the Bible,' uses the difficulty of identifying Goliath to support his theory of various fragmentary sources for the Scripture histories. He regards the story of David's killing Goliath as a distinct, and interpolated, narrative. He says: 'Read 1 Sam. xvi. 14-23 and then go on at xviii. 6, and you see you have a straightforward narrative; the section xvii. to xviii. 5, appears plainly as a separate piece, coming no doubt from a separate source. This interpolated section is one of the most conned and loved of Old Testament stories; but it is certainly very puzzling to find our author in xxi. 19, informing us that Goliath of Gath was killed, not by David at all, but by another Bethlehemite named Elhanan. The chronicler (1 Chron. xx. 5) was as puzzled as we are, and took the liberty of altering the statement, saying that Elhanan slew, not Goliath, but his brother.' Mr. Horton did not, we fear, seek for any explanation of the confusion, or note that the 'brother' of verse 5 is the 'son' of verse 8.

The only other attempted explanation to which reference need be

made regards Goliath as a family name, and treats the several names as distinctive of individual members. We should therefore read, Ishbi-Goliath, Saph-Goliath, Lahmi-Goliath, etc. *Bishop Wordsworth* writes: 'The word "Goliath" means a *stranger*, an *alien*. It may describe any one of the family of giants at Gath, the Anakim, or sons of Anak, the Philistine Titans; as Hamor was the name of the chiefs of Shechem, Abimelech of Gerah, Pharaoh and Ptolemy of those of Egypt, Cæsar of Rome, and the members of the giant family of the Cyclops are all called Cyclopes by Homer and other poets.'

It is quite possible that the word in Samuel, 'Bethlehemite,' which is wanting in Chronicles, is a corruption of 'Lahmi, the brother (or son) of.'

The Pharaoh of Abram's Days.

GENESIS xii. 15: 'The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.'

Question.—*Is it possible to decide, with any great probability, the name and dynasty of this Pharaoh?*

Answer.—No certainty is attainable. The name 'Pharaoh' gives us no help, as its derivation and meaning are now well known. M. De Rougé has shown that the hieroglyphic which is the regular title of the Egyptian kings, signifies 'the great house,' or the 'double house,' and must be read, Peraa, or Perao. The identity of this name with Pharaoh is admitted by Brugsch, Ebers, Canon Cook, etc. How early in Egyptian history this name was applied to the reigning monarch cannot be known. It was a title of respect, veiling the person of the monarch under the name of his dwelling, in much the same manner as we include the sovereign and his attendants under the name of the 'Court.'

Some have argued that because Abram, an Arab Sheikh, found favour in Egypt, its Pharaoh must have been one of the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, and as it is almost certain that the Pharaoh of Joseph's time belonged to the twelfth dynasty, the Pharaoh of Abram's time must have belonged to that dynasty or an earlier one.

'Very little beyond the names of the kings who belonged to the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh dynasties is known; and a gap of about 500 years occurs in the history, which it is absolutely impossible to fill up in detail. The first king of the twelfth dynasty was called Amenemha.'

W. J. Deane, M.A., in his recent 'Life of Abraham,' favours an earlier date: 'To determine the exact date of Abram's arrival in Egypt, and who was the Pharaoh whom he found upon the throne, is impos-

sible. Josephus calls him in one place Nechaoh, and in another Pharaothes; other Jewish authorities name him Rikaion or Rakaion, adding that he came from Sinear, and obtained the royal dignity by force and fraud. Malala gives him the name of Naracho, of which Rikaion seems to be a corruption, and which is probably the same as the Nechaoh of Josephus. That the Egypt even of that early date was a country of vast importance, and of venerable antiquity, is certain from the monuments which have survived; but the obscurity of its early annals has not yet been cleared up, nor is the chronology of its several dynasties accurately fixed. But it was probably between the sixth and eleventh dynasties, and during the dominion of the Hyksos, or Shepherds, that Abram appeared in the land.'

Professor Sayce takes the same view. 'The Middle Empire, from the twelfth dynasty, did not last long. Semitic invaders from Canaan and Arabia overran the country, and established their seat at Zoan or Tanis. For 511 years they held the Egyptians in bondage, though the native princes, who had taken refuge in the south, gradually acquired more and more power, until at last, under Aahmes or Amosis, founder of the eighteenth dynasty, they succeeded in driving the hated foreigners out. It must have been while the Hyksos monarchs were holding their court at Zoan that Abraham entered the land. He found there men of Semitic blood, like himself, and speaking a Semitic language. A welcome was assured him, and he had no need of an interpreter.'

Kings of the Hittites.

2 KINGS vii. 6: 'For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.'

Difficulty.—*As the only other Bible allusions to Hittites refer to the small nation which formed one of the Canaanite nations that were dispossessed by the Israelites, this mention of the Hittites as a distinct and powerful nation seems to be incorrect.*

Explanation.—This difficulty was seriously felt by all the older Biblical writers. But it has no more foundation than lack of knowledge. That lack has been quite recently supplied, and consequently the difficulty can now be completely removed. The history of the comments on this text furnishes so severe a rebuke to the dogmatic spirit, which asserts error when adequate explanation is not at once forthcoming, that we may give it a careful consideration.

Matthew Henry says on this verse: 'There was, for aught we

know, but one king of Egypt; and what kings there were of the Hittites nobody can imagine; but as they were imposed upon by that dreadful sound in their ears, so they imposed upon themselves by the interpretation they made of it.'

Dr. Sayce tells of a distinguished scholar, nearly forty years ago, who, selecting this passage for criticism, wrote in this way concerning it: 'Its unhistorical tone is too manifest to allow of our easy belief in it. No Hittite kings can have compared in power with the King of Judah, the real and near ally, who is not named at all . . . nor is there a single mark of acquaintance with the contemporaneous history.'

Even *Dean Stanley* had to write on the subject without adequate knowledge. He says, 'The Amorites, or mountaineers, occupied the central and southern hills (of Palestine) with the Hittites and Hivites. The Hittites belong to the more peaceful occupants, and their name is that by which Palestine, in these early ages, was chiefly known in foreign countries.'

Ewald has no idea of Hittites, save as one of the small nations inhabiting Canaan at the time of the Israelite invasion. 'The contrast to these highlanders (the Amorites) with their strong castles is furnished by the Hittites, as dwellers in the valley, who had different employments and manners, and lived, wherever possible, in distinct and independent communities. We are not, therefore, surprised to find them living near the mountains wherever they could find room, as for instance in the south near Hebron, and extending from thence as far as Bethel in the centre of the land. They nowhere appear as warlike as the Amorites, but rather lovers of refinement at an early period, and living in well-ordered communities possessing national assemblies. Abraham's allies in war are Amorites; but when he desires to obtain a possession peaceably he turns to the Hittites.'

These extracts may suffice to indicate what was known or imagined concerning the Hittites up to quite recent years.

But by-and-by it began to be perceived that the above text, and similar references to tribes, or a nation, of Hittites (1 Kings x. 29; 2 Chron. i. 17), and more especially their association with the 'kings of Syria,' pointed to a people settled independently beyond Lebanon, possibly on the south-eastern frontier towards Arabia.

When the Egyptian annals came to be more fully known, and more carefully examined, they were found to refer to a war with Hittites, and these could not be the petty tribe dwelling in Canaan. Egyptian pictures, too, were believed to represent Hittites.

The way was thus preparing for the most interesting and important

discovery of modern times. It is now known that the Hittites of Palestine were only a colony, or offshoot, from a large and strong nation occupying the tract of North Syria, between the Euphrates and Orontes. In the thirteenth century before Christ, as is proved by inscriptions cut in the rocks, their power extended over great part of Asia Minor. Carchemish, Kadesh, Hamath, and Helbon (or Aleppo) were their capitals. 'They are found among the Syrian enemies of the Egyptians in the monuments of the nineteenth dynasty (about B.C. 1300), and in the early Assyrian monuments they appear as the most powerful people of Northern Syria, dwelling on both banks of the Euphrates in the country along its course from Bir to Balis. In this tract they formed a great confederacy under a number of petty kings, while, at the same time, there is a second confederacy of their race further to the south, which seems to inhabit the Anti-Lebanon between Hamath and Damascus.' (*Speaker's Commentary.*)

By the Egyptians the Hittites were called *Kheta*, or *Khata*. *Dr. Sayce* finds it possible to speak of a 'Hittite Empire' from the time of Ramses II. He says: 'From this time forward it becomes possible to speak of a Hittite Empire. Kadesh was once more in Hittite hands, and the influence formerly enjoyed by Egypt in Palestine and Syria was now enjoyed by its rival. The rude mountaineers of the Taurus had descended into the fertile plains of the south, interrupting the intercourse between Babylonia and Canaan, and superseding the cuneiform characters of Chaldæa by their own hieroglyphic writing. From henceforth the Babylonian language ceased to be the language of diplomacy and education.'

'The "land of the Hittites," according to the statements of the Vannic Kings, stretched along the banks of the Euphrates from Palu on the east as far as Malatiyeh on the west. The Hittites of the Assyrian monuments lived to the south-west of this region, spreading through Komagenê to Carchemish and Aleppo. The Egyptian records bring them yet further south, to Kadesh on the Orontes, while the Old Testament carries the name into the extreme south of Palestine. It is evident, therefore, that we must see in the Hittite tribes fragments of a race whose original seat was in the ranges of the Taurus, but who had pushed their way into the warm plains and valleys of Syria and Palestine. They belonged originally to Asia Minor, not to Syria, and it was conquest only which gave them a right to the name of Syrians. Hittite was their true title, and whether the tribes to which it belonged lived in Judah or on the Orontes, at Carchemish or in the neighbourhood of Palu, this was the title under which they were known.'

As to the personal appearance of this race, *Dr. Sayce* says: 'The Hittites were a people with yellow skins and "Mongoloid" features, whose receding foreheads, oblique eyes, and protruding upper jaws, are represented as faithfully on their own monuments as they are on those of Egypt, so that we cannot accuse the Egyptian artists of caricature. If the Egyptians have made the Hittites ugly, it was because they were so in reality.'

In his interesting work, 'Fresh Light from Ancient Monuments,' Dr. Sayce has a chapter on the Empire of the Hittites, which contains a sketch of the history of the discovery of this people, their sculptures, and their writing; and he has more fully dealt with the subject in a recent work on 'The Hittites.' From the former of these books we take the following passages, premising that it was quite recently published.

'Five years ago there was no one who suspected that a great empire had once existed in Western Asia, and contended on equal terms with both Egypt and Assyria, the founders of which were the little noticed Hittites of the Old Testament. Still less did anyone dream that these same Hittites had once carried their arms, their art, and their religion to the shores of the Ægean, and that the early civilization of Greece and Europe was as much indebted to them as it was to the Phœnicians.

'The discovery was made in 1879. Recent exploration and excavation had shown that the primitive art and culture of Greece, as revealed, for example, by Dr. Schliemann's excavations at Mykenæ, were influenced by a peculiar art and culture emanating from Asia Minor. Here, too, certain strange monuments had been discovered, which form a continuous chain from Lydia in the west to Kappadokia and Lykaonia in the east. The best known of these are certain rock sculptures found at Boghaz, Keui and Eyuk, on the eastern side of the Halys, and two figures in relief in the pass of Karabel, near Sardes, which the old Greek historian, Herodotus, had long ago supposed to be memorials of the Egyptian conqueror, Sesostris, or Ramses II.

'Meanwhile, other discoveries were being made in lands more immediately connected with the Bible. Scholars had learned from the Egyptian inscriptions that, before the days of the Exodus, the Egyptian monarchs had been engaged in fierce struggles with the powerful nation of the Hittites, whose two chief seats were at Kadesh on the Orontes, and Carchemish on the Euphrates, and who were able to summon to their aid subject-allies not only from Palestine, but also far away from Lydia and the Troad, on the western coast of Asia Minor. Ramses II. himself, the Pharaoh of the oppression, had

been glad to make peace with his antagonists; and the treaty, which provided, among other things, for the amnesty of political offenders who had found a shelter during the war among one or other of the two combatants, was cemented by the marriage of the Egyptian king with the daughter of his rival. A century or two afterwards Tiglath-Pileser I. of Assyria found his passage across the Euphrates barred by the Hittites of Carchemish and their Kolkhian mercenaries. From this time forward the Hittites proved dangerous enemies to the Assyrian kings in their attempts to extend the empire towards the west, until at last, in B.C. 717, Sargon succeeded in capturing their rich capital, Carchemish, and in making it the seat of an Assyrian satrap. Henceforth the Hittites disappear from history.

'That they were a literary people, and possessed a system of writing of their own, we learn from the Egyptian monuments. What this writing was has been revealed by recent discoveries. Inscriptions in a peculiar kind of hieroglyphics or picture-writing have been found at Hamath, Aleppo, and Carchemish, in Kappadokia, Lykaonia, and Lydia. They are always found associated with sculptures in a curious style of art, some of which from Carchemish, the modern Jerablûs, are now in the British Museum. It was the discovery of this fact (by Dr. Sayce), in 1879, which first revealed the existence of the Hittite Empire and its importance in the history of civilization. Certain hieroglyphic inscriptions, originally noticed by the traveller Burckhardt, at Hamah, the ancient Hamath, had been made accessible to the scientific world by the Palestine Exploration Fund, and the conjecture had been put forward that they represented the long-lost writing of the Hittites. The conjecture was shortly afterwards confirmed by the discovery of similar inscriptions at Jerablûs, which Mr. Skene and Mr. George Smith had already identified with the site of Carchemish. If, therefore, the early monuments of Asia Minor were really of Hittite origin, it was clear that they ought to be accompanied by Hittite hieroglyphics. And such turned out to be the case. On visiting the sculptured figure in the pass of Karabel, in which Herodotus had seen an image of the great opponent of the Hittites, Dr. Sayce found that the characters engraved by the side of it were all of them Hittite forms.'

It is only necessary to add, 'that the Hittites were intruders in the Semitic territory of Syria. Their origin must be sought in the highlands of Kappadokia, and from hence they descended into the regions of the south, at that time occupied by Semitic Arameans. Hamath and Kadesh had once been Aramean cities, and when they were again wrested from the possession of the Hittites they did but return to

their former owners. The fall of Carchemish meant the final triumph of the Semites in their long struggle with the Hittite stranger.

'Even in their southern home the Hittites preserved the dress of the cold mountainous country from which they had come. They are characterized by boots with turned-up toes, such as are still worn by the mountaineers of Asia Minor and of Greece. They were thick-set, and somewhat short of limb, and the Egyptian artists painted them without beards, of a yellowish-white colour, with dark black hair. In short, as M. Lenormant has pointed out, they had all the physical characteristics of a Caucasian tribe. Their descendants are still to be met with in the defiles of the Taurus, and on the plateau of Kappadokia, though they have utterly forgotten the language or languages their forefathers spoke. What their language was is still uncertain. But the proper names preserved on the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments show that it did not belong to the Semitic family of speech, and an analysis of the Hittite inscriptions further makes it evident that it made large use of suffixes. But we must be on our guard against supposing that the language was uniform throughout the district in which the Hittite population lived. Different tribes, doubtless, spoke different dialects; and some of these dialects probably differed widely from each other. But they all belonged to the same general type and class of language, and may, therefore, be collectively spoken of as the Hittite language, just as the various dialects of England are collectively termed English.'

Identification of Belshazzar.

DANIEL v. 30: 'In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldæans, slain.'

Question.—*What light has been thrown upon the reign, and the death, of this king by recent discoveries?*

Answer.—It will be well to see first what was the knowledge at command a few years ago, so that we may clearly understand the importance of the additions and corrections that have been recently suggested.

The kings of Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar, who died 561 B.C., were Evil-Merodach (561-559), Neriglissar (559-556), Laborosoarchod (reigned nine months), and Nabu-Nahid (555-538). Herodotus gives only the one name Labynetus to fill up the interval; and the Scriptures only mention Evil-Merodach and Belshazzar.

Belshazzar is called the 'son of Nebuchadnezzar,' but this need not occasion difficulty, because the term 'son' is freely used to mean

'descendant,' and Belshazzar would be regarded as a son of the royal house if he married one of the princesses. Two explanations seem to have gained favour. Belshazzar was regarded as a second name for Evil-Merodach, who perished, as Belshazzar is said to have done, after a reign of the same length as is ascribed to Belshazzar. But the dates cannot be fitted to this theory. In 1854 a remarkable discovery was made by Sir H. Rawlinson, at Mugheir, the ancient Ur; but the value of it in relation to the question before us is not universally admitted. 'Documents were brought to light which prove that Nabonnedus (Nabu-Nahid), during the last years of his reign, associated his son Bil-shar-uzur with himself in the government, and allowed him the royal title. He, then, may have conducted the defence of Babylon within the walls; while the father commanded without. Bil-shar-uzur was very young at the time; but princes as young as he have held high command in the East;—thus Herod the Great was Governor of Galilee at fifteen;—and the interference of the queen is some presumption of the king's youth. If Nabonnedus married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and if Belshazzar was the issue of that marriage, the expressions of Dan. v. 11, 13, 18, 22 are accounted for. Also, as there were *two* sovereigns, it is seen why Daniel was proclaimed *third* ruler of the kingdom.'

According to Berosus, Nabonnedus had retired from Babylon to the neighbouring city of Borsippa; there he was blockaded, and, surrendering at last to Cyrus, his life was spared, a principality in Carmania was bestowed on him, and there he died. The circumstances connected with the taking of Babylon by Cyrus are disputed. Xenophon speaks of the capture of the city during a night of feasting, and of the death of the king, whom, however, he does not name.

A fairly reasonable account of Belshazzar was thus given in explanation of the Scripture references. He was represented as the son, and joint king, of Nabonnedus, and entrusted with the defence of Babylon, while his father led the army in the field. Scripture does not give any intimation of a desperate assault on Babylon. It is quite open to the possibility that the city was taken by stratagem, or even entered quietly at the goodwill of the officials. The only thing affirmed is that, on the very night of the banquet, Belshazzar was slain.

Professor George Rawlinson presents the following arguments in support of the discovery of Sir H. Rawlinson, which provides such important help toward the identification of Belshazzar. 'Sir H. Rawlinson's inference from the inscription has been denied. (On

cylinders placed by Nabonidus at the corners of the great temple of Ur, he mentioned by name "his eldest son, Bel-shar-uzur," and prayed the moon-god to take him under his protection "that his glory might endure.") Mr. Fox Talbot has maintained that the inscription does not furnish the "slightest evidence," that Bel-shar-uzur was ever regarded as co-regent with his father. "He may," he says, "have been a mere child when it was written." The controversy turns upon the question, What was Oriental practice in this matter? Sir H. Rawlinson holds that Oriental monarchs generally, and the Assyrian and Babylonian kings in particular, were so jealous of possible rivals in their own family, that they did not name even their own sons upon public documents unless they had associated them with them in the government. Kudur-mabuk mentions his son Rim-agu; but he has made him King of Larsa. Sennacherib mentions Asshur-nadinsum, but on the occasion of his elevation to the throne of Babylon. Apart from these instances, and that of Bel-shar-uzur, there does not seem to be any mention made of their sons *by name* by the monarchs of either country.'

'The supposition that Bel-shar-uzur may have been "a mere child," when the inscription on which his name occurs was set up, is completely negatived by the newly discovered tablet of Nabonidus, which shows him to have had a son—and Bel-shar-uzur was his "eldest son"—who held the command of his main army from his seventh year, B.C. 549, to his eleventh, B.C. 545. It is a reasonable supposition that the prince mentioned upon this tablet was Bel-shar-uzur. He is called emphatically "the king's son," and is mentioned five times. While Cyrus is threatening Babylon both on the north and on the south, Nabonidus is shown to have remained sluggish and inert within the walls of the capital, the true kingly power being exercised by "the king's son," who is with the army and the officers in Akkad, or northern Babylonia, watching Cyrus, and protecting Babylon. When the advance of the army of Babylon is finally made, what "the king's son" did is not told us. Nabonidus must have roused himself from his lethargy, and joined his troops; but as soon as he found himself in danger, he fled. Pursuit was made, he was captured—possibly at Borsippa, as Berosus related. The victorious Persians took him with them into Babylon. If at this time "the king's son" was still alive, any further resistance that was made must, almost certainly, have been made by him. Now, *such resistance was made.* A body of "rebels," as they are called, threw themselves into Bit-Saggatu, or the fortified enclosure within which stood the Great Temple of Bel-Merodach and the Royal Palace, and, shutting to the gates, defied

the enemy. It is true one record says no preparations had been previously made for the defence of the place, and there was no store of weapons in it. But the soldiers would have their own weapons; the temple and the palace would probably be well supplied with wine and provisions; the defences would be strong; and the feeling of the defenders may well have been such as Herodotus ascribes to the mass of the Babylonians when they shut themselves within the walls of the town. Bel-shar-uzur and his lords may have felt so secure that they could indulge in feasting and revelry. They may have maintained their position for months. It is at any rate most remarkable that the writer of the tablet, having launched his shaft of contempt against the foolish "rebels," interposed a break of *more than four months* between this and the next paragraph. It was at the end of Tammuz that the "rebels" closed the gates of Bit-Saggatu; it was not till the third day of Marchesvan that "Cyrus to Babylon descended, and made peace there. It may have been on the night of his arrival with strong reinforcements that the final attack was made, and that Belshazzar, having provoked God by a wanton act of impiety, was slain."'

The objections to this identification of the Belshazzar of Daniel with Bil-shar-uzur, the eldest son of Nabonidus, are: (1) Belshazzar is called repeatedly the son of Nebuchadnezzar, but there is no evidence that Bel-shar-uzur was in any way related to that monarch. (2) The Book of Daniel gives no hint of Belshazzar's having a father still alive, and on the throne. (In replying to this, due importance may be given to the fact that Daniel was constituted *third* ruler; v. 7.)

Professor A. H. Sayce reads the latest inscriptions in such a way as to venture on the statement that Babylon was not besieged and taken by Cyrus. It opened its gates to his general long before he came near it, and needed neither fighting nor battle for its occupation. There may have been several sieges of the city, and foreign historians may have confused these together. We need to be very careful in not making Scripture responsible for the errors of Herodotus and other historians. And concerning Belshazzar Scripture affirms no more than the banquet of the king, and his death by violence on the night of the banquet, and the change of the government of Babylon on the event of his death. It may be further noticed that the name of the last King of Babylon, on the Babylonian records, is Maruduk-sarra-usur, which is not unlike Belshazzar, or Bel-shar-uzur.

There will probably be further discoveries which may help to clear

up difficulties; but it must be admitted that the most recent discoveries tend to increase difficulties rather than to relieve them. 'In the inscription of Cyrus, of which Professor Sayce gives a somewhat full account, Cyrus states that he "took Babylon without bloodshed, and made Nabonidus prisoner." He also mentions that "the king's son" was at Accad, "with his great men and soldiers," in the same year as the capture of Babylon, and that the men of Accad raised a revolt. Further on in the inscription, which is much mutilated, a statement is made, "and the king died. From the seventh of the month Adar unto the third day of the month Nisan there was weeping in Accad." Now, according to the last mention made of Nabonidus in this inscription, he was taken bound to Babylon. It is highly probable, therefore, that the king who died at Accad was "the king's son" mentioned in an earlier part of the inscription. May it not be conjectured that this was Belshazzar, and that the scene described in Dan. v. occured at Accad, and not at Babylon?' (*H. Deane, B.D.*)

We may venture to say that Belshazzar is identified as the eldest son of Nabonidus, but the materials are not yet at our command for presenting his history with minuteness and precision.

Fulfilment of the Curse on Jericho.

1 KINGS xvi. 34: 'In his days did Hiel the Bethel-ite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua, the son of Nun.'

Difficulty.—*As Jericho is mentioned as an existing town between the time of Joshua and the time of Ahab, it is not easy to recognise in what lay the precise sin of Hiel.*

Explanation.—It will be well first to have all the passages relating to the matter before us. The first is the curse pronounced by Joshua: 'And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.' On this curse it may be remarked that the interest of the siege of Jericho gathers about the *walls*, or fortifications, of the city. The miraculous power of God was directed to the throwing down of the *walls;* and the significant reference in the curse to the 'gates' may indicate that the curse took a soldier's form, and was concerned only with the peril which might attend upon rebuilding the walls, and refortifying the

town. Jericho, as an open town, would be no peril to the young nation, but Jericho, walled and fortified, might easily become a serious menace if seized by a hostile army. As we read the original curse, then, it may be intended to curse the fortifier rather than the rebuilder of the city.

The following are the intimations that a city was to be found at the site of Jericho up to the time of David. In Judges i. 16, the children of the Kenite are said to have gone up 'out of the city of palm-trees;' and that this was the recognised name of Jericho is inferred from Deut. xxxiv. 3; 2 Chron. xxviii. 15.

In Judges iii. 13, we are told that Eglon of Moab confederated with the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went 'and smote Israel, and they possessed the city of palm-trees.'

But the matter is made quite certain by the fact that David appointed Jericho for the place of retirement to his ambassadors whom the Ammonites had maltreated. They were to tarry at Jericho until their beards were grown; and there certainly must have been a Jericho to tarry at (2 Sam. x. 5).

Two explanations have been suggested. (1) As a devoted city might not be rebuilt (Deut. xiii. 16), and the Jews in all probability levelled the houses, we may assume that the open towns referred to in Judges, and Samuel, were built in the neighbourhood, but not at the original site. But if there was already a Jericho quite near, it is difficult to understand why Hiel should take the trouble to build on the old site. (2) The other suggestion is, in every way, the most reasonable one, and is supported by most Biblical writers. As a part of Ahab's military schemes, taken without giving any heed to the word or will of God, Hiel was entrusted with the work of re-fortifying Jericho, as a frontier garrison of the territory of Israel, and as commanding the ford over the Jordan. It was designed to be a Divine warning to Ahab, that the old curse so surely fell on him who thus wilfully acted against a positive Divine command.

The narrative of Hiel is given as a proof of the general impiety of Ahab's time. Men were wilful because the king set an example of wilfulness. 'The curse of Joshua had hitherto been respected; but now faith in the old religion had so decayed that Joshua's malediction—terrible as it was—no longer exercised a deterrent power.'

The Time for Killing the Passover.

EXODUS xii. 6: 'And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.' REV. VER.: 'At even.' HEB.: 'Between the two evenings.'

Question.—*Does any symbolical importance attach to the precision of these Passover requirements?*

Answer.—The thing that most arrests attention, in the account of the institution of the Passover, is the precision and minuteness of the details. Everything had to be done at exactly prescribed times, and in exactly prescribed ways. But the explanation is to be found in the necessity for putting to the test the *obedience* of the people, rather than in the symbolical suggestion of all the details of the ritual. It is always safer to seek for moral than for symbolical meanings in the Divine regulations: for, even if symbolical ones can be found, they are only the handmaids of the moral. The end of all Divine dealings, whatever may be the forms they take, is always the *culture of character.* Symbol and rite are never ends in themselves, nor can they ever have value apart from their religious and moral influence.

Moral obedience can be tested by requirements definite in form, and precise in detail. A formal obedience may satisfy itself with doing the thing that is required; but heart obedience will find its natural expression in doing the thing that is required *exactly as he who commands wishes it to be done.* The details of the Divine requirement are of the deepest interest to the man who desires to show his love by his obedience. And these minute requirements of the Passover rite are to be regarded as a gracious provision of *opportunities* for showing obedience.

The arrangement of one particular time for killing the lamb, is perhaps the most striking of these details. What is called in the Hebrew, 'between the two evenings,' was doubtless quite distinctly understood by the Israelites, though it seems confusing to us. According to Onkelos and Aben Ezra, the first evening was at sunset, the second about an hour later, when the twilight ended, and the stars came out (Deut. xvi. 6). *Canon Cook* thinks the most probable explanation is that it includes the time from afternoon, or early eventide, until sunset. 'This accords with the ancient custom of the Hebrews, who slew the paschal lamb immediately after the offering of the daily sacrifice, which on the day of the Passover took place a little earlier than usual, between two and three p.m. This would allow about two hours and a half for slaying and preparing all the

lambs. It is clear that they would not wait until sunset, at which time the evening meal would take place. This interpretation is supported by Rashi, Kimchi, Bochart, Lightfoot, Clericus, and Patrick. Thus Josephus: "They offer this sacrifice from the ninth to the eleventh hour." The Greeks had the same idiom, distinguishing between the early and late evening.'

The Pharisees, in our Lord's time (and the Jews now), understood the time between the sun's declining and its actual setting.

Kalisch translated: 'at dusk,' and quotes with approval the following from Aben Ezra. 'We have two evenings; the first, the setting of the sun, that is, the time when he disappears beneath the horizon; and the second, the ceasing of the light which is reflected in the clouds; and between both lies an interval of about one hour and twenty minutes.'

Sentiment of Egyptians concerning Shepherds.

GENESIS xlvi. 34: 'For every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.'

Question.—*Is it possible for us to trace the causes, in Egyptian manners, or in Egyptian history, for this strong sentiment?*

Answer.—It is not reasonable to suppose the Egyptians merely objecting, in an aristocratic spirit, to the occupation of tending cattle. Mere class-feeling is not sufficient to explain so strong an expression as 'an abomination.' The sentiment must have been a national and political one. It seems that, 'in the reign of Timaus, or Thamuz, Egypt was invaded by a tribe of Cushite Shepherds from Arabia. The Egyptians submitted without trying the event of a battle, and were exposed, for a period of 260 years, to the most tyrannous and insulting conduct from their new masters; who made one of their own number king, and established their capital at Memphis; having in proper places strong garrisons, which kept both Upper and Lower Egypt under subjection and tribute. There were six kings of this dynasty, who were called Hyksos, or "King-shepherds," and they exercised a degree of cruelty and oppression upon the natives which left an indelible sense of hatred upon the minds of the Egyptians, even in periods long subsequent. At last the national spirit was roused, and after a war of thirty years, the princes of Upper Egypt succeeded in obliging them to withdraw from the country which had been so deeply injured by their invasion' (*Kitto*).

Professor George Rawlinson points out that, though this sentiment against shepherds prevailed among the *native* Egyptians, while the

foreign Hyksos reigned, such an immigration as Jacob's would be specially welcome to the authorities. 'Egypt had been conquered, some centuries before the time of Joseph, by a nomadic race from Asia, of pastoral habits. The conquest had been accompanied with extreme cruelty and violence; wherever the nomads triumphed, the males of full age had been massacred, the women and children reduced to slavery, the cities burnt, the temples demolished, the images of the gods thrown to the ground. An oppressive and tyrannical rule had been established. The old Egyptians, the native African race, were bowed down beneath the yoke of unsympathetic aliens. Although by degrees the manners of the conquerors became softened, and, as so often happens, the rude invaders conformed themselves more and more, in language, habits and methods of thought, to the pattern set them by their more civilized subjects, yet, so far as feelings and sentiments were concerned, a wide gulf still separated the two. Like the Aryan Persians under the rule of the Parthians, like the native Chinese under the Mantchu Tartars, the Egyptians groaned and repined in secret, and persistently nurtured the hope of one day reasserting their independence. Nor were their foreign masters unaware of these feelings. They knew themselves to be detested; they were conscious of the volcano under their feet; they lived in expectation of an outbreak, and were always engaged in making preparations against it. In this condition of affairs, each band of immigrants from Asia, especially if of nomadic habits, was regarded as an accession of strength, and was therefore welcomed and treated with favour. Shepherds were "an abomination" to the *real native Egyptians.* To the Hyksos kings, who held the dominion of Egypt, shepherds were congenial, and Asiatic shepherds, more or less akin to their own race, were viewed as especially trustworthy and reliable.'

As the date of the Shepherd dynasty is doubtful, many writers prefer to explain the sentiment of the Egyptians towards shepherds, as a class, as being merely the prejudice of a settled and civilized people against a wandering and rough-mannered race. *Inglis* well illustrates this point. 'The Egyptians, being a settled, civilized and cultivated people, despised the rude, wandering shepherd; in proof of which they are always depicted on the monuments with long, lean, sickly and distorted forms. So great was the hatred of shepherds, that the figures of them were wrought into the soles of their sandals, that they might tread at least on their effigies. There is a mummy in Paris having a shepherd bound with cords painted beneath the buskins. Wool was considered by the priests to be unclean, and was never used for wrapping the dead. The Pharisaic prejudices, and the

repulsions of caste, meaningless and irrational, so violent in India in the present day, may help us to an explanation of the Egyptian aversion to shepherds.'

Speaker's Commentary adds: 'Herodotus speaks of the aversion of Egyptians for swineherds. To this day, sheep-feeding is esteemed the office of women and slaves. The fact that the Egyptians themselves were great agriculturists, tillers of land, and that their neighbours the Arab tribes of the desert, with whom they were continually at feud, were nomads only, may have been sufficient to cause this feeling. The Egyptians looked on all the people of Egypt as of noble race, and on all foreigners as low-born. Hence they would naturally esteem a nomadic people in close proximity to themselves, and with a much lower civilization than their own, as barbarous and despicable.'

Kitto is probably right in a careful distinction which he makes. 'We are inclined to consider that the aversion of the Egyptians was not so exclusively against rearers of cattle as such, as against the class of pastors who associated the rearing of cattle with habits and pursuits which rendered them equally hated and feared by a settled and refined people like the Egyptians. We would therefore understand the text in the most intense sense, and say that "*every nomad shepherd* was an abomination to the Egyptians;" for there is no evidence that this disgrace attached, for instance, to those cultivators who, being proprietors of lands, made the rearing of cattle an important part of their business. The nomad tribes who pastured their flocks on the borders, or within the limits of Egypt, did not in general belong to the Egyptian nation, but were of Arabian, or Libyan, descent; whence the prejudice against them as nomads was superadded to that against foreigners in general. The turbulent and aggressive disposition which usually forms part of the character of nomads—and their entire independence, or at least the imperfect and uncertain control which it is possible to exercise over their tribes—are circumstances so replete with annoyance and danger to a carefully organised society, like that of the Egyptians, as sufficiently to account for the hatred and scorn which the ruling priestly caste strove to keep up against them; and it was probably in order to discourage all intercourse that the regulation precluding Egyptians from eating with them was first established.'

Note.—The question whether one of the Hyksos kings was on the throne at the time of Joseph and the migration of Jacob's family, is treated in another paragraph. *Wallis Budge, M.A.*, estimating carefully the evidence, says, 'The last king of the twelfth dynasty was

Amenemhā IV.; and from this period (about 2200 B.C.) to the eighteenth dynasty there is a gap of about 500 years. It is during this break that the rule of the Hyksos or "Shepherd Kings" comes in. But the Hyksos only preserved their power for some 260 years.

Sennacherib's Calamity.

2 KINGS xix. 35: 'And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.'—*Rev. Ver.*

2 CHRON. xxxii. 21: 'And the Lord sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains, in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land.'

Difficulty.—*One of these accounts seems to intimate that the great mass of the army was slain; the other appears to limit the slaughter to the officers.*

Explanation.—The note in Chronicles is evidently only a brief epitome of the incident, and, as it gives no special details, cannot be regarded as in any sense contradictory of the accounts in 2 Kings xix., or Isaiah xxxvii. 36. It is an accepted rule for all historical compositions, that what is *omitted* by one author shall not be regarded as contradicting what is *stated* by another author, unless it is plainly inconsistent. The author of Chronicles, in stating that the 'officers' perished, does not deny that the 'common soldiers' also perished; and, whatever was the agent used for the infliction of this judgment, it is hardly conceivable that it would be limited, in its range, to the leaders. What we are to understand is, that the loss was so utterly overwhelming because amongst the slain were all the principal officers.

Herodotus gives the Egyptian version of this calamity. 'Sennacherib, king of the Arabians and Assyrians, marched a large army into Egypt. On this the Egyptian army refused to help their king, Sethon, a priest of Vulcan. He, therefore, being reduced to a strait, entered the temple and lamented before the god the calamities impending. While thus engaged he fell asleep, and the god appeared to him in a vision, telling him that he would stand by him, and encouraging him by the assurance that he should not suffer, since he, the god, would send him help. Trusting this vision, the priest-king took with him such men as would follow him, and shut himself up in Pelusium, at the entrance of Egypt. But when they arrived there myriads of field-mice, pouring in on their enemies, devoured their quivers and bows and the handles of their shields, so that when they

fled next day, defenceless, many of them were killed; and to this day a stone statue of this king stands in the temple of Vulcan, with a mouse in his hand, and an inscription: "Whoever looks on me, let him revere the gods."'

Kitto says: 'Either some terrible known agency, such as that of the pestilence, or the hot poisonous wind, was employed, or some extraordinary and unknown operation took place. Berosus says that it was a pestilence. It has been objected that no pestilence is so suddenly destructive. Yet we do read of instantaneously destructive pestilence in Scripture, as in the wilderness and at Bethshemesh; and it may be remarked, even of the natural pestilence, that under that disease death supervenes at a certain number of days (not more in any case than seven), from the commencement; and if, therefore, any number of men were smitten with it at one time, they would all die at the same period, or within a very few hours of each other. If this were the case here, the Assyrians who died before Jerusalem may have been smitten with the pestilence before they left Egypt. But we do not think that it *was* the plague. The almost immediately mortal pestilence so often mentioned in Scripture, and known from other ancient authorities, was clearly not the plague—the symptoms described do not agree with those of the plague; and it is probably an extinct disease. It is not now known, even in the East, though there is abundant evidence in history, tale, and song, of its former existence. Of the glandular plague, the present prevailing epidemic of the East, there is no certain trace in history anterior to the third century, even in Egypt. Some suggest the agency of the simoon, the hot, pestilential, desert wind; but this does not usually affect Palestine. Its effects sometimes prove instantly fatal, the corpse being livid or black, like that of a person blasted by lightning; at other times it produces putrid fevers, which become mortal in a few hours, and very few of those struck recover.'

Dean Stanley says: 'By what special means this great destruction was effected, with how large or how small a remnant Sennacherib returned, is not told. It might be a pestilential blast (Isai. xxxvii. 7), according to the analogy by which a pestilence is usually described in Scripture under the image of a destroying angel (Ps. lxxviii. 49; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16); and the numbers are not greater than are recorded as perishing within very short periods—150,000 Carthaginians in Sicily, 500,000 in seven months at Cairo. It might be accompanied by a storm. So Vitringa understood it, and this would best suit the words in Isaiah xxx. 29. Such is the Talmudic tradition, according to which the stones were still to be seen in the pass of Bethoron

up which Sennacherib was supposed to be advancing with his army.'

Geikie gathers up some important information. 'The vast multitude who perished—185,000 men—points to a far greater calamity than could have befallen the army corps detached for service against Jerusalem. It seems probable that affairs had not prospered with Sennacherib from the first, in spite of his pompous inscriptions. Indeed, it appears as if this could be read between the lines; for, though he boasts of having gained a victory at Eltekeh, no list of prisoners or details of the booty are given, and he has to content himself with stating that he took the town of Eltekeh, and Timnah, which very possibly was only an unwalled village. He speaks of having shut up Hezekiah like a bird in a cage, but there is nothing said of the capture of Jerusalem, nor of the conquest of Egypt, or even of his having entered it, though this was the great object of the campaign. It seems probable that, after the doubtful triumph at *Eltekeh*, Sennacherib contented himself with besieging and taking Lachish with part of his army; a large force being sent on, possibly, towards Egypt, while a corps was detached against Jerusalem. But the plague, which had perhaps already shown itself in the host, appears to have broken out violently in its different sections before Jerusalem, beyond Eltekeh, and at Libnah, to which the headquarters had been removed on the fall of Lachish. The Jewish tradition, handed down from generation to generation, understood the language of Scripture as indicating an outbreak of pestilence, let loose, as in the case of the similar visitation of Jerusalem under David, by the angel of God specially commissioned to inflict the Divine wrath. . . . Instead of the thousands of mail-clad warriors, lately so eager for the battle, only a terrified remnant could marshal round him. His mighty men of valour—the rank and file of his proudest battalions—his officers and generals, had been struck down. . . . Deserted by heaven, and left to the fury of the dreaded demons of pestilence and death, the panic-stricken king could think of nothing but instant, though ignominious, flight towards Nineveh, where he might hope to appease his gods. Orderly retreat was impossible. The skeleton battalions were too demoralized. A deadly fear had seized the survivors. The spectacle in each camp was too appalling to leave room for hesitation.'

Sennacherib lived for twenty years after his withdrawal from Palestine.

Darius the Median.

DANIEL v. 31: 'And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about three score and two years old.'

Difficulty.—*No person evidently answering to this description appears in the records of Persian or Median history.*

Explanation.—*Dean Stanley* says that 'Darius the Mede is still an unsolved problem.' The secular history says that Cyrus, after the capture of Babylon, appointed a man named Gubaru (Gobryas) as his governor in Babylon. The question is whether this Gubaru and Darius can possibly be the same person. Certainly Darius cannot be identified with any person mentioned in profane history, and hitherto no traces of any such name have been found in Babylonian inscriptions belonging to this period.

The part of the inscription of Cyrus that refers to this matter reads as follows: 'On the third day of Marchesvan (October), Cyrus entered Babylon. The roads (?) before him were covered. He grants peace to the city, to the whole of Babylon Cyrus proclaims peace. Gobryas, his governor, was appointed over the (other) governors in Babylon, and from the month Chisleu (November) to the month Adar (February) the gods of Accad, whom Nabonidus had brought to Babylon, were restored to their shrines. On the eleventh day of the previous Marchesvan, Gobryas (was appointed) over Babylon, and the King Nabonidus died.'

But we cannot be sure that the death of Belshazzar was connected with the taking of Babylon by Cyrus on this occasion; and history gives no record of any *Median* kingdom intervening between the Babylonian and the Persian Empires. The readiest explanation is found by treating Darius as a deposed king, or a royal relative of Cyrus, and assuming that he was appointed chief governor of the conquered province of Babylon, with the courtesy title of 'king,' his official name being Darius, his personal name Gobryas. But this is assumption, and cannot be called knowledge.

The only Darius of this date known in history is Darius the son of Hystaspes, who was the real founder of the Persian Empire; and some think he is the 'Darius' of the Book of Daniel. The dates may be first given, and then Sayce's account of this Darius Hystaspes.

Cyrus takes Babylon, 538 B.C.
Cambyses, his son, reigns 529-519 (eleven years).
Smerdis, the Magian, reigns seven months.
Darius Hystaspes, the Persian, reigns 517-486 (thirty-one years).

'The Empire of Cyrus was broken up after the death of Cambyses, and had to be reconquered by Darius Hystaspes. Darius was a Zoroastrian monotheist as well as a Persian, and under him and his successors polytheism ceased to be the religion of the State. Twice during his reign he had to besiege Babylon. Hardly had he been proclaimed king when it revolted under a certain Nidinta Bel, who called himself, "Nebuchadrezzar, the son of Nabonidus." Babylon endured a siege of two years, and was at last captured by Darius only by the help of a stratagem. Six years afterwards it again rose in revolt, under an Armenian, who professed, like his predecessor, to be "Nebuchadrezzar, the son of Nabonidus." Once more, however, it was besieged and taken, and this time the pretender was put to death by impalement. His predecessor, Nidinta Bel, seems to have been slain while the Persian troops were forcing their way into the captured city. In Nidinta Bel the line of independent Babylonian Kings may be said to have come to an end, since the leader of the second revolt was not a native, but an Armenian settler.'

Quite an attractive theory might be constructed on the basis of the identification of Nidinta Bel, who called himself a 'son of Nebuchadrezzar,' with Belshazzar; and of Darius the Median with Darius, the son of Hystaspes, the Persian. But there are serious difficulties to overcome before such a theory can be accepted. Two especially need attention. The Darius of Scripture is called the 'son of Ahasuerus.' But Darius Hystaspes was the son of Achæmenes, the founder of the Persian Royal Family. Then the Darius of Scripture is said to have been 'of the seed of the Medes' (Dan. ix. 1). But there is the strongest evidence that Darius Hystaspes was of pure Persian race, and not an atom of evidence that he had any Persian blood in his veins. It is among his proudest boasts that he is an 'Aryan, of Aryan descent, a Persian, the son of a Persian.'

The explanation that is perhaps the most generally accepted is thus stated by *Professor George Rawlinson:* 'It is said, in Dan. v. 31, that "Darius the Median *took* the kingdom, and in ix. 1, that he "*was made king* over the realm of the Chaldæans." Neither of these two expressions is suitable to Cyrus (with whom some would identify Darius, making out Darius to be a royal title). The word translated "took" means "received," "took from the hands of another;" and the other passage is yet more unmistakable. "Was made king," exactly expresses the original, which uses the Hophal of the verb, the Hiphel of which occurs when David makes Solomon king over Israel (1 Chron. xxix. 20). No one would say of Alexander the Great, when he conquered Darius Codomannus, that he "*was*

made king over Persia." The expression implies the reception of a kingly position by one man from the hands of another. Now Babylon, while under the Assyrians, had been almost always governed by viceroys, who received their crown from the Assyrian monarchs. It was not unnatural that Cyrus should follow the same system. He had necessarily to appoint a governor, and the "Nabonidus Tablet" tells us that he did so almost immediately after taking possession of the city. The first governor appointed was a certain Gobryas, whose nationality is doubtful; but he appears to have been shortly afterwards sent to some other locality. A different arrangement must then have been made. That Cyrus should have appointed a Mede, and allowed him to take the title of "King," is in no way improbable. He was fond of appointing Medes to high office, as we learn from Herodotus. He was earnestly desirous of conciliating the Babylonians, as we find from his cylinder.

'It was not many years before he gave his son, Cambyses, the full royal power at Babylon, relinquishing it himself, as appears from a dated tablet. The position of "Darius the Median" in Daniel is compatible with all that we know with any certainty from other sources. We have only to suppose that Cyrus, in the interval between the brief governorship of Gobryas and the sovereignty of Cambyses, placed Babylon under a Median noble named Darius, and allowed him a position intermediate between that of a mere ordinary "governor" and the full royal authority.'

But, if we accept this explanation, it remains to consider whether we can further identify this Darius, and find out the relationship in which he stood to Cyrus. The most satisfactory theory is that attested by Josephus and Xenophon. 'According to these historians, Cyrus conquered Babylon for his father-in-law, Cyaxares II., the son of Astyages, and did not come to the throne of Babylon as an independent prince till after his death. Josephus mentions that Darius was known to the Greeks by another name; and this, it has been concluded, was Cyaxares, the name given to him by Xenophon.'

Dr. C. Geikie summarizes the knowledge which is at present at command very effectively: 'The transition from the Chaldæan dynasty to the rule of the conquerors followed at once, for resistance appears to have ceased after the taking of Babylon. Cyrus was now supreme over all Asia, from India to the Dardanelles; but, though the moving spirit of this vast revolution, the obscurity of his original position as king only of Elam, and his relations to the Medes, and perhaps the Persians, seem to have led him for the time to deny himself the titular sovereignty. A Median prince appears, therefore, to have

been put forward by him as the nominal king, though the real power remained in his own hands. Elam and Persia had been hitherto very inferior in power and rank to Media, the haughty clans of which followed him rather as their adopted chief than as their conqueror, and the time was not yet ripe for affronting this proud assumption of independence. Cyrus had gained the leadership by affecting to liberate Media from a tyrannical despot, and the support of the aristocracy and army had been won only by his diplomacy. A Median prince was therefore established for the time as king in Babylon—Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, or Cyaxares, a childless and easily-managed man of sixty-two. Two years later this phantom king died, and no further opposition to the accession of Cyrus, as an Elamite, being possible, he openly assumed the empire.'

As a caution, we add a sentence from a note by *Deane:* 'In modern times the identity of Darius with Cyaxares II. has been strongly maintained, though without paying sufficient attention to the very slight evidence in favour of the existence of the latter.'

The fact is, that no absolute decision can be made in relation to either Belshazzar, or Darius the Mede, until we can be sure which fall of Babylon is referred to in the Book of Daniel, and what is its precise date. The materials for forming such a decision are certainly not at present within our reach; and we must be satisfied with what may seem to us the most reasonable explanatory theory.

Esau's Wives.

GENESIS xxxvi. 2, 3: 'Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; and Bashemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.'

Question.—*Are we to understand that Esau thus deliberately cut himself, and his descendants, off from all share in the rights and privileges of the Abrahamic covenant? And how can this list of names be reconciled with the lists given in* xxvi. 34; xxviii. 9?

Answer.—The verse heading this paragraph belongs to a genealogical table. For the history we must refer to the earlier notices. As indicating the wild, wayward, wilful, impulsive character of Esau, we are told of the indifference he showed to his birthright, as eldest born, and the readiness with which, under stress of hunger, he sold that birthright to Jacob for 'bread and pottage of lentils' (Gen. xxv. 29-34). It has become the fashion to compare Jacob unfavourably with Esau; and to praise Esau in a very uncritical

fashion. It is not sufficiently noticed that Scripture exhibits his character in this incident, and it cannot be regarded as commendable. The man who has no restraint of his animal appetites, is not likely to have restraint of his bodily passions, or mastery of his will and moral nature. And, lest we should form this unfavourable comparison between Jacob and Esau, we are carefully informed of the troubles that Esau's wilfulness, lack of self-control, and indifference to all higher considerations, made in the family, *before* Jacob guilefully secured the 'blessing.' In Gen. xxvi. 34, 35, we read: 'and Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite, which were a grief of mind (bitterness of spirit) unto Isaac and to Rebekah.'

It may be said that the grief of Isaac was caused by Esau offending against tribal sentiment, which required the leading family of a tribe to marry only within the tribe, or strictly allied tribes, in order to preserve the exclusiveness of each race. But the Scripture records must always be read in the light of the Jehovah covenant. Isaac regarded Esau as, not only the tribal heir, but as the covenant-heir, and his marriage to Canaanite women was a distinct and wilful offence against the covenant conditions, an open declaration that Esau despised the covenant if it interfered with his following the 'devices and desires of his own heart.'

This comes out yet more clearly in the conduct of Esau, when he found he had lost the patriarchal blessing, as well as the birthright. His act then was a violent expression of the 'don't care' spirit—as if he had said, 'What is your covenant to me? I can get along very well without it. Take your birthright, and your blessing, and your covenant. My own energy and enterprise shall stand to me instead of birthright and blessing and covenant.' There is every intimation that Esau meant to wash his hands of the whole covenant business, by going and taking to wife the daughter of Ishmael. The passage (Gen. xxviii. 6-9) gains its explanation when read in this light. 'When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; and that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram; and Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.'

Seetzen says of the Arabs: 'They always marry in their own tribe, not allowing any member of it to marry into another.'

Dr. C. Geikie supports the view we have taken of the relation of Esau's conduct to the covenant. 'The marriages of the patriarchal families decided the history of their subsequent branches. Quiet progress from households of shepherds to a settled nation turned necessarily on the life adopted, and that again was largely affected by the domestic alliances made. The daughter of Bethuel, coming from the "city" of Nahor, must have brought with her the instincts of a settled life, and so, also, with the daughters of Laban, Bethuel's son. But what instincts could grow up in the children of Ishmael or Esau, except those of the wild, unimproving Arab; born as they were of idolatrous mothers, wherever the wandering camp of their parents chanced for the time to be pitched? It was a Divine impulse, therefore, which, acting through the Eastern craving for unmixed blood, led to the choice of brides, for Isaac and Jacob, from the old home of the race. Esau's leanings were only too plain in his bringing home two Hittite maidens as wives. It was clear that the traditions of Abraham and Isaac had no hold on him, and that their worship of the One only God, to whom he himself had been dedicated by circumcision, was nothing in his eyes. To build up a chosen race, the heirs of the Divine covenant, involved strict separation from the heathen around; but Esau, with this knowledge, had deliberately forsaken his own race, with all its hopes and aspirations, and identified himself with those from whom God had required them to keep themselves distinct. No wonder that it was "bitterness of heart" to both Isaac and Rebekah, to see him thus break away from all they counted most sacred, and despise his birthright by slighting the conditions which God had imposed for its inheritance.'

The lists of Esau's wives are as follows:

GEN. xxvi. 34; xxviii. 9:	GEN. xxxvi. 2:
1. Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hittite.	1. Aholibamah, daughter of Anah, daughter of Zibeon the Hivite.
2. Bashemath, daughter of Elon the Hittite.	2. Adah, daughter of Elon the Hittite.
3. Mahalath, daughter of Ishmael, sister of Nebajoth.	3. Bashemath, daughter of Ishmael, sister of Nebajoth.

There is manifest confusion of names. It is easy to recognise the daughter of Elon, and the daughter of Ishmael, and to give them their right names, or assume that they had two names. But the first wife is not so readily recognisable. Not only do the names differ, but also the parentage, and even the tribe to which the women belonged.

Suggestions in explanation are that 'daughter of Zibeon' should read 'son of Zibeon,' that Anah having discovered 'hot springs' (true reading of word *mules*, in verse 24), was also called Beeri, or the 'well-finder;' that an error in copying made *Hivite* for *Hittite;* or that the general name Hittite included the Hivites and Horites.

'We may conclude that Judith the daughter of Anah, called Beeri, from his finding the hot springs, and the grand-daughter of Zibeon the Horite, one of the tribes reckoned in the great Hittite family, when she married Esau, assumed the name of Aholibamah, meaning, "the tent of the height."'

Judgments in the order of Providence.

2 KINGS vii. 19, 20: 'And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate.'

2 KINGS ix. 25, 26: 'Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up and cast him (Jehoram) in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember how that when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the Lord laid this burden upon him; surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord, and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord.'

Question.—*Are we justified, from such cases of manifest fulfilment of prophecy, in establishing as a truth that God's providences are ever being used to work out God's judgments?*

Answer.—This certainly appears to be the teaching of the incidents narrated. No sign is given of any special interference with the workings of Providence, and yet they bring round precisely what had been foretold. It does not seem possible to assert more firmly that moral purposes are being outwrought by the common and ordinary movements and changes of men and nations. In these cases before us, the *precision* of fulfilment, even in detail, is evidently designed to make the connection between providence and judgment very clear and impressive.

It is the fashion now to see, in what our fathers called 'Providence,' only the systematic working of ordinary laws. Bible history and prophecy are the constant appeal against the imprisoning of our minds in any mere mechanical explanation of the universe. In some cases it tells us beforehand what God is going to do, so that when the event comes round, in the ordinary way of providence, we may make no mistake about it, but fully recognise the Divine over-rulings.

It may be quite true that the Divine purpose in providence is not revealed to anyone of us in these days. But it is enough that the connection has been fully established, in the Divine Word, by illustra-

tive instances such as those now before us. In the principles according to which He orders and governs this material world, and the moral world in its relation to the material, God is certainly the 'Unchangeable one.'

The point illustrated in the above incidents will be more clearly seen, if the incidents themselves are carefully examined.

There was a famine of extraordinary severity in Samaria, in consequence of a prolonged siege by the Syrians. The extremities to which the people were reduced are vigorously described. They were so dreadful that even motherly instincts were overpowered. In his anger, the king thought to make a scapegoat of Elisha the Prophet. Instead of turning to God in penitence and prayer, the king, in ungovernable rage, tried to defy God by attempting to kill His prophet. He failed, and the response Elisha was told to make surprises us. God proposed to relieve the dire necessities of the people, but in connection with His mercy there should be a stern rebuke of the sin of mistrusting God, which the king and the people would do well to heed. 'Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.'

Now, the lord was, from the human view of things, quite right. Ordinary providences could not be expected to bring round either such a relief, or such a judgment, as Elisha anticipated. But God is in providence; controls its workings, and controls them for moral ends. He could shape the providences, adjust them, refit them together, so as to accomplish the promised deliverance, and to bring down the threatened judgment. There is the Divine *Will* even in *orderly providence.*

The second instance is connected with the judgment of God on Ahab and his house, for all his crimes, but more especially for his iniquity in the matter of Naboth the Jezreelite. Here, too, we have antecedent judgment spoken, but no special provision made for the execution of the judgment. It was left to providence to work round the carrying out of the Divine sentence. And providence proved to be effective for the operation of the Divine will, because the Divine will was in the ordering of the providences. Events now can no more be separated from the Divine mind and control, than in the olden times. Providence is still, as ever, the Divine instrumentality.

Meeting Ahab, when returning from taking possession of Naboth's vineyard, Elijah solemnly declared that he and his house must be punished for their crimes. As for himself, the town dogs would lick up his blood where they had licked the blood of poor stoned Naboth. Jezebel and her sons would be left exposed to the dogs and vultures; and some special form of woe upon his house should be connected with that very plot of ground, for the sake of which he had soiled his hands with blood.

Exactly what Elijah referred to was only known through the fulfilment of his threat. 'Joram,' the king, the son of Ahab, 'learning that the furious driving of an approaching company marked the cavalcade as attending Jehu, and suspecting no treachery, ordered his own chariot, and rode out to meet him, accompanied by King Ahaziah of Judah, then at Jezreel to sympathize with his wounded uncle. They expected stirring news from Ramoth, and were eager to hear it. "Had Hazael made peace?" shouted Joram as he came near. "Peace!" cried Jehu, "what peace can there be as long as Jezebel acts so wickedly as she does?" Joram felt in a moment that all was lost. Muttering the words, "Treachery, Ahaziah," he turned the chariot and hastily fled. But an arrow from Jehu pierced him through and through next moment, and he fell out of his chariot dying, close to the very field of Naboth in which Elijah had said that the crime of Ahab should be avenged. To stop and cast the body into Naboth's ground, that the words of the prophet might be literally fulfilled, detained Jehu but for a moment.'

It is true that 'God's providence is our inheritance,' but it is also true that God's providence is, in His hands, the instrument of our judgment.

Balaam's Prophecy.

NUMBERS xxiv. 17: 'I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.'

Difficulty.—*If this prophecy refers to Messiah, the work he is expected to do is presented in very unusual and extravagant figures.*

Explanation.—What appears to be certain is, that this part of the prophecy of Balaam found its *first* fulfilment in the military triumphs of *David.* Only through the figures of speech suitable to this *first* fulfilment can we get references to Messiah, and then they must be treated in a large and suggestive manner. The terms 'star out of Jacob,' and 'sceptre out of Israel,' can readily be adapted to

the Messiah; but it requires great ingenuity to fit 'smiting the corners of Moab,' and 'destroying the children of Sheth,' into any conceivable description of the work of Messiah.

It was, indeed, no part of the mission of Balaam to proclaim the Messiah. The subject-matter of his prophecy was the certain triumph of the race on whose tents he gazed. It was befitting that his vision should culminate in that king who brought the nation to the height of its dignity. So far as David was a type of Messiah, we may say that the Messiah was referred to in Balaam's prophecy. But we had better regard the mental vision of Balaam as limited to the career of David.

Ibn Ezra interprets these words of David. For David's conquest of the Moabites, see 2 Sam. viii. 2. The expression 'children of Sheth,' would be better translated 'sons of tumult.' David's military successes may be briefly summarized. The Philistines were the first to be attacked, and upon David's taking their royal city of Gath, they seem to have been so far subdued as to give him little or no subsequent trouble. On the south-east of his kingdom David repressed the Edomites, and established garrisons in their country, securing thus the eastern arm of the Red Sea, and the caravan routes to the marts and harbours of Arabia. On the north-east, David attacked Hadadezer, King of Zobah, defeating him with great loss. East of Jordan, David attacked the Moabites. But the chief war of his reign was that conducted against Ammon. The result of these wars was the extension of the territories of Canaan to the limits foretold to Abraham, and so the fulfilment of the Divine promise. The list of David's successes closely follows the prophecy of Balaam.

Bishop Wordsworth says that the Messianic reference of this, and the following verse, is now recognised by Rosenmuller, Baumgarten, Delitzsch, Kurtz, Tholuck, and Keil. The passage he regards as 'fulfilled primarily and partially by David, and perfectly and finally by the Son of David, the Christ, the King of kings, who has already made great conquests by His Gospel over the whole world, and will eventually put all Moabites—the enemies of His Israel—under His feet.' But however excellent this may be as a sentiment, it involves a curious distortion of a plain historical reference to the actual countries of Moab and Edom. Surely it is better to say the Star was David, and the sceptre the symbol of his rule; and then find the fulfilment of the *prophecy* in the *history*.

Identification of So, King of Egypt.

2 KINGS xvii. 4: 'And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year; therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.'

Difficulty.—*The Egyptian lists of kings have no such name as So; and the name nearest like it stands for a king of a later dynasty.*

Explanation.—*Professor George Rawlinson* suggests a satisfactory removal of this difficulty. 'It is not very easy to identify the "King of Egypt" here mentioned, as one with whom Hoshea, the son of Elah, sought to ally himself, with any of the known Pharaohs. "So" is a name that seems at first sight very unlike those borne by Egyptian monarchs, which are never monosyllabic, and in no case end in the letter *o*. A reference to the Hebrew text removes, however, much of the difficulty, since the word rendered by "So" in our version is found to be one of three letters, סוא (S V A), all of which may be consonants. (Our readers are aware that, in the older Hebrew, the vowels were not marked in the writing.) As the Masoretic pointing (or putting of vowels to words), which our translators followed, is of small authority, and in proper names of scarcely any authority at all, we are entitled to give to each of the three letters its consonant force, and, supplying short vowels, to render the Hebrew word, S V A, by "Seveh." Now "Seveh" is very near indeed to the Manethonian "Sevech-us," whom the Sebennytic priest makes the second monarch of his twenty-fifth dynasty; and "Sevechus" is a natural Greek equivalent of the Egyptian "Shebek" or "Shabak," a name borne by a well-known Pharaoh (the first king of the same dynasty), which both Herodotus and Manetho render by "Sabacôs." It has been generally allowed that So (or Seveh) must represent one or other of these, but critics are not yet agreed which is to be preferred of the two. (The general opinion is in favour of Shabak.)'

In his latest work on 'Egypt,' Professor Rawlinson gives a sketch of the twenty-fifth, an Ethiopian dynasty. 'Piankhi, soon after his return to his capital, died without leaving issue; and the race of Herhor being now extinct, the Ethiopians had to elect a king from the number of their own nobles. Their choice fell on a certain Kashta, a man of little energy, who allowed Egypt to throw off the Ethiopian sovereignty without making any effort to prevent it. Bek-en-ranf, the son of Tafnekht, was the leader of this successful rebellion, and is said to have reigned over all Egypt for six years. He got a name for wisdom and justice, but he could not alter that

condition of affairs which had been gradually brought about by the slow working of various more or less occult causes, whereby Ethiopia had increased, and Egypt diminished in power, their relative strength, as compared with former times, having become inverted. Ethiopia, being now the stronger, was sure to reassert herself, and did so in Bek-en-ranf's seventh year. Shabak, the son of Kashta, whose character was cast in a far stronger mould than that of his father, having mounted the Ethiopian throne, lost no time in swooping down upon Egypt from the upper region, and, carrying all before him, besieged and took Saïs, made Bek-en-ranf a prisoner, and barbarously burnt him alive for his rebellion. His fierce and sensuous physiognomy is quite in keeping with this bloody deed, which was well calculated to strike terror into the Egyptian nation, and to ensure a general submission. The rule of the Ethiopians was now, for some fifty years, firmly established. Shabak founded a dynasty which the Egyptians themselves admitted to be legitimate, and which the historian Manetho declared to have consisted of three kings—Sabacos (or Shabak), Sevechus (or Shabatok), and Taracus (or Tehrak), the Hebrew Tirhakah. The extant monuments confirm the names, and order of succession, of these monarchs. They were of a coarser and ruder fibre than the native Egyptians, but they did not rule Egypt in any alien or hostile spirit. On the contrary, they were pious worshippers of the old Egyptian gods; they repaired and beautified the old Egyptian temples; and, instead of ruling Egypt, as a conquered province, from Napata, they resided permanently, or at any rate occasionally, at the Egyptian capitals, Thebes and Memphis. There are certain indications which make it probable that to some extent they pursued the policy of Piankhi, and governed Lower Egypt by means of tributary kings, who held their courts at Saïs, Tanis, and perhaps Bubastis. But they kept a jealous watch over their subject princes, and allowed none of them to attain a dangerous pre-eminence.'

Geikie prefers to regard 'So' as the second king of this dynasty, and gives the following reasons for his opinion: 'A strong Egyptian faction existed in Samaria; perhaps in part from the old tradition of Jeroboam I. having found a home on the Nile in his exile, and having brought thence an Egyptian queen, but, still more, from the wily diplomacy of the Pharaohs, whose agents in all the courts of Palestine constantly urged alliance with their masters, and promised their help to any who refused to pay tribute to Assyria. In his difficult position, Hoshea seems to have tried to keep favour with the Great King (of Assyria), while secretly treating for assistance from So,

or Savah, of Egypt, the second king of the Ethiopian dynasty, in a projected revolt. Savah is called, in Sargon's annals, "The Sultan," and is distinguished from "the Pharaoh, the King of Egypt." He was, in fact, the lord paramount, with an Egyptian king under him, at Tanis, besides many other petty kings throughout the valley of the Nile and the Delta. The affix *ka* was added in Egypt to the names of the Ethiopian kings. It is the article. Thus Seveh, or Schava, becomes Schabaka. In the Bible this is contracted to So. On the Assyrian monuments to Schava. Savah, though the second king of the dynasty, was regarded as its real founder, from his ability and deeds.'

Dr. Lumby confirms this view. 'In the Assyrian records (Smith, *Assyrian Canon*, p. 126) there appears an Egyptian general, whose name is represented as Sabakhi or Sibahe. He is represented as helping the King of Gaza against Assyria and being overthrown. This may be the person here spoken of.' Date about 720 B.C.

The objection to the identification of So with the Sabaco of Herodotus is, that Sabaco did not reign so early. Manetho puts him only twenty-four years before Tirhakah, whose first year was 690 B.C. But Manetho's numbers cannot be relied on.

The *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'Like other founders of dynasties, as Shishak and Psammeticus, So would be likely to revive the old Egyptian claims on Syria, and to take advantage of any opening that offered, in order to reassert those sovereign rights, which Egypt never forgot, though she had often to let them remain in abeyance. In the inscriptions of Shebek he boasts to have received tribute from the "King of *Shara*" (Syria), which is probably his mode of noticing Hoshea's application.'

The Mysterious Figure of Melchizedek.

GENESIS xiv. 18: 'And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God.'

Question.—*Are we to regard Melchizedek as an historical, or as a legendary figure?*

Answer.—Probably in this case there is an historical basis, about which legends have gathered, and it is now nearly impossible to detach the history from the legend.

W. J. Deane says: 'Round this personage tradition has gathered a crop of legends which have no credibility in themselves, and no foundation in history. There are difficulties in this narrative (Gen. xiv. 18-20), the solution of which has never been successfully

attained. The presence of Melchizedek, "priest of the Most High God" (El Elyon), in the midst of the probably heathen population of Salem, is perplexing. We are scarcely prepared for the sudden appearance of this *Cohen* (priest), offering bread and wine in connection with the first fruits of the spoil, as Philo observes, blessing Abram, and receiving tithes from the patriarch. We have long looked upon Abram as the one witness to Monotheism among an idolatrous people, and to see him holding a position inferior to this hitherto unknown chieftain is an unexpected difficulty. Who he was, of what family, or nation, is left in utter obscurity. Suddenly he comes forth in the page of history for one brief moment, and then his name is heard no more for a thousand years, when it is found in the Book of Psalms (Ps. cx.); a thousand years more passed before it occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrew; so that there is a mystery connected therewith, which gives to it a preponderating interest and charm. As to the person and nationality of Melchizedek, different opinions have been held, and nothing can with absolute certainty be determined. Some heretics, we are told, considered him to have been the Holy Ghost; Origen and Didymus deemed him an angel; the Jews, in order to account for his acknowledged superiority to Abram, identified him with Shem, the most pious of Noah's sons, who, according to their genealogies, lived till Isaac's time. Some Christians, both in early and later times, have maintained that he was the Son of God appearing in human form. There is no reason to doubt that he was an historical personage. As to his nationality we can conclude nothing from his Semitic name, as that might be only a translation of his original appellation. He is dwelling among Hamites, recognised apparently as the chief of a settled Canaanitish tribe. If he had been of Semitic descent, he could scarcely have been considered so entirely disconnected with Levi and the Jewish priesthood; his sacerdotal office would not have had the isolated character which is attributed to it. Monotheists were to be found among alien people, such as Job in the land of Uz, and Balaam in Pethor. It is reasonable to conclude that he was of the same blood as those among whom he dwelt, preserving in himself that revelation of the true God which was maintained by Noah and his immediate descendants.'

Taking a strictly historical view of Melchizedek, very striking and very hopeful suggestions are made by Miss Corbaux, in the 'Journal of Sacred Literature.' 'It may be safely concluded that, though reigning in Canaan, Melchizedek was not of one of the depraved and idolatrous Canaanitish tribes. Miss Corbaux, writing concerning the

Rephaim, a distinct race, supposes that Salem was the central seat of their authority, and that the king who reigned there was the supreme head of their nation, to whom the different tribes were subordinate. If Melchizedek were a mere local chief, it is difficult to see why the King of Sodom, an Emim prince, and why Abraham, should pay him the deference they did.' 'But the moment the important fact comes in by way of explanation, supported by sufficient extrinsic evidence, that the King of Salem was the supreme chief of the entire nation, and the local chiefs of tribes were his subordinates, the whole transaction becomes perfectly intelligible, because we understand the mutual relation of all parties concerned in it. As feudal lord of the land, in which Abraham had settled, Abraham paid him this tribute. As head of the national body to which the Emim belonged, the chief of the Emim sanctioned it. As head of the state in religious as well as in temporal concerns, according to the primitive patriarchal order, Melchizedek received the tribute, both as a votive offering of gratitude from the givers for the rescue of the goods, and as an acknowledgment of his lordship over the goods rescued.

On the question whether he was of Canaanite or Semitic race, the *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'The name and titles of Melchizedek are Semitic; but this proves nothing. He dwelt among Canaanites; but there had probably been Semitic inhabitants of the land before the emigration of the Canaanites; and so Melchizedek, who was a worshipper of the true God, may have been one of the original Semitic stock. There were, however, worshippers of the true God, besides the Israelites, retaining patriarchal truth, as Job and Balaam, and so it is not certain that Melchizedek was a descendant of Shem.'

Dr. C. Geikie brings out some points of interest in his note. 'Melchizedek's pure and holy faith in the "Most High God," was doubtless a relic of the anciently universal recognition of the One Creator, and is one of the proofs incidentally afforded in such other cases as that of Abimelech, King of Gerar; Jethro, the Midianite; Balaam, from the mountains of Assyria, and Job the Arab, that God has at no time left Himself without a witness even in lands secluded from the direct privileges of His people. El Eliōn, the name given by Melchizedek to God, was not, indeed, new or unknown, for El, or Il, "The Mighty One," was the ancient supreme god of the Semitic races of Babylonia, and was known in Palestine by the Phœnicians; and even the great title, Eliōn, "The Highest," had been adopted by them, corrupt and idolatrous as they had become. With them, indeed, both names only marked one Divine Being among many, though perhaps the highest; nor is it to be overlooked that while

Melchizedek uses the general expression "The Most High God," Abraham, in repeating it, prefixes the personal name "Jehovah," as if to claim for Him the exclusive right to supreme divinity. With this weighty addition, though not without it, he recognises the God of Melchizedek as Him whom he himself worshipped.'

Dean Stanley's reference, though familiar, is too suggestive to be omitted. Melchizedek 'appears for a moment, and then vanishes from our view altogether. It is this which wraps him round in that mysterious obscurity which has rendered his name the symbol of all such sudden, abrupt apparitions, the interruptions, the dislocations, if one may so say, of the ordinary, even succession of cause and effect and matter of fact in the various stages of the history of the Church (Heb. vii. 3). No wonder that, in Jewish times, he was regarded as some remnant of the earlier world—Arphaxad or Shem. No wonder that when, in after times, there arose One whose appearance was beyond and above any ordinary influence of time, or place, or earthly descent, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews could find no fitter expression for this aspect of His character than the mysterious likeness of Melchizedek.'

What became of Goliath's Head and Armour?

I SAMUEL xvii. 54: 'And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armour in his tent.'

I SAMUEL xxi. 9: 'And the priest said, The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom thou slewest in the valley of Elah, behold, it is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take that, take it: for there is no other save that here. And David said, There is none like that; give it me.'

Difficulty.—*Jerusalem at this time was in the hands of the Jebusites, and there was no possibility of David's taking the head to that city. And besides, David had no tent; he was only a visitor at the camp, and the sword was found afterwards, not in David's tent, but in the sacred Tabernacle at Nob.*

Explanation.—The two facts presented in this statement of difficulty should be at once and fully recognised and admitted. It is true that, in some sense, the Israelites dwelt in the city of Jerusalem, though the fortress of Jebus had not been taken (see Josh. xv. 63; Jud. 1, 8). But it is also quite true that Jerusalem occupied, at the time, no such relation to Saul, or to David, or to the kingdom, as could have suggested it as a store-place to David. And there was no sense in which David could be said to have either a tent or a dwelling.

We should naturally expect that David, having conquered in the strength of God, and as a testimony of the power they have who

trust in God, would feel an impulse to dedicate the trophies of his victory to God. It would be a very unfitting close of the narrative if we had to understand that David made a public boast over his fallen enemy, and enriched himself with the spoils of battle. The 'tent' referred to must be the sacred tent, or tabernacle, of Jehovah, and there the sword was found, carefully wrapped up, only a little time later on (1 Sam. xxi. 9). All difficulty would be removed if we might assume that the Tabernacle was at this time erected at Nob, which was near to, and overlooking, Jerusalem. What we understand David to have done was this: taken both the head and armour to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, fixed up the head near the sacred tent, where it would speedily decay; and left the armour in charge of the priests as historical treasures. We know positively that the Tabernacle was at Nob, a little later in Saul's reign (1 Sam. xxi. 1), and it is reasonable to think it had been placed there before the conflict with Goliath. Nob, as one of the eminences near Jerusalem, may, in a general way, be spoken of as 'Jerusalem.'

Imagination has filled in the Bible record very variously. *Edersheim* says: 'The head of the Philistine he nailed on the gates of Jerusalem, right over in sight of the fort which the heathen Jebusites still held in the heart of the land; the armour he laid up in his home as his part of the spoil.' *Wordsworth* explains the 'tent' as 'David's abode in Bethlehem;' but there is no hint given of his having any separate dwelling. *Dr. Geikie* is very inventive. 'From the battlefield David returned for a time to his father's house, apparently, however, after a visit to Jerusalem, which, though still held by Jebusites, was largely inhabited by Hebrews. In the care of some of his friends, among these, he left, for the present, the grisly memory of his victory—the head of the fallen man.' But no hint is given of a reason why Jerusalem was chosen as the treasury. *Geikie* adds: 'The huge armour he kept, meanwhile,' in his 'own' tent 'in the hills, and the sword was laid up in his father's house till it could be transferred to the Tabernacle at Nob, as an offering of grateful thanks to Jehovah.' But reference to his 'father's house' is not made in the narrative.

The Speaker's Commentary recognises that there was no reason why Jerusalem should at this time be selected as the place to put the trophy of David's victory in; and suggests that this was not actually done until David had made Jerusalem his capital, and the treasury of his trophies (2 Sam. v. 5; viii. 7), but it is mentioned, at this particular time, by anticipation, in the usual way of Hebrew narrative. 'It would be quite in accordance with David's piety that he should

immediately dedicate to God the arms taken from the Philistine, in acknowledgment that the victory was not his own but the Lord's.'

It is the Eastern custom to exhibit the heads of conquered kings or generals; but we need not think of them as being kept a long time. They were placed on poles in some conspicuous position, and soon fell to pieces.

As so often, Dean Stanley presents the solution which can hardly fail to be acceptable. 'Two trophies long remained of the battle—the head and the sword of the Philistine. Both were ultimately deposited at Jerusalem; but, meanwhile, were hung up behind the ephod in the Tabernacle at Nob. The mention of Jerusalem may be either an anticipation of the ultimate disposition of the relics in David's Sacred Tent there (2 Sam. vi. 17), or a description of the Tabernacle at Nob, *close to Jerusalem*, where the sword is mentioned (1 Sam. xxi. 9).'

Left Uncircumcised.

JOSHUA v. 5: 'Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised.'

Question.—*What was the reason for the neglect of the Divine requirement of circumcision during all the later years of the wilderness journey?*

Answer.—From the time that the judgment of Jehovah fell on the Israelites, on account of their rebellion, after receiving the report of the spies, they were regarded by Jehovah as being out of the covenant, or, at least, the covenant relations were regarded as *suspended*, and therefore the sign of the covenant could not be permitted to continue. The significance of this suspension of the covenant, and of its sign, can only be understood by considering the Divine use made of the rite of circumcision.

It is now known that the rite was not invented afresh for the Abrahamic race. The Egyptians had practised it from immemorial antiquity, and traces of it are found in many unrelated tribes and nations. It was made a requirement by God of Abraham and his posterity. When God solemnly established and ratified His covenant with Abraham, as narrated in Gen. xvii., it is added, 'Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you.' 'My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh

of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My covenant.' The strict and continued observance of the rite was to be a continuous acknowledging of the covenant relations and claims.

If, then, God was pleased, in judgment and in discipline, to suspend for a time the covenant-relations, nothing could be a more efficient reminder of the fact, that the people were under discipline, than the suspension of this familiar rite. They were not allowed to bind themselves to the covenant by the act of circumcising their children, because the covenant-relations were held in abeyance. But this explanation depends on our taking a correct view of the thirty-eight years of wandering.

It is worthy of notice that, even in the historical record, the *events* of this period are unnoticed, as if they did not belong to the history of the covenant; and verse 6 of Joshua v. seems distinctly to connect the non-observance of the rite with the judgment resting on the people. It reads thus: 'For (as if presenting the reason) the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: unto whom the Lord sware that he would not show *them* the land, which the Lord sware unto their fathers that He would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey.'

One writer suggests that possibly their nomad life, perpetually moving, may sufficiently account for their not circumcising during the wilderness-period; but this writer adds: 'Some have supposed them, as it were, in a state of rejection until the disobedient generation had died out." The crossing of Jordan was a sign of the covenant being re-established, and therefore at that time the rite could be fittingly resumed.

Waller says: 'As the narrative stands, it is not quite obvious why uncircumcision is called "the reproach of Egypt," verse 9, whereas all the people born in Egypt were circumcised. The uncircumcision attached to those who were born in the wilderness, during the years of wandering. But the period of wandering, between the departure from Kadesh-barnea and the return to Kadesh (thirty-seven and a half years, Num. xv.-xix. inclusive), is a kind of blank in the story of the Exodus. The five chapters which belong to it in the Book of Numbers contain no note of progress as to time or place. The people had "turned back in their hearts to Egypt" (Acts vii. 39; Num. xiv. 4), and were bearing the reproach of their apostasy all those years, "the reproach of Egypt." Suffering under the "breach of promise" of Jehovah (Num. xiv. 34), they appear to have omitted

the sign of the covenant, as though they were no longer the people of God. The passage of Jordan was the practical proof of Israel's restoration to Divine favour, and they were then brought into covenant with Him once more.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* may be cited as a further authority for the explanation given above. 'It was not (as Rosenmüller and Kurtz, after many older authorities) that during the wanderings they were constantly on the move, or at least uncertain of their stay in any given place; for they remained at Sinai eleven months, and must have, on many other occasions, been stationary for weeks together The true reason is that suggested by Hengstenberg, after Calvin and others, viz., that the sentence of Num. xiv. 28, *sqq.*, placed the whole nation for the time under a ban; and that the discontinuance of circumcision, and the consequent omission of the Passover, was a consequence and a token of that ban. . . . For the time the covenant was abrogated, though God's purpose to restore it was from the first made known, and confirmed by the visible marks of His favour which he still vouchsafed to bestow during the wandering.'

David's Lion and Bear.

1 SAMUEL xvii. 34-36: 'And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear.'

Difficulty.—*There appear to be two distinct incidents referred to, but the details given are not suitable to both cases.*

Explanation.—The 'Revised Version' reads the first sentence, 'when there came a lion, *or* a bear;' but this does not get over the difficulty, because, in the following verses, two cases are referred to as having actually occurred.

We have, in these verses, an instance of the hurried speech of a man in a time of excitement. The natural hurry and almost incoherency are precisely caught. David mixes things up, for it is not possible, at such a moment, to be logically precise. His point comes out clearly enough. He does but summarize the instances in which his promptitude and courage, with the help of God, had overcome serious perils. Whether there had been *one* case, or *two*, or *ten*, in which his shepherd's prowess and his faith in God had been tried, was quite a secondary consideration. He had trusted in God, and done exploits; and trusting in God, he would do exploits again.

The *Speaker's Commentary* makes an unnecessary effort to account for the apparent confusion of thought and speech. 'The narrative

does not make it certain whether the lion and the bear came on one and the same, or on two different occasions. If it was one occasion, the probability would be that, the bear having seized a lamb, and carrying it off, a lion appeared to dispute the prize with the bear, or with David after he had taken it from the bear, and that David slew first one, and then the other. If on different occasions, David's description applies to each.' But it may fairly be urged that the habits of lions and bears are so different, that they are not likely to have hunted in any sense together; and the expression, 'caught him by the beard' is only suitable to the *lion*. It is surely simpler to say, that David hurriedly recalled two cases, and gave the details of one only.

Dean Stanley treats the passage as describing a single incident. 'In those early days, when the forests of Southern Palestine had not been cleared, it was the habit of the wild animals which usually frequented the heights of Lebanon, or the thickets of the Jordan, to make incursions into the pastures of Judæa. From the Lebanon at times descended the bears. From the Jordan ascended the lion, at that time infesting the whole of Western Asia. These creatures, though formidable to the flocks, could always be kept at bay by the determination of the shepherds. Sometimes pits were dug to catch them. Sometimes the shepherds of the whole neighbourhood formed a line on the hills, and joined in loud shouts to keep them off. Occasionally a single shepherd would pursue the marauder, and tear away from the jaws of the lion morsels of the lost treasure—two legs, or a piece of an ear. Such feats as these were performed by the youthful David. It was his pride to pursue these savage beasts, and on one occasion he had a desperate encounter at once with a lion and a she bear. The lion had carried off a lamb; he pursued the invader, struck him with the boldness of an Arab shepherd, with his staff or switch, and forced the lamb out of his jaws. The lion turned upon the boy, who struck him again, caught him by the mane, or the throat, or, according to another version, by the tail, and succeeded in destroying him.'

The Origin of Moab and Ammon.

GENESIS xix. 37-38: 'And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.'

Question.—*What value may be reasonably attached to the tradition explanatory of the origin of these nations?*

Answer.—*De Wette*, *Tuch*, *Knobel*, etc., regard this narrative

concerning Lot as an invention of a later age, and due to the national hatred of the Israelites against the Moabites and Ammonites. We confess to some sympathy with this view. It is a curious characteristic of Eastern people, that they vent their anger against a man by saying shameful things of *his mother*. It would be in harmony with this peculiarity if annoyance at a nation found expression in the invention of some shameful origin for it. The origins of all nations, being pre-historic, are always uncertain and cloudy. Some poet-soul arises, who recognises the *genius* of the nation, and then invents for it some symbolic beginning, which after ages treat as if it were history. In this way the story of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf was no doubt created, to account for the characteristic strength of the Romans as a people. It may be fairly urged that the origin of Moab and Ammon is such an imaginative picture, coloured by the enmity felt towards them by the Israelites. It has been argued that we do not come into the region of what can be called *history* until the Israelites are brought into relations with civilized Egypt. The records of Abraham are reasonably assumed to blend the legendary with the historical.

The *Speaker's Commentary*, referring to De Wette's idea, that this narrative had its origin in the national hatred of the Israelites to the Moabites and Ammonites, replies, that the Pentateuch by no means shows such national hatred (see Deut. ii. 9, 10): and the Book of Ruth gives the history of a Moabitess who was ancestress of David himself. It was not until the Moabites had seduced the Israelites to idolatry and impurity (Num. xxv. 1), and had acted in an unfriendly manner towards them, hiring Balaam to curse them, that they were excluded from the congregation of the Lord for ever (Deut. xxiii. 3, 4).

It is pointed out that the name Moab (Me-ab) means, 'Son of my father;' and Ammon 'Son of my people,' *i.e.* one born of intercourse with her own kin and family. So the very names indicate the incestuous origin of the tribes.

Lange says: 'When later debauchery (Num. ii. 25) and impiety (*e.g.* 2 Kings iii. 26) appear as fundamental traits in the character and cultus of both peoples, we can at least hold with equal justice that these inherited sins came with them from their origin, as that the tradition of their origin has moulded their character.'

It must, however, be admitted that a narrative which assumes Lot's absolute ignorance is, on the face of it, somewhat unreasonable, and belongs to the region of imagination rather than of historical fact.

Two Accounts of David's Magnanimity.

1 SAMUEL xxiv. 7: 'So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul.'

1 SAMUEL xxvi. 9: 'And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?'

Question.—*Is there reasonable ground for the suggestion that these two chapters contain differing traditions of one incident?*

Answer.—The suggestion is made on such authority, and supported by so good arguments, that it certainly calls for a patient and careful consideration. *Ewald* regards the earlier narrator's fragments as defective here, but says there must have been some original narrative, or the representations that we have would be inexplicable. He points out that, in the popular traditions, the story of David's generosity, in sparing Saul's life, was almost as great a favourite as the tale of his combat with Goliath, and accordingly was told as often, and finally assumed as many different forms. 'Two narratives of this description are contained in the Book of Samuel, both alike flowing into that style of representation in which the simple act sinks into insignificance before the grandeur of the sentiments which it illustrated, yet each bearing in its style of composition traces of a special narrator.'

Lord Arthur Hervey, D.D., Bishop of Bath and Wells, has given this question most careful attention, and lays out in order the materials for forming a judgment, though with an evident bias towards the view that we have two traditions of one event. His entire note may be given. 'The verse, ch. xxvi. 1, is all but identical with ch. xxiii. 19, only a little abbreviated; and as there is no intimation in it that the Ziphites came to Saul *again*, or, *a second time*, and as the incident related in this chapter of the meeting between Saul and David bears a strong resemblance to that recorded in ch. xxiv., and is of a nature unlikely to have occurred more than once, the inquiry naturally arises whether the event here narrated is really different from that in ch. xxiv., or whether it is the same event somewhat differently told. The points of resemblance are: (1) The identity above named of ch. xxvi. 1 with ch. xxiii. 19. (2) The identity of position occupied by David, ch. xxiii. 19, 24, and ch. xxvi. 1, 3. (3) The fact of Saul and David being on the same hill at the same time, ch. xxvi. 3, compared with ch. xxiii. 26. (4) The special note of Saul's locality "by the way," ch. xxvi. 3, and xxiv. 3. (5) The number of Saul's army on both occasions, 3,000, ch. xxvi. 2; xxiv. 2. (6) The speech of David's men, ch. xxvi. 8, and xxiv. 4. (7) David's

refusal to set forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, ch. xxvi. 9, 11, and xxiv. 6. (8) The incident of David's taking Saul's spear from his bedside, ch. xxvi. 12, compared with his cutting off the skirt of his garment (ch. xxiv. 4), incidents which might possibly be identified if the skirt of the *mêil*, or garment, were hanging upon the spear. (9) Saul's sound sleep, ch. xxiv. 3, and xxvi. 7. (10) David's expostulation and defence of himself, ch. xxvi. 19, compared with xxiv. 9; xxvi. 20, compared with xxiv. 14; xxvi. 22-24, compared with xxiv. 10, 11; xxvi. 23, 24, compared with xxiv. 15. (11) Saul's words, xxvi. 17, compared with xxiv. 16. (12) Saul's avowal of his conviction of David's future greatness, xxvi. 25, compared with xxiv. 20, and confession of his own misconduct, xxvi. 21, compared with xxiv. 17, 18. (13) The termination of the interview as described xxvi. 25, compared with xxiv. 22. It may also be remarked that the two narratives may be brought into very near agreement if we suppose *David's men*, in xxiv. 3, to mean not the whole gang, but his two companions, Ahimelech and Abishai; if we suppose David's coming into the cave to be not accidental, but the result of the *reconnaissance* mentioned in xxvi. 5, and give to the word יֹשְׁבִים, in ch. xxiv. 3, its proper sense of "lying in ambush," waiting till all was quite still in the camp; and if we suppose that Abner and the people were encamped just outside the cave within which Saul lay, as it is natural to suppose they were. If we further suppose that one narrative relates fully some incidents on which the other is silent, there will remain no discrepancy of any importance. So that on the whole the most probable conclusion is that the two narratives relate to one and the same event. Compare the two narratives of the Creation, Gen. i. and Gen. ii. 4, *sqq.*; the two narratives of David's war against the Syrians under Hadarezer, 2 Sam. viii., and x.; those of the death of Ahaziah, 2 Kings viii. 27, *sqq.*, and 2 Chron. xxii. 9; and many instances in the Gospels as compared one with another.'

We may present, as fairly and fully, what can be urged in favour of the view that two wholly distinct incidents are narrated. For this we take the guidance of *Canon Spence*. 'The circumstances of the night raid by David and his companions into *the camp* of the sleeping Saul are, when examined closely, so *entirely* different from the circumstances of the mid-day siesta of Saul in *the Engedi cavern*, where David and his band were dwelling, that it is really impossible to assume that they are versions of one and the same incident. We conclude, therefore, with some certainty, that the accounts contained in ch. xxiii., xxiv., xxvi., refer to two distinct and separate events; and so Keil, Erdmann, Lange, and Dean Payne Smith. There re-

mains, however, a still graver question to be considered, the gravity and difficulty of which remains the same, whether we assume, as we propose to do, that *twice* in the course of the outlaw life of David the king's life was in his power, or that only *once* David stood over the sleeping king, sword in hand, and that the two accounts refer to one and the same event. *For what purpose* did the compiler of the First Book of Samuel insert in his narrative this twenty-sixth chapter—where either the *old* story of ch. xxiii. and xxiv. is repeated with certain variations, or else an incident of a similar nature to one which has been told before in careful detail is repeated at great length? To this important question no perfectly satisfactory reply can be given. The object of *one* such recital in an account of the early life of the great founder of Israelitic greatness is clear, but we may well ask why was a *second* narrative of an incident of like nature inserted in a book where conciseness is ever so carefully studied? All we can suggest is, that everything which conduced to the glory of the favourite hero of Israel was of the deepest interest to the people, and the surpassing nobility and generosity of the magnanimity of David to his deadly foe was deemed worthy of these detailed accounts, even in the necessarily brief compilation of the inspired writer of the history of this time.'

The question is a deeply interesting and important one, because it involves the further question, whether we may expect to find in the Scripture histories accounts of events that are not true to fact in every precise detail. May we think that the writer recorded faithfully the narratives as he found them, or heard them, but the accounts were only in a general sense correct? We may be helped by recalling to mind the general agreement, but diversity of details, in any reports sent to our newspapers of events that happen. We do not think of them as untruthful, though they do not exactly agree. A historian has to collate the different reports of a battle, all of which may be truthful. And when historical events or incidents in lives of great men were only remembered, and told from one to another, differences in detail were only too likely to spring up. In the case before us the probabilities seem quite in favour of a variation in the traditional records of one incident.

The First Assyrian Invasions.

2 KINGS xv. 19: 'And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.'

2 KINGS xv. 29: 'In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.'

Question.—*Do the Assyrian records furnish any corroboration, and any further details, of these invasions?*

Answer.—It is necessary first to endeavour to trace clearly what is stated in Scripture. These texts record two distinct invasions, one occurring in the reign of Menahem, the other in that of Pekah. Some think the two invasions occurred during the reign of one Assyrian king, who is called in the one place Pul, in the other Tiglath-pileser; but it is always safer to conclude that the compiler of Scripture history knew what he was writing about, and was not likely to give two names to the same man.

Bible readers are often confused by the statements that connect Babylonia and Assyria with Israel. We know so little of the relations of those countries, and their national and political changes, that to most of us the one seems to embrace the other. Babylonia was the older nation, and lay southwards, around the river Tigris, and near the Persian Gulf. Assyria was the nation occupying the country north of Babylonia, and around the Euphrates. Both Babylonia and Assyria were aggressive nations, disposed to move westwards, and so they were rivals; sometimes Babylonia was a dependent of Assyria, and sometimes Assyria of Babylonia. When Samaria was taken, and the kingdom of Israel destroyed, Assyria was the dominant power. When Jerusalem was taken, and the kingdom of Judah destroyed, Babylonia was the dominant power.

It is with Assyrian history that we are just now concerned. It begins with the *patesis* or viceroys of the city of Assur, of whom we only know the names. In the seventeenth or sixteenth century before the Christian era, one Bel Kapkapi gave himself the title of king. For two or three centuries our chief information is founded on the relations between this monarchy and that of Babylonia, which were sometimes peaceable, and sometimes hostile. For six generations the descendants of Kapkapi followed one another on the throne; and then came Tiglath-pileser I., who may be regarded as the founder of the first Assyrian Empire. He conquered Babylonia in B.C. 1130. The next important kings are Assurdân II.;

Rimmon-nirari II.; and Assur-natsir-pal (B.C. 911-858). Then came Shalmaneser II., who seems to have been the first to compel Israel (under Jehu) to pay tribute, B.C. 884. In B.C. 854 he attacked the kingdom of Hamath, and a confederacy was formed against him, which included Ahab of Israel. Shalmaneser also succeeded in reducing Babylonia to vassalage.

Rawlinson thinks that Judæa was regularly tributary to Assyria from the beginning of the reign of Amaziah, B.C. 838, and that it is most unlikely Samaria, which lay between Judæa and Assyria, could have maintained its independence. 'Under the Assyrian system, the monarchs of tributary kingdoms, on ascending the throne, applied for "confirmation in their kingdoms" to the Lord Paramount, and only became established on receiving it. We may gather from 2 Kings xv. 19, 20 that Menahem neglected to make any such applications to his liege lord, Pul—a neglect which would have been regarded as a plain act of rebellion. Pul evidently looked on Menahem as a rebel. He consequently marched an army into Palestine for the purpose of punishing his revolt, when Menahem hastened to make his submission, and having collected, by means of a poll-tax, the large sum of a thousand talents of gold, he paid it over to the Assyrian monarch, who consented, thereupon, to "confirm" him as king.'

The difficulty in identifying Pul lies in the fact that this name does not appear among the Assyrian monumental kings, and we have to find out the king who was reigning at the time of this particular expedition. The name is even absent from the copies of the Assyrian Canon, which professes to give the entire list of monarchs from about B.C. 910 to B.C. 670. There seem to be three possible theories. (1) For a time a sort of second Assyrian monarchy was established, and Pul belonged to it. (2) Pul is but another name for Tiglath-pileser. (3) Pul is the predecessor of Tiglath-pileser, and appears on the monuments as *Vul-lush.*

On theory 1, *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'Assyria proper appears to have been in a state of depression for some forty years before the accession of Tiglath-pileser. And it is to be noted that Berosus, who mentioned Pul, called him a *Chaldæan*, and not an Assyrian king. These circumstances render it probable that, during the depression of the Ninevite line, a second monarchy was established upon the Euphrates, which claimed to be the true Assyria, and was recognised as such by the nations of Syria and Palestine; and that Pul was one of its kings.' But this is too much like making history in order to remove a difficulty.

On theory 2, *Sayce* writes: 'After Rimmon-nirari III. (B.C. 810-781), who compelled Mariha, of Damascus, to pay him tribute, as well as the Phœnicians, Israelites, Edomites, and Philistines, the vigour of the dynasty began to fail. A few short reigns followed that of Rimmon-nirari, during which the first Assyrian empire melted away. A formidable power arose in Armenia, the Assyrian armies were driven to the frontiers of their own country, and disaffection began to prevail in Assyria itself. At length, on June 15, B.C. 763, an eclipse of the sun took place, and the city of Assur rose in revolt. The revolt lasted three years, and before it could be crushed the outlying provinces were lost. When Assur-nirari, the last of his line, ascended the throne, in B.C. 753, the empire was already gone, and the Assyrian cities themselves were surging with discontent. Ten years later the final blow was struck; the army declared itself against the monarch, and he and his dynasty fell together. On the 30th of Iyyar, of the year B.C. 745, a military adventurer, Pul, seized the vacant crown, and assumed the venerable name of Tiglath-pileser.'

The Rev. J. C. Ball, M.A., in Ellicott's Commentary, strongly supports the identification of Pul with Tiglath. In a note on 1 Chron. v. 26, where the two names will be found closely associated, he says: 'Tiglath-pileser II. actually claims to have received tribute of Menahem (*Menahimmu*). Pul appears to have been the original name of Tiglath-pileser, which, upon his accession to the throne of Assyria (B.C. 745), he discarded for that of the great king who had ruled the country four centuries before his time. The name Pul (Pie-u-lu) has been identified by Dr. Schrader with the Porus of Ptolemy's Canon, *Pôr* being the Persian pronunciation of Pul. Perhaps, in 1 Chron. v. 26, the chronicler meant to indicate the identity of Pûl and Tiglath: "The spirit of Pûl *and* (=*that is*) the spirit of Tiglath," and *he* carried them away.'

Professor Schrader's argument may be summarized. '(1) Menahem, of Israel, and Azariah, of Judah, were contemporaries, according to the Bible as well as the Inscriptions. (2) According to the Bible, both these rulers were contemporary with an Assyrian king, Pul; according to the Inscriptions, with Tiglath-pileser. (3) Berosus calls Pul a Chaldæan; Tiglath-pileser calls himself King of Chaldæa. (4) Pul-Porus became, in B.C. 731, King of Babylon; Tiglath-pileser in B.C. 731 received the homage of the Babylonian king, Merodach-Baladan, as he also reduced other Babylonian princes in this year, amongst them Chinzēros, of Amukkan. (5) Porus appears in the Canon of Ptolemy as King of Babylon; Tiglath-pileser names him-

self "King of Babylon." (6) Chinzēros became King of Babylon in B.C. 731 according to the Canon, and, in fact, along with, or under, a king of the name of Poros; the hypothesis that the vanquished King of Amukkan of the same name was entrusted by Tiglath-pileser with the vassal kingship of Babylon is suggested at once by the coincidence of the chronological data. (7) In the year B.C. 727-726, a change of government took place in Assyria, in consequence of the death of Tiglath-pileser, and in Babylonia in consequence of the death of Porus. (8) No king appears in the Assyrian lists by a name like Pul, which is anomalous as a royal designation; we can only identify Pul with some other name in the lists, and, on historical grounds, with Tiglath-pileser only. (9) Pul and Porus are forms of the same name. Compare *Babiru* for Bâbilu, in Persian inscriptions. (10) From all this, the conclusion is inevitable that Pul and Porus, Pul and Tiglath-Pileser, are one and the same person.'

On theory 3, *Rawlinson* writes in *Smith's* 'Dictionary of the Bible,' but we have been unable to find any recent confirmations of it: 'The Assyrian monuments have a king, whose name is read, very doubtfully, as *Vul-lush* or *Iva-lush*, at about the period when Pul must have reigned. This monarch is the grandson of Shalmaneser (the Black Obelisk king, who warred with Benhadad and Hazael, and took tribute from Jehu), while he is certainly anterior to the whole line of monarchs forming the lower dynasty—Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, etc. His probable date, therefore, is B.C. 800-750, while Pul ruled over Assyria in B.C. 770. The Hebrew name Pul is undoubtedly curtailed; for no Assyrian name consists of a single element. If we take the "Phalos," or "Phaloch" of the Septuagint as probably nearer to the original type, we have a form not very different from *Vul-lush* or *Iva-lush*. If, on these grounds, the identification of the Scriptural Pul with the monumental *Vul-lush* be regarded as established, we may give some further particulars of him which possess considerable interest. *Vul-lush* reigned at Calah (Nimrud) from about B.C. 800 to 750. He states that he made an expedition into Syria, wherein he took Damascus; and that he received tribute from the Medes, Armenians, Phœnicians, Samaritans, Damascenes, Philistines, and Edomites. He also tells us that he invaded Babylonia and received the submission of the Chaldæans. He was probably the last Assyrian monarch of his race. The list of Assyrian monumental kings, which is traceable without a break, and in a direct line to him from his seventh ancestor, here comes to a stand; no son of Vul-lush is found; and Tiglath-pileser, who seems to have been *Vul-lush's* successor, is evidently a usurper, since he

makes no mention of his father or ancestors. The circumstances of *Vul-lush's* death, and of the revolution which established the lower Assyrian dynasty, are almost wholly unknown, no account of them having come down to us upon any good authority. Not much value can be attached to the statement in Agathias that the last king of the upper dynasty was succeeded by his own gardener.'

Of these theories, the second appears to be best supported.

Joshua's Sudden March to Ebal.

JOSHUA viii. 35: 'There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.'

Difficulty.—*This paragraph, verses* 30-35, *is inserted in the midst of the narrative of the conquest. Can it be in its proper place? Can we think of the whole congregation temporarily removed from Gilgal, their camp, while the country was still at war?*

Explanation.—This difficulty has been met in several ways. Josephus places the transaction later on. The LXX. puts this paragraph after ch. ix. 2. *Lange* and *Speaker's Commentary* think it should come in after ch. xi. *Keil* suggests that another Gilgal is referred to, not that by Jericho. There was a Gilgal near Gerizim, but no hint is given us of the removal of the camp to that spot. Other writers think the conquest of Ai secured the road to Shechem, and prefer to recognise an earnest effort made at this time to fulfil the requirement of Moses.

It must be admitted that, however strange it may seem to our notions, the removal of such a host in those days would not be remarkable. Great caravans break up camp and march long distances in the East, and the Israelites were still keeping their tent-life and habits. The chief difficulty in such a march would be the peril of attack from active foes. But the recent conquest of Ai would add to the terror of the nations round, and in acting with promptitude Joshua found safety. Shechem seems to have been chosen as the place of meeting, because it was the *centre* of the land; and a solemn ceremony *there* was like taking possession of the whole land for Jehovah. 'Accordingly, all the nation, including the women and children, and even the multitude of other races which had come up with them from Egypt, were led on a stupendous grimage, from the banks of the Jordan at Gilgal, to the valley between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, in the midland hills.'

In a separate note, the *Speaker's Commentary* argues the point that

the paragraph is out of its place. 'It is difficult to escape the conviction that these verses are here out of their proper and original place. The connection between viii. 29, and ix. 1, is natural and obvious; and in ix. 3, the fraud of the Gibeonites is represented as growing out of the alarm caused by the fall of Jericho and Ai. It is, too, on the face of it, extremely unlikely that a solemnity of this nature in the very centre of the country should be undertaken by Joshua whilst the whole surrounding district was in the hands of the enemy, or that, if undertaken, it would have been carried out unmolested. For it appears that (verse 35) "all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them," were present at it. The distance from Gilgal in the Jordan Valley to Mount Ebal is fully thirty miles; and so vast a host, with its non-effective followers, could certainly not have accomplished a march like this through a difficult country and a hostile population in less than three days. Moreover, in ix. 6; x. 6, 15, 43, the Israelites are spoken of as still encamping at Gilgal. If, then, the solemnity described in these verses was really transacted immediately after the fall of Ai, the host, with its "women, little ones," etc., must have made the tedious and dangerous march to Shechem and back again, beside having to spend a day or two in the neighbourhood of the mountains for the preparation and performance of the solemnity. Nothing is said of special Divine interference; and in the absence of miraculous help, Joshua could hardly have accomplished this undertaking at the time suggested by the present position of verses 30-35 in the narrative.'

The Law of the Goël.

NUMBERS XXXV. 12: '*And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.*'

Question.—*Did Moses adopt an existing custom in regulating for escape from the family avenger? If so, what modifications of the custom did he make?*

Answer.—*Gesenius* gives the derivation of the word 'Goël' as from the verb *Gaual*, to redeem, or buy back. The participle 'Goël' means 'redeemer:' when added to the word *daum* (blood), the verb means 'to avenge bloodshed, to require the penalty of bloodshed from anyone.' In the participle 'Goël Haddaum' it means 'avenger of blood.' Since the right of redemption, and the office of avenging bloodshed, belonged to the nearest kinsman, 'Goël' came to denote 'near of kin,' 'near relative.'

All the evidence favours the idea, that Moses modified and adapted an existing sentiment and custom. Similar ideas and arrangements prevail in uncivilized nations still. *Dr. Turner*, the South Sea missionary, tells us that in Samoa, the manslayer, or the deliberate murderer, fearing the family avenger, flies to the house of the chief of the village, or to the house of the chief of another village to which he is related by the father's or the mother's side. In nine cases out of ten he is perfectly safe, if he only remains there.

'In an unsettled state of society the execution of justice was necessarily left in private hands. The lowest stage of national development is where everyone assumes the right of avenging alleged misdeeds at his discretion; and it was, therefore, already an upward step when prevailing custom restricted this right to certain persons, who, although wielding no public authority, were yet invested, *ipso facto*, for the time being, with a public character. It was in such a spirit that the unwritten code of the East conceded to the nearest kinsman of a murdered man the right of avenging the blood that had been shed. He was permitted to kill the murderer, without notice, openly or secretly, wheresoever he might find him. Such rude justice necessarily involved grave evils. It gave no opportunity to the person charged with crime of establishing his innocence; it recognised no distinction between murder, manslaughter, and accidental homicide; it perpetuated family blood-feuds, the avenger of blood being liable to be treated in his turn as a murderer by the kinsman of the man whom he had slain. These grievances could not be removed as long as there was no central government strong enough to vindicate the law; but they might be mitigated; and to do this was the object of Moses in the arrangement he made for "cities of refuge." Among the Arab tribes, who are under the control of no central authority, the practice of blood-revenge subsists in full force to the present day. The law of the Koran limits the right of demanding satisfaction to cases in which a man has been unjustly smitten, and forbids the kinsman of the deceased to avenge his blood on any other than the actual murderer. But these restrictions are generally disregarded in practice by the Arabs.' (*Speaker's Commentary.*)

Dr. Thomson, in 'Land and Book,' tells us, concerning some tribes he visited, 'as in the Jewish community in the time of Moses, so here, the custom of blood-revenge is too deeply rooted to be under the control of the feudal lords of the land; indeed, they themselves and their families are bound by it in its sternest demands. It is plain that Moses, clothed with all the influence and power of an

inspired law-giver, could not eradicate this dreadful custom, and was merely commissioned to mitigate its horrors by establishing cities of refuge under certain humane regulations. It is one of the cruel features of the *lex talionis*, that if the real murderer cannot be reached, the avengers of blood have a right to kill any other member of the family, then any relation, no matter how remote, and, finally, any member of the blood confederation.'

C. J. Elliot says: 'The avenger (*Goël*) was the near kinsman whose office it was to redeem the person or inheritance of his kinsman, if that kinsman was reduced by poverty to sell himself into slavery, or to sell his inheritance; and also to avenge his blood in the event of his being slain. The Mosaic law of the *goël* served to keep in check the excited passions of the near relations of the man who had been slain, and to secure for him a fair and impartial trial.'

Dr. Cox, in 'Biblical Antiquities,' gives a good account of early notions of justice. 'In the earliest times, it was left altogether to the nearest relation of the person that had been killed to execute punishment upon the murderer. (See the fear of Cain lest someone, finding him, should kill him.) In the common sentiment of society this was not only his *right*, but his *duty* also; so that disgrace and reproach fell upon him if he failed to perform it. Hence it became, with such an one, a great point of honour not to leave the blood of his kinsman unavenged, and this, added to the keen feeling of anger which naturally raged in his bosom, urged him to make the greatest exertions to overtake and destroy the person by whose hand it had been shed. This plan of punishment was the most natural one in that simple state of society which was first common. Hence it prevailed among all people; and because the manners of many nations in the East have been handed down with very little alteration from the most ancient days, it still prevails to a considerable extent in that part of the world. It is in use also among the American Indians, and in various countries of Africa. It is easy to see, however, that such a plan must be attended with most serious evil. It is adapted to cherish feelings of bitterness and revenge, and to make them seem honourable; it is not likely to distinguish between wilful murder and such as happens without design; and more than this, it tends to produce lasting feuds between families, one revenge still calling for another, and blood continually demanding new blood, so that in the end, instead of one life, many are cruelly destroyed, in consequence of a single murder. Thus it is, remarkably, among the Arabs; families, and sometimes whole tribes, are set against each other in deadly hatred and war, by the retaliation which a crime of this sort

produces; and the enmity is handed down from fathers to sons as a sacred inheritance, until either one party is completely destroyed, or satisfaction made, such as the side to whom the injury was first done may agree to accept. The true interest of society, therefore, requires that a different plan of punishment should be secured; that its execution should be taken out of the hands of the nearest relation, and put into those of the civil magistrate.'

Dr. Geikie says: 'Blood-revenge has been a passion among all Semitic people from the earliest ages. It may have arisen, in some degree, as lynch law has sprung up in the frontier States of America, from the imperfect development of society, and the fancied necessity of taking private means to secure justice; but whatever its source, it was early recognised as not only a right but a duty. Among the Bedouins, it has, for ages, been made not only a personal matter, but the affair of the whole tribe of the murdered man, on each member of which lies the responsibility of obtaining vengeance. . . . The law was, indeed, written, "He that killeth any man shall surely be put to death;" but the avenger of blood was left to be the executioner, due reprisals being regarded as so completely a fulfilment of the Divine will that God Himself is spoken of as the blood-avenger of His people. No money-payment could be taken for murder, or even for homicide: to compound such a felony made the land unclean before God. Innocent blood, in the opinion of the Hebrews, as of the Arabs now, cries from the ground to God for revenge. Even the altar, inviolable for any other crime, could give the murderer no protection. It was manifestly wrong, however, to put deliberate and accidental homicide on the same footing, and hence means of escape were provided for those guilty of only the unintentional offence.'

Ewald, in his 'Antiquities of Israel,' treats this 'law of the Goël' very philosophically. His introductory paragraph may be given as dealing with that portion of the subject which is now under consideration. 'That the life, or, to express the idea in another more Hebrew word, the "soul" of a man, possesses of itself an inviolable sanctity, is one of the first principles which was firmly established among the nobler races from the very earliest times, and in which all those presentiments of something infinite being implanted in man sought to find the clearest expression possible. All more particular historical reminiscence begins with the fact of the sanctity of human life being already terribly violated in every variety of way; and the sinful impulses had also become sufficiently pernicious and excitable in this direction before the human race set about repressing them energetically. Then, in order to uphold the true principle, there

arose among the nobler and more spirited races what is known as the *vengeance of blood.* This was already an established custom in the primitive days when the household was still everything, and when a kingdom embracing all individuals was either extremely weak, or altogether wanting, and at that time it alone furnished this most in-indispensable reciprocal protection for life. The avenger of blood is the *redeemer;* he is the next heir; he inherits not merely the goods, but the corresponding debts and duties of the dying man. If, then, it is one of the first duties of a living man not to endure any wrong that has been put upon him, and to avenge all insult, if, moreover, having been wrongfully murdered, he is himself unable to discharge this duty, then the nearest of kin, or his representative, inherits, along with his other new duties, the vengeance of blood as the most sacred of them all, and the full burden of infamy rests on him should he not discharge this most burning obligation. Accordingly, it was a further and natural consequence that the whole family of the murdered man took this duty upon themselves, and however long, or with whatever craft, the murderer might seek to baffle the avenger, this only called for more craft and persistence on the part of the latter. The investigation, whether a murder were intentional or not, undoubtedly led very early to simple *expiation* for what was done without purpose; but among many nations, even in the case of intentional murder, it became a custom to compound with *blood-money* for the life which was forfeited to this right of retaliation.'

Dissatisfaction with the Theocracy.

1 SAMUEL viii. 7: 'And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.'

Question.—*Is not God here represented as taking an altogether more serious view of the request of the people than they intended?*

Answer.—It is important to notice that, in using the expression, 'They have rejected Me,' God is not sending a message to the people, but graciously relieving and comforting His servant, who felt that the demand for a king was a slight put upon himself—an intimation that his judging or ruling of the people was not altogether satisfactory. The expression bears the intensity which is suitable to a kind and friendly expostulation.

Canon Spence well expresses this point. 'The words spoken to Samuel, probably in a vision, by the Most High, are very touching and very sad—very touching in their extreme tenderness to the noble

old man. "Take courage," they seem to say, "My old true servant, and be not dismayed at this apparently bitter proof of the ingratitude of the people you loved so well. This deliberate complaint on the part of Israel is directed not against you, the judge, but against Me, the invisible King. They have ever been the same—incapable of becoming My true subjects, and of winning on earth the lofty position I would have given them; you must give them now their heart's desire. It has all been foreseen and provided for; only make them understand *what* they are asking. Then give them their earthly king."'

The people certainly had not in their minds any idea of rejecting Jehovah as their *God*. But God knew that the actual issue of gaining their desire would be His rejection by the nation. With those bonds removed, which made Israel a separate and distinct people, it was only too certain that they would first try to blend the worship of idol-gods with the worship of Jehovah, and then speedily come to put the worship of idol-gods *in the place of* Jehovah. The real nature of a seemingly simple and innocent request can often be seen through its remote consequences, and it is the skill of the historian to estimate the movements of an age in the light of its after-issues; but God alone can see beforehand, and estimate present conduct in the light of the results that flow from it. What God told Samuel was a view of present conduct based upon Divine foreknowledge.

Jehovah was pleased to unite in Himself two relationships, which, in common nations, were kept distinct. He was Israel's *God*, and He was Israel's *King*. The union of these two relationships is expressed in the term 'Theocracy.' So far as the people understood their own request, what they wanted was that Jehovah should continue to be their God, but that the actual government of the nation should be put into the hands of some fellow-man, so that they might have with them a chief magistrate, a centre of court-life, and a captain of their armies. Israel had been called and separated, as a nation, in order to preserve for the world the two primary truths of the *unity* and *spirituality* of God. But these could only be preserved by *faith* —faith of unseen things. As a constant educator of faith, God arranged to be their *unseen*, but ever-present, earthly King; always accessible, directly concerned in every national movement, making His presence felt by national successes, but never *seen;* His presence apprehended only *by faith.*

It was this call for faith in the unseen which proved too great a strain upon the people. It was this strain they asked to have relieved. They did not see that they were losing their safeguard,

and virtually refusing the mission for the world which had been entrusted to them.

It must be admitted that, from the purely human point of view, the history of the period of Judges will account for 'dissatisfaction with the Theocracy.' It certainly had not worked well during those ages of struggle. But the question to solve is this: Was that failure due to the Theocratic system, or to the inability of the people to work the Theocratic system? These elders who came to Samuel should have been dissatisfied with *themselves*, and not with the *Theocracy*. The tribes had not kept together. The religious ceremonials had not been rightly observed. Jehovah's actual guidance of national affairs had not been sought. Those Israelites were like bad workmen, who complained of their *tools*, when they should complain of *themselves*.

Kitto suggests, as one reason for the people desiring an earthly king, that their having no king was made a subject of reproach by their heathen neighbours. 'The Eastern mind is so essentially and pervadingly regal, that to be without a sovereign is scarcely an intelligible state of things to an Oriental; and they must have had occasion to feel that the absence of a king gave them an appearance of inferiority in the eyes of their neighbours, incapable of understanding or appreciating the special and glorious privileges of their position. The want of a royal head must often have been cast in their teeth by their neighbours as a kind of stigma; and they would in course of time come to regard it as such themselves, and long to be in this point on a level with other nations. Even good men, able to appreciate the advantages of existing institutions, would eventually become weary of a peculiarity which the nations would obtusely persist in regarding as discreditable.

Ewald says: 'To the Theocracy was now added the Monarchy, not to subvert or gradually supersede it, but to fulfil the wants of the age by its side. Hence, as the Monarchy was not intended to call in question the foundation of the Theocracy, but rather to stand and work on the same basis with it, it was bound to leave untouched the necessary living instruments through which the Theocracy then acted, especially the Prophets. There was consequently formed what we may call a mixed constitution and sovereignty; and the pure Theocracy became a Basileo-Theocracy.' 'In so far as the previous Theocracy excluded temporal royalty, an all but indispensable element, it inevitably acquired in course of time a certain stiffness and one-sidedness, and became less competent to fulfil its own mission; as the preceding history has shown. Thus the entrance of

monarchy soon surprises us by the great increase of variety, movement, and vigour which it produces; and while the two strongest powers of the state, by their combination, alternately hostile and friendly, kindle a new life in the higher departments, such a fresh energy soon so far penetrates the lower also, that Israel in a short time makes up for the delays of centuries.' 'But now in this community, face to face with the human king stands the Theocracy; a something still higher, and inviolable; with all its long-standing sacred laws and arrangements, and still continuously revealing itself through prophets and their words, valid as a Divine command.' If the man appointed 'desired to be really king, it could only be through his entering more fully than anyone else into the mind and spirit of Jahveh (*Jehovah*), and becoming through Him the proper human ruler in the midst of the Theocracy.'

It is evidently necessary to state with precision and care the sense in which the request for an earthly king expressed dissatisfaction with the Theocracy. The dissatisfaction only concerned its practical working in times of grave difficulty.

The Scripture Figure of Nimrod.

GENESIS x. 8-10: 'And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.'

Difficulty.—*It does not seem worth while to keep the record of a man's being a 'great hunter.' Can this be a figure for the man who first showed the ambition to become a great world-conqueror?*

Explanation.—The name Nimrod is said to mean 'a rebel.' Among the Assyrian monuments a figure has been discovered which is said to represent Nimrod; he is grasping a lion in his left hand, while his right holds probably a missile weapon. We may take this as symbolical. Allowing for the uncertainty that attaches to all legendary accounts of the beginnings of nations and races, we may still regard Nimrod as an historical figure. He was the first great hero on earth, as the world understands the term 'hero.' He was successful in war, and distinguished in the chase, so that his skill and intrepidity as a huntsman passed into a proverb. But what we are left to assume from the record is, that Nimrod was the leader of aggressive movements of nations against nations; the first great invader who had the hunger for territory, and universal rule, which has made desolating world-conquerors in almost every age of human history. He moved northward into the fertile land of Shinar, and

to the town of Babylon, making that a centre from which he ruled other cities around. He also went into the country called Asshur, and founded Nineveh (verse 11).

The date of Nimrod can only be conjectured. *Kalisch* places him 2450 B.C. He is called by the LXX., 'a hunting giant;' by the Arabic Version, 'a terrible tyrant;' and by the Syriac Version, 'a warlike giant.' The Scripture notice does not imply any violence or lawlessness in Nimrod's career, more than would be associated with any world-conqueror or founder of kingdoms. Dean Payne Smith takes a kindly view of his life-work. 'Cush was probably not immediate father, but *ancestor* of Nimrod. In his days population had become numerous, and whereas each tribe and family had hitherto lived in independence, subject only to the authority of the natural head, he was able, by his personal vigour, to reduce several tribes to obedience, to prevail upon them to build and inhabit cities, and to consolidate them into one body politic.'

Bochart says that, by being a famous hunter, he gathered to himself all the enterprising young men of his generation, attached them to his person, and so became a kind of king among them, training his followers first in the chase, and then leading them to war.

Kitto remarks that 'we really know nothing more of Nimrod than that he was a strong, forceful, and unscrupulous character, a leader of men in his generation, and the first founder of the Assyrio-Babylonian Empire, which, however small in its beginning, was destined, ages after, to overshadow the nations.' The only actual facts that are at our command concerning Nimrod are (1) that he was a Cushite; (2) that he established an empire in Shinar (the classical Babylonia), the chief towns being Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh; (3) that he extended this kingdom northwards along the course of the Tigris over Assyria, where he founded a second group of capitals —Nineveh, Rehoboth, Calah, and Resen.

Smith's Dictionary gives a good summary of what may reasonably be thought about Nimrod. 'Our present information does not permit us to identify Nimrod with any personage known to us either from inscriptions or from classical writers. Ninus and Belus are representative titles rather than personal names, and are but equivalent terms for 'the lord,' who was regarded as the founder of the empires of Babylon and Nineveh. We have no reason on this account to doubt the personal existence of Nimrod, for the events with which he is connected fall within the shadows of a remote antiquity. But we may, nevertheless, consistently with this belief, assume that a large portion of the interest with which he was invested was the mere

reflection of the sentiments with which the nations of Western Asia looked back on the overshadowing greatness of the ancient Babylonian Empire, the very monuments of which seemed to tell of days when "there were giants in the earth." The feeling which suggested the colouring of Nimrod as a representative hero still finds place in the land of his achievements, and to him the modern Arabs ascribe all the great works of ancient times, such as the *Birs Nimrûd*, near Babylon, *Tell Nimrûd*, near Baghdad, the dam of *Suhr el Nimrûd* across the Tigris below *Mosul*, and the well-known mound of *Nimrûd* in the same neighbourhood.'

Prof. George Smith has an interesting note: 'One of the earliest and chief gods of Babylon was *Nipru*, whom Rawlinson identifies with Nimrod. Among recent discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon are many scenes of the chase. Izdubar (Nimrod) legends, from inscriptions in Nineveh, appear to have been composed 2000 B.C. He is represented as a great hunter or giant, who obtained the dominion of the district round Babylon, and drove out a tyrant from Erech, adding this region to his kingdom.'

The legends that have gathered round Nimrod are of no value, save as they indicate the kind of impression concerning him, his character, and career, left on the Eastern mind by the traditions that had come from early times. We give, as a specimen, one that was told to Mr. Layard, by Awad, a sheikh of the Jehesh tribe of Arabs. 'The palace was built by Athur, the Kiayah, or lieutenant, of Nimrod. Here the holy Abraham (peace be with him !) cast down and brake in pieces the idols which were worshipped by the unbelievers. The impious Nimrod, enraged at the destruction of his gods, sought to slay Abraham, and waged war against him. But the prophet prayed to God, and said, "Deliver me, O God, from this man, who worships stones, and boasts himself to be the lord of all beings." And God said to him, "How shall I punish him?" And the prophet answered, "To Thee armies are as nothing, and the strength and power of men likewise. Before the smallest of Thy creatures they will perish." And God was pleased at the faith of the prophet, and He sent a gnat, which vexed Nimrod night and day, so that he built himself a roof of glass in yonder palace, that he might dwell therein, and shut out the insect. But the gnat entered also, and passed by his ear into his brain, upon which it fed, and increased in size day by day, so that the servants of Nimrod beat his head with a hammer continually, that he might have some ease from his pain; but he died, after suffering these torments for four hundred years.'

Prof. Sayce gives the latest word: 'The name of Nimrod has not

yet been discovered in the cuneiform records. Some Assyrian scholars have wished to identify him with Gisdhubar, the hero of the great Chaldæan epic, which contains the account of the Deluge; but Gisdhubar was a solar hero who had originally been the Accadian god of fire. It is true Gisdhubar was the special deity of the town of Marad, and that Na-Marad would signify in the Accadian language, "the prince of Marad;" such a title, however, has not been found in the inscriptions.'

Haman's Plot.

ESTHER iii. 6: 'Wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.'

Question.—*Did Haman propose to himself merely to revenge himself on Mordecai by this massacre of the Jews; or to secure the death of his rival by this scheme?*

Answer.—Such general race, or class, massacres are very strange and dreadful to the Western mind, but they are sadly familiar to Easterns.

The *Speaker's Commentary* says 'the Magophonia, or the great massacre of the Magi at the accession of Darius Hystaspis, was an event not fifty years old in the twelfth year of Xerxes, and was commemorated annually. A massacre of the Scythians had occurred about a century previously.' *Jamieson* expresses the feeling which we all have on reading the dreadful story. 'To us it appears unaccountable how any sane monarch could have given his consent to the extirpation of a numerous class of his subjects. But such acts of frenzied barbarity have, alas, not rarely been authorized by careless and voluptuous despots, who have allowed their ears to be engrossed and their policy directed by haughty and selfish minions, who had their own passions to gratify, their own ends to serve.' Explaining the conduct of Mordecai and Haman, *Jamieson* adds: 'Large mansions in the East are entered by the spacious vestibule, or gateways, along the sides of which visitors sit, and are received by the master of the house; for none except the nearest relatives, or special friends, are admitted further. There the officers of the ancient King of Persia waited till they were called, and did obeisance to the all-powerful minister of the day. The obsequious homage of prostration, not entirely foreign to the manners of the East, had not been claimed by former viziers; but Haman required that all subordinate officers of the court should bow before him with their faces to the earth. But to Mordecai it seemed that such an attitude of profound reverence was due only to God. Haman being an Amalekite, one

of a doomed and accursed race, was doubtless another element in the refusal; and on learning that the recusant was a Jew, whose nonconformity was grounded on religious scruples, the magnitude of the affront appeared so much the greater, as the example of Mordecai would be imitated by all his compatriots. Had the homage been a simple token of civil respect, Mordecai would not have refused it; but the Persian kings demanded a sort of adoration, which, it is well known, even the Greeks reckoned it degradation to express, and as Xerxes, in the height of his favouritism, had commanded the same honours to be given to the minister as to himself, this was the ground of Mordecai's refusal. . . . In resorting to the method of Pur, or Lot, for ascertaining the most auspicious day for putting his atrocious scheme into execution, Haman acted as the kings and nobles of Persia have always done, never engaging in any enterprise without consulting the astrologers, and being satisfied as to the lucky hour. Vowing revenge, but scorning to lay hands on a single victim, he meditated the extirpation of the whole Jewish race, who, he knew, were sworn enemies of his countrymen, and, by artfully representing them as a people who were aliens in manners and habits, and enemies to the rest of his subjects, procured the king's sanction of his intended massacre. One motive which he used in urging his point, was addressed to the king's cupidity. Fearing lest his master might object that the extermination of a numerous body of his subjects would seriously depress the public revenue, Haman promised to make up the loss.'

Canon Rawlinson says: 'To a European of the nineteenth century, a massacre on an appointed day, by permission from the government, of thousands of unoffending persons, seems one of the most monstrous things that can be conceived. We have, indeed, one instance of such a fact in the history with which we are familiar; but the massacre of St. Bartholomew stands by itself in our minds, as though it were a solitary case, wholly without a parallel. Acquaintance with Oriental history would make us aware that in the East such terrible doings are not infrequent; that there they excite little horror, and do not appear strange or startling. The destruction of the Mamelukes at Cairo; that of the Janissaries at Constantinople; and the attempted destruction of the Syrian Christians in 1850, are recent examples; the massacre of the Scythians by the Medes; of the Magi by Darius Hystaspis; and of all the Romans in Asia by Mithridates, are earlier instances. To sweep a tribe or petty nation out of his path, was thus no wild or extravagant idea, when entertained by an Oriental statesman, who knew that he had great influence with his sovereign, and could induce him to sign almost any decree that he chose.'

Another, and much later, instance of an attempted general massacre may be given. During a war between the Russians and Turks in 1770, some of the Greeks, whose nation had long been under the Turkish yoke, sided with the Russians. This so enraged the Sultan that he conceived the horrible design of exterminating the whole nation; and no doubt the deed, so far as practicable, would have been perpetrated but for the timely advice of Hassan Pasha, who succeeded in gaining a general amnesty for the Greeks.

Dr. C. Geikie briefly sums up the plot. 'At one sweep Haman would avenge his own personal grudge, and quench the hereditary feud of his race in the blood of the whole brood of the hated race of Jews. Insinuating to Xerxes that they were dangerous, as a people who, unlike the other subject races of the empire, insisted on observing their own laws rather than those of the king, and thus formed a ready centre for revolt, he obtained leave to arrange for their massacre everywhere throughout the empire, recommending his proposal by promising a vast sum to the treasury from their wealth.'

Geikie adds an interesting note on the absolute despotism of Persian kings. These are familiar Persian expressions. 'The will of the ruler is the will of the godhead.' 'Well spoken! The true Persian rejoices to be allowed to kiss the hand of his ruler, even if it be stained with his child's blood.' 'Cambyses has put my brother to death, but I murmur at him for it no more than I did at the godhead, who took my parents from me.' *Æschylus* calls the great king 'Persius Susa-born God.'

The Influence of the Mixt Multitude.

NUMBERS xi. 4: 'And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?'

Question.—*Who are we to understand by this 'mixt multitude'; and, if not genuine Israelites, in what sense did they come under covenant obligations?*

Answer.—This question involves our estimate of the character and conduct of the children of Israel throughout their wilderness experience. It is usual for Bible readers to think of the Israelites, under Moses, as being strictly and exclusively the body-descendants of Jacob. It alters our estimate of their conduct, and makes us deal more considerately with them, when we realize that the Israelites proper were in close association with large numbers of persons who were not Israelites, and were not under the covenant obligations save by their associations.

We may wisely remind ourselves that, as tribes, they were not all Israelites. The servants, herdmen, etc., in a sense belonged to the tribe, and came under the obligations that rested on the tribe, but were not strictly covenant-bound, as were the sons of Jacob. The families of these tribal servants multiplied in Egypt; and it may well have been that men of other races joined the Israelites during their sojourn in Egypt, and departed from Egypt with them at the Exodus. The impression left on us by the Bible narrative is, that while some of the rebellions—such as Korah's—came from the Israelites, and rested on purely Israelite misconceptions, the more common and ordinary murmurings and rebellions were caused by the 'mixt multitude,' who could hardly be expected to walk by faith in the unseen Jehovah, as were the true Israelites. Aaron's excuse for yielding, in the matter of the 'Golden Calf,' seems to imply that the 'people,' the 'mixt multitude,' were set on mischief, and he rather sought to pacify these half-heathen, than to meet the ideas of the Israelites, who, however, were thoroughly carried away by the excitement.

In Exodus xii. 37, 38, we read: 'And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.'

The word translated 'mixt multitude,' in Num. xi. 4 is a peculiar one, found in the text only. *Hasaph-suph* may be best translated 'riff-raff.' It denotes a mob of people scraped together. 'They consisted probably of remains of the old Semitic population of Egypt, whether or not first brought into the district by the Hyksos is uncertain. As natural objects of suspicion and dislike to the Egyptians who had lately become masters of the country, they would be anxious to escape, the more especially after the calamities which preceded the Exodus.' (*Speaker's Commentary.*) 'Some may have been Egyptians, impressed by the recent miracles; some foreigners held to servitude, like the Israelites, and glad to escape from their masters. It is noticeable that the Egyptian writers, in their perverted accounts of the Exodus, made a multitude of foreigners (Hyksos) take part with the Hebrews.' (*Professor G. Rawlinson.*)

Such persons came under covenant-obligations by virtue of their association with the Israelites. If they shared covenant *privileges*, they must share covenant *responsibilities*. But, in their case, we can hardly look for those helps to obedience which come out of *personal religion*, which we expect to find in the case of the Israelites.

Saul and Abner's Ignorance of David.

1 SAMUEL xvii. 55: 'And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell.'

Difficulty.—*Seeing that David had been for some time the court minstrel, it is strange to find that he was not recognised, either by the king, or by Abner, the court officer.*

Explanation.—It is now fully recognised that the Historical Books, in the form we have them, are a compilation from a variety of traditions, or historical documents: and careful students can trace where the documents have been put together, but not precisely fitted. Sometimes the narratives *overlap;* sometimes one narrator carries his story to its conclusion, and the next narrator gives intervening incidents. We have, probably, an instance of this kind here. The story of David's introduction to Saul, as given in ch. xvi. 14-23, belongs to a separate document, which contained no account of the conflict with Goliath. It therefore carries on David's relations with the court beyond the time of the battle at Ephes-dammim, and includes his taking official position as the king's armour-bearer. We may recognise that there were existing, at the time, two traditions of the circumstances under which David was introduced to court. These certainly conflicted in some degree, and both have been retained in the Scripture record.

If we might make the attempt to put the early incidents of David's court life in order, we might assume that he was introduced, by one of the servants, as a skilful 'player on an harp,' and a likely man to soothe the king's mental irritation. But the king, in such a state of mind, would take no notice of the player; and, as his attacks came on with extensive intervals, David's services were only occasionally required, and he was probably sent for when wanted. Then came the conflict with Goliath, and the direction of Saul's attention to David, which led him to ask Jesse for the constant attendance of his son at court, where David at once took an office as courtier; but, on occasion, exercised his old musical gift in soothing the king's madness. It should not occasion any surprise that Abner did not know the youth, for the busy military man was not in the least likely to take any notice of the court minstrel.

Ewald is the advocate of the theory of two narrators. One he finds in ch. xvi. 14-23, the other in ch. xvii. But concerning the work of the first narrator he says: 'It is beyond doubt, on the one hand, that it must have been some such extraordinary feat of arms

which first brought David to Saul's notice, as a hero of whose warlike capacity he ought to avail himself; and as to the sequel, we know from the histories of many ancient nations that in those times a whole war might turn on a single combat undertaken with due formalities by the heroes of the two armies.' Ewald adds to this passage a suggestive note: 'We assume that even the earlier narrator mentioned the single combat between David and Goliath: the passages, ch. xviii. 6; xix. 5; xxi. 10 (xxi. 9), leave us no doubt on this point; besides, the words which describe the final result of the achievement (ch. xviii. 1, 3-5), to judge from their colouring, are from the earlier narrator.'

Those who object to this explanation of the difficulty, by the theory of two conflicting traditions, point out that 'it is quite consistent with the genius of Hebrew narrative for the narrator to pursue his theme to its ultimate consequences in respect to the leading idea of his narrative, and then to return to fill up the details which had been omitted. Thus the words "he loved him greatly, and he became his armour-bearer; and Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David stand before me," etc., are the *ultimate sequence* of David's first visit to Saul, and of his skill in music, and are, therefore, placed here; but they did not really come to pass till after David's victory over Goliath.' To this peculiarity of Hebrew historical writing due attention should be paid. As illustrations of it, references are made to 1 Sam. xviii. 2; xxii. 20; 2 Sam. xvi. 22; xvii. 1, 17; also Gen. xi. 31, 32; xii. 1-5; Judg. xx. and 1 Sam. xiv. 47-52.

Kitto gives a very simple and common-sense account of what probably occurred, which certainly relieves the narrative of its principal difficulties, and, whether we regard it as entirely successful or not, is certainly deeply interesting. 'It would seem that Saul, while under the process of cure for his grievous malady, contracted great regard for David. "He loved him, and made him his armour-bearer," the latter being a mere honorary mark of consideration and attachment, at a time when there was no actual war. By degrees the intervals of the king's phrenzy became more distant, and eventually he seemed to be altogether cured. The services of David being no longer required, he went home to his father, and resumed the care of the sheep. By this it would seem that Saul's affection towards his healer cooled as soon as the cure had been effected. The probability of this most physicians can vouch from their own experience. Besides, it is likely that, from the peculiar nature of his complaint, Saul cared not to be continually reminded, by the presence of his healer, of the sufferings he had gone through, and of paroxysms which it humbled his proud mind to think had made him an object of compassion in

the eyes of his subjects. He therefore made no opposition to the application for his son's return home, which Jesse probably made when he found that David's services were no longer necessary. An interval passed—how long we know not, but probably about two or three years—when we again behold David traversing the road from Bethlehem, nearly in the same condition as before. But his appearance is considerably altered. You would scarcely know him for the same person that you saw some three years ago. He was then a growing youth; but he has now attained to greater fulness of stature, and to more firmly knit limbs. Above all, his beard has grown; and to those who, like us, remove the beard as soon as it appears, the great difference produced by the presence of this appendage on the face of one who, a year or two ago, was a beardless youth, is scarcely conceivable.'

Suggested explanations may be thus summarized. (1) Saul's madness had prevented any personal observation of the young minstrel. (2) In the interval between the service of minstrelsy and the combat with Goliath, David had grown, as we say, 'out of memory.' (3) Saul's inquiry did not concern David's name, but the rank and position of his family. The inquiry was a suitable one, seeing that David was to become the king's son-in-law, according to the king's promise of reward to the victor over Goliath. But (4) 'the real solution, we cannot but think, lies in the fact that this, and the other historical books of the Old Testament, were made up by the inspired compiler from well-authenticated traditions current in Israel, and most probably preserved in the archives of the great prophetical school. Two of these are here selected, which, to a certain extent, cover the same ground.' It should be observed that, in the earlier passage (1 Sam. xvi. 14-23), no *note of time* occurs: this first notice being wholly concerned with the influence of David's music on the king's mental disease. (*Dr. Spence.*)

The Pharaoh that knew not Joseph.

EXODUS i. 8: 'Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

Question.—*Have recent discoveries helped towards the identification of this Pharaoh?*

Answer.—*Professor Sayce* considers the identification is definitely settled by the excavations recently undertaken at Tel el-Maskhûta. These confirm the opinion of many Egyptian scholars, that the Pharaoh of the oppression was the great Ramses II., and the Pharaoh

of the Exodus his son and successor, Meneptah II., who came to the throne about B.C. 1325. *Budge* gives the list of kings succeeding the Hyksos, and forming the 18th and 19th dynasties, as follows:

18th Dynasty.		19th Dynasty.	
Ahmes	1700	Ramses I.	1400
Amenhetep I.	1666	Seti I.	1366
Thothmes I.	1633	Ramses II.	1333
Thothmes II.	1600	Merenptah, or Meneptah	1300
Thothmes III.	1600	Seti II.	1266
Amenhetep II.	1566		
Thothmes IV.	1533		
Amenhetep III.	1500		
Her-em-heb	1466		
Heretic Kings	1433		

Under Thothmes III., and other great monarchs of the 18th dynasty, wars of aggression into Asia were carried on, and Egyptian armies penetrated as far as the Euphrates. The tribes of Canaan were brought under tribute. 'On the temple-walls of Karnak at Thebes, Thothmes III. (B.C. 1600) gives a list of the Canaanitish towns which had submitted to his arms.' Two centuries later the same districts had again been overrun by the Egyptian kings, especially by Seti I., and Ramses II., the latter 'battling for long years against the Hittites on the plains of Canaan, and establishing a line of Egyptian fortresses as far north as Damascus.' The argument for Ramses II. as the Pharaoh of the oppression is given by *Sayce*. 'The accounts of the wars of himself and his predecessors in Canaan, show that up to the date of his death that country was not yet inhabited by Israelites. Not only is no mention made of them, but the history of the Book of Judges precludes our supposing that Palestine could have been an Egyptian province after the Israelitish conquest. It must have ceased to be tributary to the Pharaohs before it was entered by Joshua. Moreover, the name of the city of Ramses (Raamses), built by the Israelites in Egypt, points unmistakably to the reign of the great Ramses II. himself. The name was given to Zoan after its reconstruction by this monarch:' and, singularly, we find mention made of a certain class of foreigners, called *Aperiu* (not unlike *Hebrew*), who were employed by Ramses II. to work at his monuments.

The argument from the excavations of M. Naville is as follows: 'Tel el-Maskhûta is the name of some large mounds near Tel el-Kebîr and other places which were the scene of the late war; and M. Naville, who has excavated them for the Egyptian Exploration Fund, has found inscriptions in them which show not only that they represent an ancient city whose religious name was Pithom, while its civil name was Succoth, but also that the founder of the city was

Ramses II. In Greek times the city was called Heroöpolis, or Ero, from the Egyptian word *ara*, "a store-house," reminding us that Pithom and Raamses, which the Israelites built for the Pharaoh, were "treasure-cities," Exod. i. 11). M. Naville has even discovered the treasure-chambers themselves. They are very strongly constructed, and divided by brick partitions from eight to ten feet thick, the bricks being sun-baked, and made some with and some without straw. The name Pithom—in Egyptian Pa-Tum—signifies the city of the setting sun; and since it had another name, Succoth, we can now understand how it was that the Israelites started on their march not from Goshen, but from Succoth (Exod. xiii. 20)—that is, from the very place where they had been working.' *Miss Whately* says: 'Herodotus and others mention Pithom; Rameses* is only mentioned in Exodus; but its site has been ascertained by the discovery of a granite statue of Rameses, between two statues of Egyptian gods, with the king's name inscribed repeatedly on different parts of it.'

It would seem, therefore, that the connection of the Israelite oppression with Ramses II. is now definitely fixed; and it may be well to note that this king reigned sixty-seven years; as co-regent with his father, Seti I., for more than half the time.

Canon Rawlinson thinks Seti I. should be regarded as the oppressor. He explains the reason for the oppression found in the political circumstances of the country during Seti's reign: but we have observed above how closely Ramses II. was associated with him. 'Egypt had at this time lost all those Asiatic possessions which had been gained under the earlier kings of the 18th dynasty—Thothmes I., Thothmes III., and Amen-hetep II.—and had retired within her own natural borders. South-western Asia had fallen under the dominion of the Khita or Hittites, who had gradually extended their dominion from the Cappadocian highlands to the low regions of Philistia and Western Arabia. In alliance with the other Canaanite nations, with the Philistines, and even with the Arabs (Shasu), the Hittites threatened an invasion of Egypt, which, it was felt, might have the most disastrous consequences. What, if this contingency actually occurred, would be the part taken by the Israelites? Might it not be that they would "join themselves to Egypt's enemies, and fight against the Egyptians" (Exod. i. 10), and so either help to bring them under subjection to the Hittites, or else "get themselves up out of the land"? The Israelites occupied the portion of Egypt which the Hittites would first enter; if they joined the enemy they would

* The name *Ramses* is also spelt *Rameses*.

deliver into his hands a large tract of most valuable territory, and put him into a position from which he would threaten the most important of the Egyptian cities—Tanis, Heliopolis, Bubastis, Memphis. Reflecting upon this, the Pharaoh of the time—Seti I., according to our view—deemed it incumbent on him to take such measures as should seriously weaken and depress his Israelite subjects, crush their aspirations, destroy their physical vigour, and by degrees diminish their numbers.'

Geikie sums up modern opinion thus: 'It was left to Ramses II., the Sesostris of the Greeks—the ninth king after Thothmes III., and the third monarch of the 19th dynasty—to earn for himself, especially, the evil distinction of the Oppressor of the Hebrews. The Exodus is believed by Maspero to have taken place under Seti II., the next king but one after Ramses; but De Rougé, Chabas, Lenormant, Sayce, Lepsius, Brugsch, Ebers, and others, agree in assigning it to the reign of Meneptah I., Ramses' son and successor.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* argues for Aahmes, founder of the 18th dynasty.

The Sceptre in Judah.

GENESIS xlix. 10: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall obedience of the peoples be.'—*Rev. Ver.*

Difficulty.—*If Shiloh be the Messiah, it is impossible to prove the retention of royal power by Judah right up to Messiah's times.*

Explanation.—It has been suggested that this verse should read, 'until they come to Shiloh,' and then the history can be shown easily to match the prophecy. The first camp of the Israelites was stationed at Gilgal, but it was removed to Shiloh, about ten miles south of Shechem, and twenty-five miles north of Jerusalem. Judah had all along been the foremost tribe in fighting the battles through which the people had passed; and this important *rule*, or *leadership*, continued until the tribes came to Shiloh, and then there was no more need of it. But this rendering is certainly opposed to all the ancient versions; and it may also be noted that the town of Shiloh was within the territory of Ephraim, and not of Judah.

The word must be treated as a proper name, and read either (1) *Shiloh*, the 'Peacemaker,' or 'Prince of Peace,' or (2) *Sheloh*, 'He whose right it is.' The reference to Messiah was recognised by all Jewish antiquity. 'There can be no doubt that this prophecy was one important link in the long chain of prediction which produced that general expectation of a Messiah universally prevalent in Judæa

at the period of the Christian era, and which Suetonius, in the well-known passage in his life of Vespasian, tells us had long and constantly pervaded the whole of the East.'

Still it must be frankly admitted that, taking the passage in its apparent meaning, as declaring that royalty should be kept in the tribe of Judah until the coming of Messiah, history does not confirm the prophecy. The Babylonian Captivity destroyed the royalty of Judah for a time, and the Roman conquest destroyed it for ever, long before Messiah appeared. The question is whether the prophecy declares absolute sovereignty for Judah, or only tribal superiority. Probably our associations with sceptres have made us put more meaning into the words of Jacob than he intended to express.

All that can wisely be said is well said by *Bishop Harold Browne.* 'As regards the fulfilment of this prophecy, it is undoubted that the tribal authority, and the highest place in the nation, continued with Judah until the destruction of Jerusalem. It is true that, after the Babylonish Captivity, the royalty was not in the house of Judah; but the prophecy is not express as to the possession of absolute royalty. Israel never ceased to be a nation, Judah never ceased to be a tribe with at least a tribal sceptre and lawgivers, or expositors of the Law, Sanhedrim or Senators, and with a general pre-eminence in the land, nor was there a foreign ruler of the people, till at least the time of Herod the Great, just before the birth of the Saviour; and even the Herods, though of Idumæan extraction, were considered as exercising a native sovereignty in Judah, which did not quite pass away till a Roman procurator was sent thither, after the reign of Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great: and at that very time the Shiloh came, the Prince of Peace, to whom of right the kingdom belonged.'

The Jordan Memorials.

JOSHUA iv. 9: 'And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood; and they are there unto this day.'

JOSHUA iv. 20: 'And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal.'

Difficulty.—*There seem to be two contradictory accounts of the position found for the twelve-stone memorial. One account leads us to think they were piled in the bed of Jordan; the other finds for them a place at Gilgal.*

Explanation.—The easiest way to remove this difficulty is to assume two distinct sets of stones, and this is done by *Geikie.* 'An event so wonderful could not be allowed to pass without a memorial,

and a double one was appointed, worthy of it in expressive simplicity. Twelve of the large stones laid bare in the bed of the river were ordered to be carried over to the western side and raised on the upper terrace of the valley, in the centre of the new camping-ground, while a second twelve were placed on the spot in the channel, where the feet of the priests had stood during the crossing.'

It is difficult, however, to see what purpose could be served by a memorial which either the waters would regularly cover, or the first flood-time overthrow. If any reasonable explanation of the two notices can be found, which assumes only one set of stones, we should certainly prefer it, and think it altogether more probable. We might even admit some confusion in those who, at a later time, reported what had occurred, which led them to write so uncertainly.

The *Speaker's Commentary* gets over the difficulty of two memorials by supposing that the priests stood on the extreme edge of the river, and so their memorial would only be reached by the fringe of any flood, and might, therefore, stand for generations.

The German commentators incline to the idea that the verse 9 is a 'fragment of a totally different version of the transaction carelessly incorporated by the historian.'

Without discussing the question, Dean Stanley writes of the national memorial as if it were a single thing. 'Carried aloft before the priests as they left the river-bed were "twelve stones," selected by the twelve chiefs of the tribes. These were planted on the upper terrace of the plain of the Jordan, and became the centre of the first sanctuary of the Holy Land—the first place pronounced "holy," the "sacred place" of the Jordan valley, where the tabernacle remained till it was fixed at Shiloh. Gilgal long retained reminiscences of its ancient sanctity. The twelve stones taken up from the bed of the Jordan continued at least till the time of the composition of the Book of Joshua, and seem to have been invested with a reverence which came to be regarded at last as idolatrous.'

The Descendants of Zerubbabel.

1 CHRON. iii. 19, 20: 'And the sons of Pedaiah were Zerubbabel and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel, Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister: and Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushab-hesed, five.'

Difficulty.—*If this Zerubbabel is the prince who led the exiles back to Jerusalem, the Book of Chronicles must be a very late composition.*

Explanation.—From verses 17, 18, we learn that Zerubbabel, who is elsewhere called 'the son of Salathiel' was really his nephew,

the son of his brother, Pedaiah, and only his *son* in the legal sense of being his *heir*. It is generally admitted that this Zerubbabel is the leader of the first Return from Babylon, under the edict of Cyrus (B.C. *cir.* 536). If the genealogy, as compiled by the writer of this Book of Chronicles includes him and his sons, it is clear that the book must have been composed, or put together from existing materials, after the Return.

'That the Book of Chronicles was composed after the return from the Captivity is evident, not only from its closing passage, but from other portions of it. A comparison of 1 Chron. ix. 10-16 with Nehem. xi. 10-17 will show that almost the whole of 1 Chron. ix. belongs to the period after the Captivity. Ch. iii. of the same part of the work contains a genealogy of the descendants of Zerubbabel (verses 19-24), which is continued down to, at least, the third generation. The date of 1 Chronicles cannot well be earlier than B.C. 538, but may be later, and is indeed thought by some to be very considerably later.' (*Speaker's Commentary.*)

'The remarkable genealogy of Zerubbabel is clear evidence on which we must bring the compilation of Chronicles to a date subsequent to the Return and the partial resettlement of those who returned, some "in the cities," and some "in Jerusalem." Either the verses relating to the family of Zerubbabel must be proved to be an interpolation or addition by a later hand (as is held by Eichhorn, Dahler, Jahn, Keil), or we are brought down to a still lower date. Even when (with Bertheau) we have counted the six entries of verse 21 as names all of *brothers*, *six* generations *appear* to succeed Zerubbabel. However, Keil, Movers, Hävernick, and others think that Zerubbabel's genealogy in this passage really stops with the grandsons Pelatiah and Jesaiah. And there is some reason for supposing with Bishop Hervey, that these *six* names should *not* stand as six generations after Zerubbabel. But if both these theories be inadmissible, we are still not necessarily driven to Prideaux's position, that the six generations, and the average length which he assumes for them, will bring us to the time of Alexander the Great, B.C. 356-324. There can be little doubt that he overestimates the average of Eastern generations, and, if this be reduced to *twenty* years, we shall only be brought to a date varying between B.C. 420-410, within the probable lifetime of Nehemiah, and the very possible lifetime of Ezra. While, then, such a date as this is probably the latest that needs to be accepted, it stands to reason that the date at the other extremity must not be placed simply at the time of the Return. In the nature of things, a work like the Chronicles, though but a matter of compilation, could

not be executed off-hand and rapidly at such a time. On the contrary, the unsettledness and the stir of the times would constitute the unlikeliest of conditions. Our general conclusion would be that, judging from internal evidence, the date of compilation *must* be placed between a limit some several years subsequent to the Return and the year B.C. 410 or thereabout—how much nearer the latter than the former still uncertain.' (*Professor Barker, in 'Pupit Commentary.'*)

Identification of Ahasuerus.

ESTHER i. 1: 'Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces).'

Difficulty.—*This name does not appear in the Persian annals.*

Explanation.—Though the name does not appear in this precise form, the fault is only in this form not adequately representing the Hebrew translation of the name as it stands in the Persian annals. The name of this monarch that is familiar to us, through Grecian history, is *Xerxes*, which is a Greek representation of the Persian name *Khshayarsha* (the ruling eye). This king ruled from B.C. 485 to 464. Represented strictly in the Hebrew spelling, this name would read *Akhashverosh*, which is easily seen to be the same as Ahasuerus. The addition of the *A* at the beginning of the word is only a help in the difficult pronunciation.

Ellicott's Commentary points out that the Bible representation of the character of Ahasuerus, and the classical account of the character of Xerxes, precisely correspond. 'Ahasuerus is an ordinary specimen of an Eastern despot, who knows no law save the gratification of his own passions, and of the passing caprice of the moment. He sends for his queen in defiance of decency and courtesy, to grace a rival, and deposes her for a refusal simply indicative of self-respect; he is willing to order the destruction of a whole people throughout his empire, at the request of the favourite of the time; when the tide of favour turns, the favourite is not only disgraced, but he and all his family are ruthlessly destroyed, and Mordecai rises from a humble position to be the new vizier. Thus, though God shapes all this for good, the instrument is distinctly evil. How similar is the picture shown in the undying story of Herodotus, of the king who, reckless of the overthrow of his father's armies at Marathon ten short years before, will make a fresh attempt to crush the nation on whose success the freedom of the world was to hinge; who comes with a host so vast that, in the poet's hyperbole, they drink the rivers dry; who

has a throne erected to view the slaughter of Leonidas and his three hundred; who gazes from Mount Ægaleos at the vast fleet in the Bay of Salamis, soon to be routed and broken by Themistocles! The king, who a few weeks before has the Hellespont scourged, because it presumes to be stormy and break his bridges, now flees away in panic, leaving his fleet to its fate.'

No earlier Persian king can be meant, because before this India was not included in Persian territory. This Xerxes was the son of Darius Hystaspis.

Rawlinson confirms this identification: 'The name Ahasuerus is undoubtedly the proper Hebrew equivalent for the Persian word which the Greeks represented by Xerxes. . . . And we are at once struck with the strong resemblance which his character bears to that assigned by the classical writers to the celebrated son of Darius. Proud, self-willed, amorous, careless of contravening Persian customs; reckless of human life, yet not actually bloodthirsty; impetuous, facile, changeable, the Ahasuerus of Esther corresponds in all respects to the Greek portraiture of Xerxes, which is not the mere picture of an Oriental despot, but has various peculiarities which distinguish it even from the other Persian kings.'

Cambyses is called Ahasuerus in Ezra iv. 6, but he cannot be meant.

Mosaic Preparations for a Time of Kingship.

DEUT. xvii. 14, 15: 'When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.'

Difficulty.—*Seeing that Moses anticipated the desire for kingship, and expressed no strong feeling as to its sinfulness, we cannot accuse the people of doing a wrong thing when, in the time of Samuel, the demand was made.*

Explanation.—The composition of the Book of Deuteronomy is the subject of very serious dispute, and it cannot be said that at present any definite conclusions can be arrived at. What is certain is, that it has been edited, and in the editing has received important additions. It is difficult now to decide what precise portions came from the hand of Moses, or belong to the age of Moses. The paragraph from which the above verses come *may*, therefore, be one of the later additions, and may represent the wisdom of someone after

the event, and an effort to get Mosaic authority for the national desire.

On the face of it, it certainly is passing strange that Moses should establish the Theocracy, and guard it round with the most terrible sanctions, and at the same time prepare for the time when the Theocracy should be replaced by an ordinary monarchy. To provide for the change was surely doing a good deal towards preparing for the change; and it certainly takes away something of the sinfulness of the people in desiring the change. They might reasonably plead, that the time had come for doing what God had arranged for in His plans for the future of His people.

This is stating the difficulty which suggests itself to every thoughtful mind. Let us see how that difficulty has been met by trustworthy Bible writers.

Bishop Wordsworth says: 'Here is a prophetic provision for a contingency, which God, in His Divine foresight, foreknew would arise. He does not approve the act, but controls it, as He does in the case of divorce.' But this is 'cutting the knot' rather than making the attempt to *untie* it.

The *Speaker's Commentary* deals with the argument that, as the Mosaic legislation is not monarchical, Moses is not likely to have prepared for, or approved, the institution of monarchy; and so no reference is made to the Book of Deuteronomy by the narrative in 1 Sam. viii.-xii., and as the prohibitions against the accumulation of horses, wives, and treasures, and, indeed, the reference to horses at all, belong to the age of Solomon, the passage in Deuteronomy must have been penned long after the date of Moses, and, indeed, subsequently to the reign of Solomon, and most probably in the age of Jeremiah. Its reply brings forward some points of importance. A statesman may foresee, and provide for, what he cannot personally approve. This is not the only reference to *kings* found in the Pentateuch. See Gen. xvii. 16; xxxvi. 31; xlix. 10; Exod. xxii. 28; Num. xxiv. 17; Deut. xxviii. 36. 'It is not too much to say that the presage of royalty to come pervades every part of the early annals of the people.' For the full argument, see Vol. I., part ii., pp. 863-865.

'The answers to the arguments for the later origin of this passage, as given above, may be briefly summarized thus: Moses does not provide for a monarchy, but prophetically recognises a future demand for it; and, apart from his own approval, secures that those who may be called upon to set it up should not be taken at unawares, and find it difficult to harmonize the principles of monarchy with those of the Theocracy. Moreover, the reference to kings and kingship in this

passage does not stand alone in the Pentateuch. Also direct quotation from early books is not the manner of Old Testament writers, but Samuel's remarks are in almost verbal harmony with the passage in Deuteronomy. Samuel does not clash with Moses in calling a sin what Moses had permitted, as what Samuel recognises as sin is the spirit of distrust and impatience manifested by the people. The caution against return to Egypt is exactly in the manner of Moses; and the excesses forbidden are not peculiar to the later times of Jewish monarchy, but characteristic of all Eastern despotisms.'

Kitto, explaining the reasons which induced the people to ask for a king in the time of Samuel, says: 'The magnates of Israel—who are the parties we behold moving in this matter—may also have considered that, although a form of government had been organized by Moses, in which the presence of a human king was not recognised, he had clearly contemplated the probability that a regal government might eventually be adopted, and had even laid down certain rules involving principles by which the conduct of their future king was to be guided. This, it might be urged, was inconsistent with any absolute interdiction of the erection of the state into a temporary monarchy; and the time had now come, if ever, which the wise and far-seeing lawgiver had contemplated.'

Note.—It should not be withheld from our readers, that the theory of the composite character of the Book of Deuteronomy is gaining favour with our English exegetes. One of the latest deliverances on the subject is by *Canon Cheyne*, in his 'Jeremiah, his Life and Times.' His conclusion is as follows: 'It only remains to explain the phrase "the original Book of Deuteronomy." We can scarcely claim to restore with precision the very book which made such an impression on Josiah. It is undoubtedly contained in the middle part of Deuteronomy; the only question is whether the whole of this part belongs to the original book. I think that, allowing for some few later assertions and glosses, we may regard chs. v.-xxvi. as the original "book of (Divine) instruction." It is probable that chs. i. 1—iv. 44, and iv. 45-49, are two distinct introductions, composed independently by two different writers, close students of the original "book of *torah*" in that which is most distinctive of it, the former of whom may perhaps have had some really Deuteronomic material to work upon.'

Canon Cook regards the passage relating to the monarchy as one of the proofs of the late composition of great parts of the book of Deuteronomy.

The First Siege of Jerusalem.

JUDGES i. 8: 'Now the children of Judah had fought against Jersusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.'

JUDGES i. 21: 'And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.'

Difficulty.—*Two tribes are spoken of as bearing relation to this siege, and what is related of their doings appears to be contradictory.*

Explanation.—In all probability, the reference to Benjamin in verse 21 is a substitution for Judah. The nearly identical passage in Joshua xv. 63 reads thus: 'As for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of *Judah* could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.' Observe the precise connection in which these two verses stand in Joshua and in Judges. 'Probably the original reading *Judah* was altered in later times to *Benjamin*, because Jebus was within the border of Benjamin.'

Jerusalem was on the borders both of Judah and of Benjamin. Properly it belongs to Benjamin, but the conquest of the fortress of Zion by David naturally caused its closer identification with Judah.

The pluperfect tense in verse 8 (had fought) is not represented in the original; and in the Revised Version the sentence reads: 'And the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword.' The narrative given in Judges refers, at least in part, to the attacks made on Jebus, or Jerusalem, in the time of Joshua. Connecting the several notices, we may infer that Jerusalem was only taken once, and that this was a success, rewarding the energy and enterprise of Judah during the lifetime of Joshua. Whether the success referred only to the city, or included also the fortress, is not made clear to us, but the Jebusites certainly returned to their city, and gradually recovered complete possession; later notices indicating that the people of Judah and Benjamin lived on pleasant neighbourly terms with them.

Jerusalem was wholly a Jebusite city in the lifetime of Phinehas (Judg. xx. 28), and so it continued till the reign of David (2 Sam. v. 6-9).

Smith's Biblical Dictionary makes the first siege to take place immediately after the death of Joshua, about B.C. 1400. It assumes that the men of Judah attacked it, and later on the men of Benjamin. *Josephus* adds to our knowledge by informing us that the siege lasted some time, that the part which was taken at last, and in which the

slaughter was made, was the lower city; but that the upper city was so strong, by reason of its walls, and also of the nature of the place, that the army relinquished the attempt, and moved off to Hebron.

In the *Cambridge Bible for Schools*, the Rev. J. Lias suggests another mode of harmonizing the above verses, but it is only a guess, and has no new facts upon which it may be based. He supposes that Judah and Simeon took Jerusalem, and set the city on fire; but the Jebusites retired into a citadel from which their enemies failed to dislodge them, and a later attempt made by Benjamin also proved unsuccessful. The consequence of the Jebusites holding their citadel was, that ultimately they succeeded in reoccupying the whole city.

The Different Accounts of Saul's Death.

1 SAMUEL xxxi. 4: 'Then said Saul unto his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.'

2 SAMUEL i. 8-10: 'And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me; for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after he was fallen.'

Difficulty.—*Both these accounts cannot be true.*

Explanation.—The differences may be accounted for in two ways. (1) We may assume the Amalekite to have made up a tale in hope of extorting a reward from David; or (2) we may think that the dishonour of having been killed in cold blood by a slave was covered over by the invention of a story that he killed himself.

What can be said in favour of each of these theories may be stated briefly. The story told by the Amalekite is certainly natural and consistent, and it is specially worthy of credence, because he narrates his own doings, and brought with him the crown, or head-dress, of the king, and his armlet. This Amalekite could not have been a soldier in Saul's army, and he is not likely to have been in the Philistine army. He was what we should call a 'camp-follower,' and came on the battle-field in order to strip the slain and the wounded. It is probable that Saul had only swooned after the injury he had inflicted on himself, though he was desperately, perhaps mortally, hurt. He had recovered so far as to sit up, and lean heavily on his spear; looking round he saw this man, and called him to him, and begged to be put out of his misery. The Amalekite, as a bitter enemy of Saul, would have no compunction whatever in giving him the finishing stroke, and might even think of his act as being a merciful one. Then the thought struck him that he might get a

large reward by carrying his tidings, with adequate proofs of its truthfulness, to David. It should be noticed that David does not show any suspicion of its being a made-up story. He condemns the Amalekite from the point of view of his own sense of duty, which could not apply to the Amalekite. He had him put to death because he had 'stretched forth his hand to destroy the Lord's anointed.' (See ch. xxvi. 9-11)

The *Speaker's Commentary*, Keil, Lange, Geikie, etc., regard the Amalekite's story as an invention in order to get rewards from David. Josephus, Ewald, Stanley, etc., think the story is a true one, and can be reconciled with the earlier narrative.

It is evident that the accounts of the attempted suicide of Saul and his armour-bearer can only have come by 'hearsay.' It was the current explanation of their deaths, but it does not appear to have been based on the authority of any actual observation or knowledge. As the body of Saul was carried off by the men of Jabesh-Gilead, the nature of his wounds may have given sufficient ground for the theory of suicide. Of the two narratives, that of the Amalekite seems to have the most satisfactory historical foundation.

Both statements may, however, be true. Wounded and spent, Saul may have tried to put an end to his own life. He was mortally wounded, but he rallied for a brief space. Just then the Amalekite came up, and finished the bloody work; then, when the king was dead, he 'stripped the royal insignia' from the lifeless corpse, and carried the things to David.

David's Siege of Jerusalem.

2 SAMUEL v. 6-8 (Rev. Ver.): 'And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the city of David. And David said on that day, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites, let him get up to the watercourse, and smite the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul. Wherefore they say, There are the blind and the lame; he cannot come into the house.'—Compare the marginal renderings of Rev. Ver.

Difficulties.—*It is not easy to understand what active connection 'blind and lame' people could have had with a state of siege; nor how a fortress on a hill could be successfully besieged by means of the watercourse.*

Explanation.—The narrative clearly assumes a general impression that the fortress of Jebus was so impregnable by nature, that no human defence of it was needed. Accepting this as the senti-

ment, David in effect says, 'You trust in your natural position, then that natural position I will overcome, and reach you by means of the watercourse down the face of your cliff.' It is boast against boast. The Jebusites say, 'The blind and the lame will suffice to keep you out.' David says (but not for the Jebusites to hear), 'Your very watercourse shall let me in.' This is the general explanation, but the passage needs to be examined carefully and in detail.

So far as the earlier history of Jerusalem can be traced, it seems to have been a city, guarded by a fortress, crowning the hill afterwards known as Zion, in the time of the Israelite invasion. The King of Jerusalem was defeated and slain by Joshua (Josh. x. 23-26; xii. 10), and the city was subsequently taken and destroyed by Judah (Judg. i. 7, 8). These earlier notices do not distinguish between the *city* and the *fortress*, but as the Israelites were not provided with siege instruments, it seems probable that they made no attempt on the *fortress*. So the existing impression of its impregnability remained up to David's time, when the fortress and the city both seem to have been in the hands of the Jebusites. (See Judg. xix. 11, 12.)

The position of the fortress was certainly a strong one, in view of the siege artillery of those times. Zion was the highest of the hills of Jerusalem, so it could not be commanded by any force on either of the others; and it was surrounded on three sides by deep valleys, the sides being so rugged and precipitous that only hardy mountaineers would attempt to climb them. It is clear that the Jebusites were so over-confident in their position, that they could venture to taunt their enemy in the usual extravagant Eastern style. *Roberts*, writing on Goliath's taunting of David, says: 'The rodomontade of Goliath is still the favourite way of terrifying an enemy. "Begone, or I will give thy flesh to the jackals!" "The crows shall soon have thy carcase." "Yes, the teeth of the dogs shall soon have hold of thee." "The eagles are ready."' The expression in verse 6 is a taunt of this kind. 'In foolhardy confidence the Jebusite chiefs even dared David to attack the stronghold, boasting that the blind and the lame were enough to keep him out of a place so strong.' There is no need to assume that any 'blind and lame' were actually there: the expression is in the figurative style so familiar to the Easterns.

The rendering of verse 6 given in the *Speaker's Commentary* is suggestive. 'And (the Jebusite) spake to David, saying, Thou shalt not come hither, but the blind and the lame shall keep thee off.' 'The verb "keep off" is not in the infinitive, as some say, but in the

perfect, in the singular number, preceding, as it does, the subject, "There shall keep thee off the lame and the blind."'

Different explanations are given of the way in which David proposed to take the fortress. In the A.V. we read (verse 8), 'Whosoever getteth up the gutter.' The word 'gutter' is only used here and in Ps. xlii. 7, where it is rendered 'waterspouts,' or 'waterpipes.' But what the waterspout or watercourse was, it is not possible to discover. *Lord Arthur Hervey* says: 'The only access to the citadel was where the water had worn a channel (some understand a subterranean channel), and where there was, in consequence, some vegetation in the rock.' *Wordsworth* proposes to correct the translation of the sentence, and read, 'Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites, let him cast down into the gutter the lame and the blind, hated by David's soul.' In this he is supported by *Ewald*, *Bochart*, and *Keil*. *Ellicott's Commentary* approves of this rendering, but improves upon it by reading, 'Whosoever smites the Jebusites, let him hurl into the watercourses (that is, down the precipice) the lame and the blind.' David simply takes up and uses the expression of the taunt. He does not mean actually lame and blind persons, but the persons, whoever they might be, who were set to defend the fortress. *Geikie*, in a footnote, says: 'A great shaft from the hill of Jerusalem to a covered aqueduct leading from the fountain of the Virgin has been thought by some to be meant. It is supposed that Joab and his men reached this shaft by wading along the subterranean aqueduct; and having ascended it, burst on the townsmen, when least expected, inside the town itself.' It seems agreed that a storming party must have been formed, and of its doings Joab, as the leader, obtained the chief credit.

Hiram's Contract with Solomon.

1 KINGS v. 9: 'My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea; and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household.'

Question.—*What points of interest attach to this contract?*

Answer.—They are chiefly connected with the difficult work of conveying large trees, such as cedars, from Lebanon to Jerusalem. The details are given by *Archdeacon Farrar*. 'Hiram, as we learn from a fragment of Menander of Ephesus, preserved in Josephus, was the son of a king named Abibaal, and had ascended the throne in early youth in B.C. 1001. He was in the eleventh year of his reign when Solomon, who had now been king for three years, entered into

close relations with him. His alliance was of the utmost importance for the future commerce of Israel, and alone rendered possible the splendid buildings which now began to adorn Jerusalem. He reigned thirty-four years, and died at the age of fifty-three. Solomon, welcoming the proffered friendship of the Tyrian king, begged him to allow his skilled workmen to hew cedar-trees and cypress-trees out of Lebanon, and Hiram in return for annual gifts of twenty thousand cors of wheat and barley, and twenty thousand "baths" of oil, gave him large assistance. The labour involved was immense. The trees were sent down the heights of Lebanon by the process technically known as *schlittage*, and thence by road or river to the seashore. (Schlittage is still much used in the Vosges to carry trees downhill. They are pushed along an artificial path called *vovtou*, made of rounded trunks.) Huge rafts of the costly timber were thence floated by sea to Joppa, a hundred miles, and then, with infinite toil, were dragged about thirty-five miles up the steep and rocky roads to Jerusalem. These works required a levy, or "tribute of men," out of all Israel, to the number of thirty thousand, who worked in relays of ten thousand for three months, of which one month was spent at Lebanon, and two at home. Adoniram was at the head of this army of soccage labourers, who are not *called* bondmen, though such they practically were.'

Van Lennep says: 'In Solomon's day the servants of King Hiram cut the cedars of Lebanon, and, making them into rafts, floated them to Joppa, the port appointed by the Jewish king. In the same manner, the timber which grows abundantly on the northern coast of Asia Minor is cut down by the Sultan's servants, made into rafts at Sinope, and other ports on the Black Sea, and conveyed to the capital, for the supply of the imperial navy yard, and for house-building.'

Burder speaks of 'two modes of conveying wood in floats. The first, by pushing single trunks of trees into the water, and suffering them to be carried along by the stream; this was commonly adopted as regarded firewood. The other was ranging a number of planks close to each other in regular order, binding them together, and steering them down the current. The earliest ships or boats were nothing else than rafts, or a collection of deals and planks bound together. By the Greeks they were called *schedai*, and by the Latins *rates*.'

'The Phœnician cities had very little arable territory of their own; cereals and oil were largely derived from Judæa. So Hiram agreed to accept for his timber, and for the services of his workmen, a

certian annual payment of grain and oil, both of them the best of their kind, for the sustentation of his court. *Herodotus* tells us that, in a similar way, the Persian monarchs received from the subject nations a tribute in kind, which was applied in the same way. The supply for the court was distinct from the feeding of the work-people employed in cutting the trees.'

The Identification of Araunah.

2 SAMUEL xxiv. 16: 'And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing-place of Araunah the Jebusite.'

Question.—*Can any information be obtained as to the person, standing, and relations of this man, who is so casually introduced into the narrative?*

Answer.—All we can actually know about him is the account of his negotiation with David, as recorded in 2 Sam. xxiv. 20-25, and 1 Chron. xxi. 18-27. There is a suggestive sentence in the A.V. of 1 Sam. xxiv. 23, 'All these things did Araunah, as a king give unto a king,' which may indicate that Araunah was a former King of Jerusalem; but the sentence is a doubtful translation. The Rev. Ver. renders the sentence thus: 'All this, O king, doth Araunah give unto the king.' The corresponding clause in Chronicles reads: 'And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes.'

We can only say that the negotiation seems conducted on terms of equality, but perhaps we should see in it no more than the characteristic Eastern politeness in bargaining. The fact that Araunah had property in that situation certainly suggests that he must have been one of the old Jebusite princes; but his name gives us no hint of his earlier associations. Ornan seems to be the Hebrew form of the name, and Araunah (or Avarnah, Aranyah, Aravnah) the Jebusite form. How he came to be permitted to retain his property during David's reign is not explained. It is only clear that he had given his allegiance to David, and he may have become a proselyte to Mosaism.

The conjectures as to the previous standing of Araunah, which, we have shown above, are based on an incorrect rendering of a text, are very beautifully given by *Dean Stanley*, and are sufficiently reasonable, though proof of their truth is not forthcoming. 'Immediately outside the eastern walls of the city of Jerusalem was a spot well known as belonging to a wealthy chief of the conquered race of Jebus; one who, according to tradition, was spared by David from

old friendship, perhaps contracted in his wanderings, at the time of the capture of the city, who, according to the probable interpretation of the sacred text, had been the king of the ancient Jebus. (Note on 2 Sam. xxiv. 23; in the original the expression is much stronger than in the A.V.—"Araunah the king.") On his property was a threshing-floor, beside a rocky cave where he and his sons were engaged in threshing the corn gathered in from the harvest. Beside the rocky threshing-floor the two princes met—the fallen king of the ancient fortress, the new king of the restored capital, each moved alike by the misfortunes of a city which in different senses belonged to each. Araunah, with his four sons, had hid himself in the cave which adjoined the threshing-floor, and crept out with a profound obeisance as he saw the conqueror of his race approach. The Jewish king asked of his heathen predecessor the site of the threshing-floor; the Jebusite king gave with a liberality equal to the generosity with which David insisted in paying the price for it. It was the meeting of two ages. Araunah, as he yields that spot, is the last of the Canaanites, the last of that stern old race that we discern in any individual form and character. David, as he raises that altar, is the close harbinger of the reign of Solomon, the founder of a new institution which another was to complete.'

There is an apparent contradiction between the amounts paid to Araunah, as given in the older and the later histories. In 2 Sam. xxiv. 22-24, it will be seen that the negotiation was strictly for the materials of sacrifice. What Araunah offered was not the estate, but distinctly 'the oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.' The fifty shekels of silver would be an adequate price for these materials of sacrifice, but we cannot imagine it to be a suitable price to pay for a man's estate. The word 'threshing-floor,' in verse 24, should plainly be rendered 'threshing instruments,' as in verse 22.

The record given by the later author, in 1 Chron. xxi. 25, includes the entire negotiation, and supplements the earlier account. What appears to have been the fact is, that in usual Eastern fashion the negotiation was prolonged. Araunah did not want to part with his property, and tried to limit the sale to the oxen and to the threshing instruments. For these a price was at last fixed, and then David persisted in purchasing the threshing-floor, and at last 600 shekels of gold were fixed as the price to be given for the *place*. Whether this included the fifty shekels of silver, or was extra to it, does not clearly appear; but the renewed negotiation may have been settled by fixing the 600 gold shekels as the all-inclusive price. We have,

then, in Samuel a true account of the negotiation up to a certain point, and in Chronicles a record of the completion of the negotiation.

When we realize how large the area was which David purchased, the 600 gold shekels was only a fitting price; fifty shekels of silver could not have been the agreed price for many acres of valuable land.

The Identification of Shishak.

1 KINGS xiv. 25: 'And it came to pass in the fifth year of Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.'

Question.—*What accounts of this king, and of his expedition, are to be found in the Egyptian annals?*

Answer.—Up to the time of this king, Scripture speaks only in a general way of the Pharaoh of the day. Shishak is the first Pharaoh whose name is given. The Hebrew name 'Shishak' represents almost exactly the Egyptian name, ordinarily written 'Shesheuk,' or 'Sheshonk,' or 'Sheshek,' and, by Manetho, 'Sesonchis.' 'Wholly absent from all the earlier monuments, it appears suddenly in those of the twenty-second (Bubastite) dynasty, where it is borne by no less than four monarchs, besides occurring also among the names of private individuals. This abundance would be somewhat puzzling, were it not for the fact that one only of the four monarchs is a warrior, or leads any expedition beyond the borders. The records of the time leave no doubt that the prince who received Jeroboam was Sheshonk I., the founder of the Bubastite line, the son of Namrot and Tentespeh, the first king of the twenty-second dynasty.'

'The Palestinian expedition of Sheshonk I. forms the subject of a remarkable bas-relief, which, on his return from it, he caused to be executed in commemoration of its complete success. Selecting the great Temple of Karnak, at Thebes, which Seti I. and Rameses II. had already adorned profusely with representations of their victories, he built against its southern external wall a fresh portico or colonnade, known to Egyptologists as the "portico of the Bubastites," and carved upon the wall itself, to the east of his portico, a memorial of his grand campaign. First, he represented himself in his war costume, holding by the hair of their heads, with his left hand, thirty-eight captive Asiatic chiefs, and with an iron mace uplifted in his right threatening them with destruction. Further, he caused himself to be figured a second time, and represented in the act of leading captive a hundred and thirty-three cities or tribes, each speci-

fied by name, and personified in an individual form, accompanied by a cartouche containing their respective names. In the physiognomies of these ideal figures the critical acumen or lively imagination of a French historian sees rendered "with marvellous ethnographic correctness" the Jewish type of countenance; but less gifted travellers do not find anything very peculiar in the profiles, which, whether representing Jews or Arabs, are almost exactly alike.'

The above extracts are taken from Professor Rawlinson's earlier book; in his later a description of the Shishak invasion is given. 'Sober students of history will regard Shishak (Sheshonk) simply as a member of a family which, though of foreign extraction, had been long settled in Egypt, and had worked its way into a high position under the priest-kings of Herhor's line, retaining a special connection with Bubastis, the place which it had from the first made its home. Sheshonk's grandfather, who bore the same name, had had the honour of intermarrying into the royal house, having taken to wife Meht-en-hont, a princess of the blood, whose exact parentage is unknown to us. His father, Namrut, had held a high military office, being commander of the Libyan mercenaries, who at this time formed the most important part of the standing army. Sheshonk himself, thus descended, was naturally in the front rank of Egyptian court officials. . . . In monarchies like the Egyptian it is not very difficult for an ambitious subject, occupying a certain position, to seize the throne; but it is far from easy for him to retain it. Unless there is a general impression of the usurper's activity, energy, and vigour, his authority is liable to be soon disputed, or even set at nought. It behoves him to give indications of strength and breadth of character, or of a wise, far-seeing policy, in order to deter rivals from attempting to undermine his power. Sheshonk early let it be seen that he possessed both caution and far-reaching views by his treatment of a refugee who, shortly after his accession, sought his court. This was Jeroboam, one of the highest officials in the neighbouring kingdom of Israel. . . . At the time of Solomon's demise, Jeroboam was allowed to return to Palestine, and to foment the discontent which it was foreseen would terminate in separation. The two kings had, no doubt, laid their plans. Jeroboam was first to see what he could effect unaided, and then, if difficulty supervened, his powerful ally was to come to his assistance. For the Egyptian monarch to have appeared in the first instance would have roused Hebrew patriotism against him. Sheshonk waited till Jeroboam had, to a certain extent, established his kingdom, had set up a new worship, blending Hebrew with Egyptian notions, and had suffi-

ciently tested the affection or disaffection towards his rule of the various classes of his subjects. He then marched out to his assistance. Levying a force of 1,200 chariots, 60,000 horse (query 6,000), and footmen "without number" (2 Chron. xii. 3), chiefly from the Libyan and Ethiopian mercenaries, which now formed the strength of the Egyptian armies, he proceeded into the Holy Land, entering it in "three columns," and so spreading his troops far and wide over the southern country. Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor, had made such preparation as was possible against the attack. He had anticipated it from the moment of Jeroboam's return, and he had carefully guarded the main routes whereby his country could be approached from the south, fortifying, among other cities, Shoco, Adullam, Azekah, Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, Tekoa and Hebron (2 Chron. xi. 6-10). But the host of Sheshonk was irresistible. Never before had the Hebrews met in battle the forces of their southern neighbour—never before had they been confronted with huge masses of disciplined troops, armed and trained alike, and soldiers by profession. The Jewish levies were a rude and untaught militia, little accustomed to warfare, or even to the use of arms, after forty years of peace, during which "every man had dwelt safely under the shade of his own vine and his own fig-tree" (1 Kings iv. 25). They must have trembled before the chariots, and cavalry, and trained footmen of Egypt. Accordingly, there seems to have been no battle, and no regularly-organized resistance. As the host of Sheshonk advanced along the chief roads that led to the Jewish capital, the cities, fortified with so much care by Rehoboam, either opened their gates to him, or fell after brief sieges (2 Chron. xii. 4). Sheshonk's march was a triumphal progress, and in an incredibly short space of time he appeared before Jerusalem, where Rehoboam and the princes of Judah were tremblingly awaiting his arrival. The son of Solomon surrendered at discretion, and the Egyptian conqueror entered the Holy City, stripped the Temple of its most valuable treasures, including the shields of gold which Solomon had made for his bodyguard, and plundered the royal palace (2 Chron. xii. 9). The city generally does not appear to have been sacked, nor was there any massacre. Rehoboam's submission was accepted; he was maintained in his kingdom, but he had to become Sheshonk's "servant" (2 Chron. xii. 8), that is, he had to accept the position of a tributary prince, owing fealty and obedience to the Egyptian monarch.'

'Sheshonk did not live many years to enjoy the glory and honour brought him by his Asiatic successes. He died after a reign of

twenty-one years, leaving his crown to his second son, Osorkon, who was married to the Princess Keramat, a daughter of Sheshonk's predecessor.'

Forty Years or Four?

2 SAMUEL xv. 7: 'And it came to pass at the end of forty years, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron.'

Difficulty.—*Forty years cannot possibly have passed between Absalom's restoration to the king's favour, and the beginning of his rebellion.*

Explanation.—There can be no doubt that the reading 'forty' is incorrect. But it is the reading of almost all our hitherto collated Hebrew manuscripts. Those who maintain the genuineness of the reading in the Hebrew manuscripts explain that the forty years should be dated from the unction of David by Samuel. But even this would be incorrect, seeing that David only reigned forty years; and, as Absalom was born after David began his reign in Hebron, he could not have been forty years old when David died. Nor can it be said that the rebellion of Absalom took place in David's fortieth year.

The suggestion has been made that the reading should be 'forty *days*,' instead of 'forty years.' But to this two objections may be urged: (1) Absalom was two years in Jerusalem before he was fully restored to the king's favour. (See ch. xiv. 28.) (2) Forty days was not a sufficient time in which to alienate the affections of the people from David.

The Syriac, Arabic, and Sixtine edition of the Vulgate, read 'four years.' This is certainly the correct reading; and it is accepted by Josephus, Theodoret, Keil, Bishop Cotton, etc. Dr. Boothroyd gives the varied reading of 'four years,' and observes: 'The common text is manifestly erroneous, David reigned only forty years, and if we follow the text the rebellion of Absalom would occur long after David was dead.' The Revised Version gives, as a marginal note, 'according to some ancient authorities, *four*.'

But it is not possible to decide from what point in Absalom's history these 'four years' are to be reckoned. They may include the two years after his return from Geshur in which he was banished from the palace; or they may date from the time of his restoration to the king's favour. This, on the whole, appears to be most probable. Four years is not too long a period in which to prepare the way for his rebellion by his arts and flatteries.

Errors in numbers should not greatly surprise us. There must always have been some uncertainty in the text of books when they were copied by hand. And a mistake once made would be repeated, through the very care the copyists exercised. The uncertainty applied in a very marked way to numbers, because, in the Hebrew, numbers are expressed, not by special figures as with us, but by the ordinary letters of the alphabet, and these are, sometimes, so nearly like each other, that a turn of the pen, or a heedlessly added dot, or dash, will change one number into another. A few of the Hebrew letters, with their numerical values may be given, from which it will plainly appear how the slips of copyists may change numbers: ב, Beth, 2; כ, Kaph, 20; ס, Samekh, 60; ד, Daleth, 4; ה, He, 5; ח, Cheth, 8; ר, Resh, 200; ת, Tau, 400; ו, Vau, 6; ז, Zayin, 7; י, Yodth, 10; נ, Nun, 50. In any of these instances, a slight carelessness, or confusion, or slip of the pen, would alter the value of the letter, and the mistake might easily escape the notice of a person when correcting the copy.

The Assyrian Location of Captive Israel.

2 KINGS xvii. 6: 'In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria 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.'

Question.—*How many separate districts are indicated by these terms, and where were they situated?*

Answer.—It is necessary first to explain, that carrying away populations from conquered countries, and captured cities, was a part of the policy introduced by Tiglath-pileser II., the founder of the second Assyrian Empire. 'The first empire was at best a loosely-connected military organization; campaigns were made into distant countries for the sake of plunder and tribute, but little effort was made to retain the districts that had been conquered.' 'Tiglath consolidated and organized the conquests he made; turbulent populations were deported from their old homes, and the empire was divided into satrapies or provinces. It is difficult for us to conceive of the removal of entire populations. We are oppressed as we think of the hardships such removals involved. But it was a much simpler thing in ancient times than we can now conceive. A living was more easily gained, and men's daily wants were strictly limited.'

Sargon gives his own account of this deportation: 'I besieged the city of Samaria, and took it. I carried off 27,280 of the citizens; I chose fifty chariots for myself from the whole number

taken; all the other property of the people of the town I left for my servants to take. I appointed resident officers over them, and imposed on them the same tribute as had formerly been paid. In the place of those taken into captivity I sent thither inhabitants of lands conquered by me, and imposed the tribute on them which I require from Assyrians.' Another part of Sargon's annals reads thus: 'Having overcome the King of Babylon I carried away — of the inhabitants, with their goods, and settled them in the land of the Chatti,' that is, in Syro Israel. On a cylinder is this inscription: 'Sargon, who subdued the people of Thammud—an Arab race of Arabia Petræa—of Ibadid, Marsiman, and Chayapu, after slaying many, carried off the rest to the distant land of the House of Omri' (Samaria). In the annals of Sargon's seventh year, we read: 'I subdued the inhabitants of Tasid, Ibadid, Marsiman, Chayapu, the people of distant Arba, the dwellers in the land of Bari, which even the learned have not known, and which had never brought their tribute to the king, my father, and transplanted the survivors and settled them in the city of Samaria.'

By *Halah* we are to understand a district on the upper course of the river Khabour in North-western Mesopotamia, the region apparently being known as 'Gozan.' By the 'cities of the Medes' we may understand the wild highland region on the east side of the Tigris, north of the Persian Gulf. According to this explanation, only two districts are referred to in the text, Halah or Gozan on the Khabour, and the 'cities (or mountains) of the Medes.'

Ewald says: 'The Book of Kings specifies Halah, Habor, the river Gozan, and the cities of Media, as the localities to which the exiles were consigned. The two first of these names indicate places north of Nineveh, and south of the lake of Van; the river Gozan, still known by the name Ozen, rises south of the lake of Ourmia, and forms approximately the northern boundary of Media, which is mentioned with it.'

The *Speaker's Commentary*, noticing the connection of Halah, both here and in 1 Chron. v. 26, with Gozan and the Habor, says it shows, almost beyond a doubt, that it is the tract which Ptolemy calls Chalcitis, and which he places on the borders of Gauzanitis (Gozan), in the vicinity of the Chaboras, or *Khabour*. In this region is a remarkable mound called *Gla*, which probably marks the site, and represents the name, of the city Chălach, whence the district Chalcitis was so called. The Habor is the great affluent of the Euphrates, the western Khabour. This stream, which is often mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions under the same name, is pre-eminently 'the

river of Gozan' (Gauzanitis), all the waters of which it collects and conducts to the Euphrates. Gozan is mentioned, not only in three passages in combination with Halah and the Habor (comp. 2 Kings xviii. 11, and 1 Chron. v. 26), but also in a fourth in combination with Haran (2 Kings xix. 12). Its identity with Gauzanitis follows almost necessarily from the fact that in this region only are all the four names combined.

The Ark of God with Saul's Army.

1 SAMUEL xiv. 18: 'And Saul said unto Ahijah, Bring hither the ark of God. For the ark of God was there at that time with the children of Israel.'

Difficulty.—*As we have no indication of the ark having left Kirjath-jearim until David removed it, can this reference to the ark be correct?*

Explanation.—So far as the history of the ark can be traced by the help of Scripture references, it was during the judgeship of Samuel that the men of Kirjath-jearim fetched up the ark from the country of the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 1). Then it was lodged in the house of Abinadab, who resided in Gibeah, that is, in the hill. It was from this house David fetched it (2 Sam. vi. 3); but in consequence of the death of Uzzah, who touched it against the Divine rule, David rested it for some months in the house of Obed-Edom, the Gittite. There is no trace whatever of Saul's showing any interest in the ark, or making the slightest attempt at securing its restoration.

The question to be decided concerns the correctness of the word *ark* in this verse. In favour of retaining it is the fact, that it is found in all extant Hebrew manuscripts, and also in the Vulgate, Syriac, and Chaldee Targums. And on the face of it, there is no impossibility involved in the idea that Saul had the ark brought for the occasion from Kirjath-jearim.

But the arguments against the correctness of the term are overwhelming. There can be no doubt that *ephod*, not *ark*, is the proper term. The Septuagint Version reads: 'And Saul said to Ahijah, Bring hither the ephod; for he bore the ephod in those days before the children of Israel.' Josephus reports the incident in this way: 'He bid the priest take the garments of his priesthood, and prophesy,' etc.

We should carefully notice, that Saul did not want the presence of the ark in the same sense, and for the same purpose, as the Israelites did, in the time of Eli, when they sent for it into the battlefield. Saul wanted it as a means of inquiring of God as to the way in which

he should act in a pressing emergency. 'Should he—seeing the panic that was evidently increasing in the Philistine camp, and knowing nothing of the cause, only that his son and the armour-bearer were missing—should he risk his little force, and, leaving his strong position, attack that great host of apparently panic-stricken enemies?'

But if Saul meant to inquire of God, the *ark* was not the proper thing to send for. There is no trace of the ark ever being used as the medium of inquiries. The proper thing was to send for the high priest, requesting him to put on the *ephod*, with the Urim and Thummim in it; and, in some mysterious way which has not been revealed to us, the Divine answer was given, and the Divine will was revealed, through some change in that Urim and Thummim.

It has also been pointed out, that the expression 'Bring hither' is never applied to the ark, and it could not properly be applied to that most sacred symbol of the Divine presence. No king could possibly have authority to order about, at his own will, the ark of God. He might command the attendance of the high priest, in order to make inquiries, through him, concerning the Divine will. This expression, 'Bring hither,' is used in connection with the *ephod*. (See 1 Sam. xxiii. 9.) 'David said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod,' and, through it, David made definite inquiry of God. Another precisely similar instance will be found in 1 Sam. xxx. 7.

It only need be added, that Saul required an immediate decision, and this he could get from the priest, who was always close at hand; but this he could not have obtained if the ark had to be fetched from Kirjath-jearim. *Stanley* is right in saying that the reading of *ark* for *ephod* is an 'obvious mistake.'

Hilkiah's Book of the Law.

2 KINGS xxii. 8: 'And Hilkiah, the high priest, said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord.'

Question.—*Can the work discovered by Hilkiah be identified with any degree of certainty?*

Answer.—There can be no reasonable doubt that the Books of Moses are referred to; but there is dispute as to whether we are to understand the Five Books comprising the Pentateuch; portions containing only the judgments of the law; or only the summary, or the primary portions of the summary, now known as the Book of Deuteronomy. (The discussion of the origin and contents of Deu-

teronomy is not required for the elucidation of this particular question, but will be found treated elsewhere.)

Dr. C. Geikie gives an explanatory account of the incident. 'Eighteen years had passed since Josiah's accession, though he was still only a young man of twenty-six. The whole country had been cleared of its high places, and other heathen or superstitious disfigurements, and the Temple was rapidly being repaired and restored to its ancient uses, under a commission, consisting of Hilkiah, the high priest; Shaphan, the king's secretary, or minister of finance; Maaseiah, the Sar, or governor of Jerusalem, and Joah, the king's mazkir, or keeper of the State archives. While engaged in their duties, Hilkiah came upon a manuscript roll, which proved to be a copy of "The Book of the Torah, or Law, of Jehovah, by the hand of Moses" (Heb. of 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14; comp. 2 Kings xxii. 8). In what part of the Temple it was found is not stated, but the discovery took place when the commissioners were removing the money gathered to repair the Temple, from the chests in which it had been stored, which may mark either when the book was found, or the place where it was discovered. In the days of Christ it was believed that the king had sent Hilkiah to get what money remained, after the restoration of the Temple, to melt into cups, dishes, etc., for the sacred ministrations, and that while he was bringing it out, he lighted upon "the Holy Books of Moses." The Rabbinical tradition is, that "the Book" was found beneath a heap of stones, under which it had been hidden when they burned the other copies of the Law. It may be, however, that it had lain hid in the ark itself, which Manasseh had thrown aside into some of the many cells, or chambers, round the Temple, where it might easily have remained unnoticed till the searching eagerness of the commission discovered it. Hitherto the king had acted only from the traditional knowledge of the old religion, preserved by the godly through the dark times of Manasseh and Amon; but the written Law was now in his hands. That its earlier existence was well known is shown by its instant recognition as "The Book of the Law." Nor is it possible that Josiah himself, and those around him, should have received it as the ancient sacred book of the nation, had no such book formerly existed.'

That there was a copy of the Law specially preserved beside the ark, within the Holy of Holies, is evident from the passage, Deut. xxxi. 25, 26: 'Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.' But the actual contents

of this 'Book of the Law' are not given, and we cannot tell whether it included the historical portions, or was strictly limited to the original legislative sections.

Whatever this Temple-copy of the Law contained, the importance attached by all parties to the discovery of Hilkiah certainly suggests that it was this particular copy, specially sacred because of its associations, which was now recovered.

Dr. Lumby gives the preceding historical associations, which enable us to appreciate the significance of the discovery. 'Josiah had succeeded his father at the age of eight, and in the previous fifty-seven years the kingdom had twice over been deluged with all the abominations of idolatry. The greater proportion, therefore, of the inhabitants of Jerusalem would have had little chance of knowing the Law and its requirements. The Temple had been neglected, perhaps closed, during a large part of these years. If we may judge of what would be needed now by what had been found necessary in Hezekiah's time (2 Chron. xxix. 5-7), the holy place would have become foul with neglect, the doors shut up, the lamps unlit, no incense within, no sacrifice without, the building. As for the Book of the Law, whatever might have been the contents of it at this time, rolls containing it would certainly not be numerous. In the possession of the priests they might be expected to be found, but only here and there. The copy made (according to the Law) for the use of the king would most certainly have perished. We must lay aside, in thinking of this time, all our modern conceptions about books and about a number of copies. The priests, in the matter of services and sacrifices in the Temple, taught the people by word of mouth what was proper in every part of the ceremonial, and much of the priestly training was traditional, passed on from one generation of priests to another. That an authoritative copy of the law, whatever it may have comprised, would be supplied for preservation in the Temple we certainly might expect; but after nearly sixty years of neglect of the Temple and its services, we can feel little surprised that neither Hilkiah nor his fellows were aware of its existence, and that Josiah knew concerning it only what had been taught him by the priests. The half-century previous to Josiah's accession had been a period of utter darkness, both for people, priests, and king. . . . Neither Hilkiah nor Shaphan are surprised at what has been found. The high priest describes it to Shaphan by a form of words which must have had a definite meaning before he used them. That is, there was known among the priests, and to some degree, no doubt, among the people, a collection of precepts which were called by the name of "the Book

of the Law." Therefore the "finding" mentioned in this verse was not a discovery of something unknown before, but the rescuing of the Temple-copy of the Law from the hiding-place in which it had long lain (perhaps in one of the chambers round about the Temple). Hilkiah knows what it is which he has come upon: the scribe with professional instinct begins to peruse it. Neither of them shows any ignorance or any surprise at the sight or perusal.'

The discussion of the probable contents of the book is reviewed and summarized by *Canon Cheyne*, in his recent work on 'Jeremiah.' Referring to Shaphan, the scribe, he says: 'At present we must accompany him to his royal master, and watch the effect of the tidings which he bears from the Temple, where a discovery has just been made by Hilkiah the priest. It is a book which has been found containing directions on religious and moral points which cut at the root of many popular customs and practices. The name which Hilkiah gives to it is, "The Book of Tōrāh" (*i.e.*, of Divine direction or instruction); the narrator himself calls it "The Covenant Book" (2 Kings xxiii. 2). The chronicler, however, gives it a fuller title, "The Book of Jehovah's Tōrāh given by Moses" (2 Chron. xxxiv. 14), which probably expresses the meaning of the earlier narrator. For certainly it was as a Mosaic production that the "Book of Tōrāh" effected such a rapid success, though not (even according to the compiler of Kings) the whole of what is now called the Pentateuch. There can be no longer any doubt that the book found in the Temple was substantially the same as our Book of Deuteronomy. Does the narrative in Kings describe the book as the Book of Tōrāh, and its stipulations collectively as "the Covenant"? (2 Kings xxii. 8; xxiii. 3). These are also phrases of the expanded Book of Deuteronomy (Deut. xxix. 1, 21; xxx. 10; xxxi. 26, etc.). Do the king and the people pledge themselves "to walk after Jehovah, and to keep His commandments and His precepts and His statutes with all their heart, and with all their soul, performing the words of this covenant that are written in this book"? (2 Kings xxiii. 3). The same phrases occur over and over again in Deuteronomy. (See Deut. iv. 13; vi. 5; viii. 6, 11; x. 12, 13; xxix. 9.) Does Josiah devote himself to the suppression of the local sanctuaries and the centralization of worship? This is also one of the principal aims of the Book of Deuteronomy.'

Canon Cheyne quotes together the following passages, Deut. vi. 4, 5; xii. 2-6; xvi. 21, 22; xviii. 9-15; xxviii. 15-21, and says of them: 'Such is the only setting in which a Biblical scholar is permitted to place the kernel at least of Deuteronomy (if the somewhat misleading

name is still to be used), but not more than this, for the fifth of the so-called "Books of Moses" has most certainly *grown* like the other four. It is too soon to inquire what this "kernel" was; too soon to set forth the probable origin of this earliest part of the book.'

In the face of searching modern criticism we may still keep the older explanation of Hilkiah's discovery. 'The thorough search which was made in the Temple, for the removal of every relic of idolatry or superstition, which former kings had introduced, brought to light the *autograph copy of the Law written by Moses;* and, in opening it, the eye fell upon the passage, Deut. xxviii. 15-68, declaring the doom of the nation if it fell into idolatry.' (*Kitto.*)

The *Speaker's Commentary* meets the objection that a fraud was arranged to serve the purposes of the priesthood, and after showing how certainly a fraud would have been detected, adds: 'On the whole, it may be said that fraud or mistake might as easily have imposed a new "Bible" on the Christian world in the sixteenth century, as a new "law" on the Jews in the reign of Josiah.'

Kirjath-Sepher, the Book Town.

JOSHUA xv. 16: 'And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.'

Question.—*As this name means 'Book Town,' may we infer that the Canaanites were sufficiently civilized to have public libraries?*

Answer.—Up to recent times, it could only be conjectured from this name that this town was an ancient seat of learning. Dr. Wright and Professor Sayce have now brought to light information of an extremely interesting character, which fully supports what was previously only a conjecture. Writing of the times of Rameses II., Sayce says: 'It is clear that already at this period the Hittites were a literary people. The Egyptian records make mention of a certain Khilip-sira, whose name is compounded with that of Khilip or Aleppo, and describe him as "a writer of books of the vile Kheta." Like the Egyptian Pharaoh, the Hittite monarch was accompanied to battle by his scribes. If Kirjath-sepher, or "Book Town," in the neighbourhood of Hebron, was of Hittite origin, the Hittites would have possessed libraries like the Assyrians, which may yet be dug up. Kirjath-sepher was also called "Debir," the "Sanctuary," and we may, therefore, conclude that the library was stored in its chief temple, as were the libraries of Babylonia. There was another Debir or Dapur further north, in the vicinity of Kadesh on the Orontes, which is mentioned in the Egyptian inscriptions; and since this was in the

land of the Amorites, while Kirjath-sepher is also described as an Amorite town, it is possible that here, too, the relics of an ancient library may yet be found. We must not forget that in the days of Deborah, "out of Zebulon," northward of Megiddo, came "they that handle the pen of the writer."' (Judg. v. 14.)

After giving an historical description of what has become known in regard to the conquest of Amenophis III., as shown by the archives of his palace, Professor Sayce says, of the tablets and inscriptions: 'From them we learn that, in the fifteenth century before our era—a century before the Exodus—active literary intercourse was going on throughout the civilized world of Western Asia, between Babylon and Egypt and the smaller states of Palestine, of Syria, of Mesopotamia, and even of Eastern Kappadokia. And this intercourse was carried on by means of the Babylonian language, and the complicated Babylonian script. This implies that all over the civilized East there were libraries and schools where the Babylonian language and literature were taught and learned. Babylonian appeared to have been as much the language of diplomacy and cultivated society as French has become in modern times, with the difference that, whereas it does not take long to learn French, the cuneiform syllabary required years of hard labour and attention before it could be acquired. We can now understand the meaning of the name of the Canaanitish city which stood near Hebron, and which seems to have been one of the most important of the towns of Southern Palestine. Kirjath-sepher, or "Book Town," must have been the seat of a famous library, consisting mainly, if not altogether, as the Tel el-Amarna tablets inform us, of clay tablets inscribed with cuneiform characters. The literary influence of Babylonia in the age before the Israelitish conquest of Palestine explains the occurrence of the names of Babylonian deities among the inhabitants of the West. Moses died on the summit of Mount Nebo, which received its name from the Babylonian god of literature, to whom the great temple of Borsippa was dedicated; and Sinai itself, the mountain of "Sin," testifies to a worship of the Babylonian Moon-god, Sin, amid the solitudes of the desert. Moloch, or Malik, was a Babylonian divinity like Rimmon, the Air-god, after whom more than one locality in Palestine was named; and Anat, the wife of Anu, the Sky-god, gave her name to the Palestinian Anah, as well as to Anathoth, the city of the "Anat-goddesses."' In a careful reading of the tablets, Professor Sayce came upon many ancient names and incidents known up to the present only from their appearance in the Bible.

Some account of Babylonian and Assyrian libraries may help us to

realize the provision made in the temple of this Canaanitish town, Kirjath-sepher. 'A literary people' like the Babylonians needed libraries, and libraries were accordingly established at a very early period in all the great cities of the country, and plentifully stocked with books in papyrus and clay. In imitation of these Babylonian libraries, libraries were also founded in Assyria by the Assyrian kings. There was a library at Assur, and another at Calah, which seems to have been as old as the city itself. But the chief library of Assyria, that, in fact, from which most of the Assyrian literature we possess has come, was the great library of Nineveh (Kouyunjik). This owed its magnitude and reputation to Assur-bani-pal, who filled it with copies of the plundered books of Babylonia. A whole army of scribes was employed in it, busily engaged in writing and editing old texts. Assur-bani-pal is never weary of telling us, in the colophon at the end of the last tablet of a series which made up a single work, that 'Nebo and Tasmit had given him broad ears and enlightened his eyes so as to see the engraved characters of the written tablets, whereof none of the kings that had gone before had seen this text, the wisdom of Nebo, all the literature of the library that exists,' so that he had 'written, engraved, and explained it on tablets, and placed it within his palace for the inspection of readers.' All the branches of knowledge known at the time were treated of in Assyrian literature, though naturally history, legend, and poetry occupied a prominent place in it. But even such subjects as the despatches of generals in the field, or the copies of royal correspondence found a place in the public library. The chronology of Assyria, and, therewith, of the Old Testament also, has been restored by means of the lists of successive 'eponyms,' or officers after whom the years were named, while a recent discovery has brought to light a table of Semitic Babylonian kings, arranged in dynasties, which traces them back to B.C. 2330.

Jeroboam's Two Calves.

1 KINGS xii. 28, 29: 'Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and he said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan.'

Difficulty.—*There was no precedent for making two calves. Whence did Jeroboam get the idea, and what object did he propose to himself?*

Explanation.—Jeroboam had become familiar, while exiled in Egypt, with the worship of the sacred ox Apis, and the calf Mnevis,

and all over Western Asia, including the heathen parts of Palestine, the ox was the favourite symbol of Baal. The young bull was the symbol of creative power.

It does not appear that any *religious* object was in view in making two calves. If visible representatives of God are once admitted, the multiplication of them is only a matter of convenience. Jeroboam was wholly swayed by considerations affecting the establishment of his new kingdom, and he was not checked by any religious considerations. He would have made ten gods as readily as two, if he had thought that ten would serve his state purposes. The one set up at Dan was, perhaps, to be the great religious centre, but, as Bethel was a recognised holy place, the calf there seems to have received the greatest attention, though Jeroboam may only have meant it to keep the southern section of his people from going to Jerusalem to worship. And with the calf at Bethel there came to be connected a new temple, 'known for centuries as the royal and national sanctuary, a rival of the great Temple of Jerusalem, with a distinct priesthood, ritual, and festivals, and all the pomp of the religious centre of the kingdom.'

There was no actual intention to cast off Jehovah—these calves were but to represent Him—but the fact that there were *two* tended to destroy the primary conception of the Divine *Unity*, as the material figure tended to destroy the other primary conception of the Divine *Spirituality*.

Canon Rawlinson suggests that these 'calves of gold' were representations of the cherubic form, imitations, more or less close, of the two cherubim which guarded the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies. As, however, they were unauthorized copies, set up in places which God had not chosen, and without any Divine sanction, the sacred writers call them 'calves.' We may gather from this that they were not mere human figures with wings, but had, at any rate, the head of a calf or ox. Jeroboam, in setting them up, was probably not so much influenced by anything that he had seen in Egypt, as (1) by a conviction that the Israelites could not be brought to attach themselves to any worship which did not present them with sensible objects to venerate; (2) by the circumstance that he did not possess any of the old objects of reverence which had been concentrated at Jerusalem; and (3) by the fact that he could plead for his 'calves' the authority of so great a name as Aaron.

The Resting-Place of Noah's Ark.

GENESIS viii. 4: 'And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.'

Difficulty.—*Mount Ararat is almost inaccessible. It is inconceivable that the women and animals climbed down from its summit.*

Explanation.—The expression 'mountains of Ararat' suggests some part of the range known by that name, and not necessarily the highest part. In its love for the extraordinary, tradition has fixed the site as one of the two highest peaks, the Aghri-dagh, and the Kara-dagh, which are more than 10,000 feet above the level of the sea. We may more wisely assume that it rested on one of the lower ridges, and that when the mists cleared, Noah found himself surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains.

'The Targum of Onkelos and the Syriac translate "on the mountains of Carduchia." This range, which separates Armenia from Kurdistan, is regarded by many authorities as the hills really meant, because, as they are nearer the place whence the ark started, the difficulty regarding the course taken by it is not so insuperable.'

'Ararat is the name of a territory (2 Kings xix. 37) which is mentioned (Jer. li. 27) as a kingdom near to Mirmi (Armenia)—probably the middle province of the Armenian territory, which Moses of Chorene calls Arairad, Araratia. The mountains of Ararat are, doubtless, the mountain-group which rises from the plain of the Araxes in two high peaks, the Great Ararat, 16,254 feet, and the Lesser, about 12,000 feet above the level of the sea. This landing-place of the ark is of the highest significance for the development of humanity, as it is to be renewed after the flood. Armenia, the fountain-land of the Paradise rivers, a "cool, airy, well-watered, insular mountain-tract," as it has been called, lies in the middle of the old continent. And so, in a special manner, does the mountain of Ararat lie nearly in the middle, not only of the Great African-Asiatic desert-tract, but also of the inland, or Mediterranean waters, extending from Gibraltar to the Sea of Baikal—at the same time occupying the middle point in the longest line of extension of the Caucasian race, and of the Indo-Germanic lines of language and mythology; whilst it is also the middle point of the greatest reach of land in the old world as measured from the Cape of Good Hope to Behring's Straits—in fact, the most peculiar point on the globe, from whose heights the lines and tribes of people, as they went forth from the sons of Noah, might spread themselves to all the regions of the earth.

'The Koran has wrongly placed the landing-place of Noah on the hill *Judhi*, in the Kurd mountain tract, but this word *Judhi* may only be an epithet, meaning the *Hill of Mercy*. The Samaritan Version locates it on the mountains of Ceylon; the Sybilline books in Phrygia, in the native district of Marsyas. The Hindoo story of the Flood names the Himalaya, the Greek Parnassus, as the landing-place of the delivered ancestor.'—(*Lange.*)

It is evident that no exact information can be obtained, and that we are left to form reasonable conjectures.

Cyrus no Monotheist.

EZRA i. 1: 'Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing.'

Question.—*What corrections of previous notions concerning Cyrus have come to us through recently-discovered documents?*

Answer.—It may be well to notice first the commonly-received notions concerning Cyrus, that we may value, by comparison, the recent information that has been obtained. *Dean Stanley* calls this hero 'Cyrus, or Koresh, or Khosroo, the King of the Persians. The day of Persian glory which he ushered in, the empire which he founded, for that brief time, embraced all that there was of civilization from the Himalayas to the Ægean Sea. . . . Of all the great nations of Central Asia, Persia alone is of the same stock as Greece and Rome and Germany. . . . Cyrus belongs to the only nation in the then state of the world which, in any sense at all approaching the Israelite, acknowledged the unity of the Godhead. The religion of the Persians was, of all the Gentile forms of faith, the most simple and the most spiritual. Their abhorrence of idols was pushed almost to fanaticism. "They have no images of the gods, no temples, no altars, and consider the use of them a sign of folly." This was Herodotus's account of the Persians of his own day, and it is fully borne out by what we know of their religion and of their history.'

Professor Sayce tell us that 'the history of the downfall of the great Babylonian Empire, and of the causes, humanly speaking, which brought about the restoration of the Jews, has recently been revealed to us by the progress of Assyrian discovery. We now possess the account, given by Cyrus himself, of the overthrow of Nabonidos, the Babylonian king, and of the conqueror's permission to the captives in Babylonia to return to their homes. The account is contained in two documents, written, like most other Assyrian and

Babylonian records, upon clay, and lately brought from Babylonia to England by Mr. Rassam. One of these documents is a tablet which chronicles the events of each year in the reign of Nabonidos, the last Babylonian monarch, and continues the history into the first year of Cyrus, as King of Babylon. The other is a cylinder, on which Cyrus glorifies himself and his son Kambyses, and professes his adherence to the worship of Bel Merodach, the patron god of Babylon.'

In these inscriptions Cyrus does not call himself and his ancestors kings of Persia, but of Elam. The word used is Anzan, or Ansan, which an old Babylonian geographical tablet explains as the native name of the country which the Assyrians and Hebrews called Elam. This statement is verified by early inscriptions found at Susa and other places in the neighbourhood, and belonging to the ancient monarchs of Elam, who contended on equal terms with Babylonia and Assyria until they were at last conquered by the Assyrian king, Assur-bani-pal, and their country made an Assyrian province. In these inscriptions they take the imperial title of 'King of Anzan.'

The annalistic tablet lets us see when Cyrus first became King of Persia. In the sixth year of Nabonidos (B.C. 549) Cyrus is still King of Elam; in the ninth year he has become King of Persia. Between these two years, therefore, he must have gained possession of Persia, either by conquest, or in some peaceable way. When he overthrew Astyages, his rule did not as yet extend so far. At the same time Cyrus must have been of Persian descent, since he traces his ancestry back to Teispes, whom Darius, the son of Hystaspes, in his great inscription on the sacred rock of Behistun, claims as his own forefather.

That Cyrus was an Elamite, however, is not the only startling revelation which the newly-discovered inscriptions have made to us. We learn from them that he was a polytheist who worshipped Bel Merodach and Nebo, and paid public homage to the deities of Babylon. We have learnt a similar fact in regard to his son Kambyses from the Egyptian monuments. These have shown us that the account of the murder of the sacred bull Apis by Kambyses, given by Herodotus, is a fiction; a tablet accompanying the huge granite sarcophagus of the very bull he was supposed to have wounded has been found with the image of Kambyses sculptured upon it, kneeling before the Egyptian god. The belief that Cyrus was a monotheist grew out of the belief that he was a Persian, and, like other Persians, a follower of the Zoroastrian faith; there is nothing in Scripture to warrant it. Cyrus was God's shepherd only

because he was His chosen instrument in bringing about the restoration of Israel; it is expressly said of him, 'I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me' (Isaiah xlv. 5).

Experience had taught Cyrus the danger of allowing a disaffected people to live in the country of their conquerors. He therefore reversed the old policy of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings, which consisted in transporting the larger portion of a conquered population to another country, and sought instead to win their gratitude and affection by allowing them to return to their native lands. He saw, moreover, that the Jews, if restored from exile, would not only protect the south-west corner of his empire from the Egyptians, but would form a base for his intended invasion of Egypt itself. The permission, therefore, which he granted to the Jewish exiles to return again to Palestine, and there rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, doubtless seemed to him a master-stroke of policy; he little knew that he was but an instrument in the hand of God, who was using him and his worldly counsels to fulfil the promises that had been made years before to the chosen people.

The return from the captivity took place in the first year of the reign of Cyrus in Babylonia, that is, in 538 B.C. The journey of so large a caravan from Babylonia to Palestine must have occupied a considerable time.

Solomon's Forced Labourers.

1 KINGS ix. 20-22: 'As for all the people that were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel; their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel were not able utterly to destroy, of them did Solomon raise a levy of bondservants, unto this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondservants: but they were the men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and the rulers of his chariots and of his horsemen.'

Difficulty.—*The accounts of the levy as given in Kings and in Chronicles differ in some important particulars. If the demand for forced labour did not apply to the Israelites, how could it be a cause of complaint in the time of Rehoboam?*

Explanation.—It will be helpful to place the passages referring to Solomon's 'tribute of men' side by side; and they may be given from the Revised Version, so as to secure the utmost precision attainable. They will be found to harmonize themselves. 1 Kings v. 13-16: 'And King Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and Adoniram was over the levy. And Solomon

had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand that were hewers in the mountains; besides Solomon's chief officers that were over the work, three thousand and three hundred, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.'

Here are mentioned 30,000 men specially working in Lebanon at tree-felling and cutting. There is no statement made as to their being Israelites or strangers, but the careful arrangement to secure that they were not overworked, suggests that they were Israelites. And Samuel had duly warned the people that if they had a king, he would exact forced labour (1 Sam. viii. 16). Besides this levy, the narrator informs us that Solomon had 70,000 labourers, and 80,000 quarrymen: and these may have been drawn from the Canaanite population. Over these it seems to have been necessary to appoint 3,300 overseers, and these were taken from the native Israelites. It is only said that 'Adoniram was over the levy.' As the building of the Temple was a work of love, the skilled native workmen would be independent of overseers, and would be likely to organize themselves under their own foremen. We may not be correct in making this distinction between the levy of Israelites for the Lebanon work, and the great mass of labourers and stone-cutters for the quarries, but it seems to be the most reasonable rendering of the passage, and it paves the way for understanding the other passages which refer to the matter.

1 Kings ix. 20, 21, is given above; and from the context it will be seen that reference is here made to Solomon's permanent arrangements for building his palaces and cities, and not to his special arrangements for building the Temple. For *that* work a levy of Israelites was reasonably made; but for ordinary state enterprises Solomon did not venture to exact forced labour from his own people. The work for which the levy from the Canaanite populations was raised, is clearly indicated in ch. ix. 17-19: 'And Solomon built Gezer, and Bethhoron the nether, and Baalath, and Tadmor (Tamar, R.V.) in the wilderness, in the land, and all the store cities that Solomon had, and the cities for his chariots, and the cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build for his pleasure in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.'

The descendants of the Canaanite population had become so mixed up with the Israelites in all the cities that no further effort could be made to dislodge them, but they never had the citizen-rights of native Israelites, and were liable to calls for forced labour, and were always distinguished from the Israelites in the service they must render and the tribute they must bear. We can quite understand that Solomon could

demand forced labour even from his own people on emergencies, but the Canaanite population seem to have been under a permanent claim; their levy is said to have been continuous 'unto this day.'

The other passage dealing with this matter is in 2 Chron. ii. 17, 18: 'And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred. And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand that were hewers in the mountains, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people awork.'

Comparing this passage with that in 1 Kings v. 13-16, it will be seen that the writer of the 'Chronicles' makes no reference to the 30,000 who were sent in batches of 10,000 to Lebanon, and who were probably skilled Israelite workmen; but confines himself to the 150,000 labourers and stone-cutters, who served in the quarries of the mountains. The only difference between the two passages is found in the number of the overseers, which is given in Kings as 3,300, and in Chronicles as 3,600. But in the Hebrew writing three (shālôsh) and six (shēsh) might easily be confused.

The *Speaker's Commentary* supports the view taken of the distinction between the 30,000 and the 150,000 in the Book of Kings. Its note on 1 Kings v. 13 is as follows: 'This was, apparently, the first time that the *Israelites* had been called upon to perform forced labour. It had been prophesied, when they desired a king, that, if they insisted on having one, he would "take their menservants, and their maidservants, and their goodliest young men, and put them to his work;" and David had bound to forced service the "strangers that were in the land of Israel" (1 Chron. xxii. 2), but hitherto the Israelites had escaped. Solomon now, in connection with his proposed work of building the Temple, with the honour of God as an excuse, laid this burthen upon them. Out of the 1,300,000 able-bodied Israelites (2 Sam. xxiv. 9), a band of 30,000—one in forty-four—was raised, of whom one-third was constantly at work in Lebanon, while two-thirds remained at home, and pursued their usual occupations. The working 10,000 were relieved every month, and thus each man laboured for one month in Lebanon, then spent two months at home, then in the fourth month returned to his forced toil, in the fifth month found himself relieved, and so on year after year. This, though a very light form of task-work, was felt as a great oppression, and was the chief cause of the revolt of the ten tribes at Solomon's death.' (1 Kings xii. 4.)

The chief grievance represented to Rehoboam was the forced labour to which the Israelites had been subjected. 'Forced labour has been among the causes leading to insurrection in many ages and countries. It alienated the people of Rome from the last Tarquin; it helped to bring about the French Revolution, and it was for many years one of the principal grievances of the Russian serfs.'

Dr. C. Geikie explains the different levies in another way, which, however, makes it more difficult to harmonize the several passages. He says: 'Another grievance that sapped the loyalty of the people was the systematic enforcement of compulsory or virtually slave labour, to carry out the various schemes of the king. The Temple; the vast series of royal buildings at Jerusalem; the fortifications of that city; the erection of strongholds at different points; the construction of the great royal roads; the creation of the royal gardens and parks; the building of the huge aqueducts and reservoirs at the capital, and much else, had required an amount of labour which could not be obtained by ordinary means. Even Solomon's revenues would not, indeed, have met the cost of it, had they been available. In imitation of the Pharaohs, therefore, he established and enforced a system of forced, unpaid labour, on the community at large. At first, however, this was demanded only from the remnants of the Canaanites. They had. indeed, been subjected to this serfdom in the later years of David's reign, but the yoke was now laid on them much more heavily. Thirty thousand men were drafted to toil in the forests of Lebanon and in the quarries at Jerusalem, felling trees, and hewing vast stones; 10,000 serving a month in rotation, with an interval of two months at home, to attend to their own affairs; a tax of four months' labour a year from each of the 30,000. But even this army of unwilling labourers was insufficient, as the buildings and other undertakings of the king increased. A levy was therefore raised from "all Israel," not from the Canaanites only, amounting to 70,000 men to carry loads, and 80,000 to hew down and square timber in Lebanon, and to quarry and prepare building stones: 3,300 overseers watching that the tasks were performed. How great the suffering imposed by these *corvées* must have been, is easy to imagine. Continued through years, involving exposure for months together on the mountains, or toil in the darkness of quarries worked like mines, where the smoke of their torches, used in the thick darkness, may still be seen—they must have been fatal to many. But besides all this, there was the exhausting labour of moving huge trees to the distant sea-shore; and on their reaching Joppa, dragging them up the steep mountain passes to Jerusalem; or transporting immense blocks

of stone on rough sledges, from the quarries to the Temple site on Mount Moriah. Forced labour in the East has, in all ages, been as fatal as war, and it was probably as destructive in Solomon's time.'

As indicating that even the Israelites were subject to forced labour, *Geikie* recalls the fact that, in 1 Kings xi. 28, Jeroboam, the master of the public works, is said to have been 'over all the charge of the house of Joseph.'

The Kings Associated with the Captivity.

2 KINGS xvii. 3: 'Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents.'

2 KINGS xvii. 5: 'Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.'

Question.—*Can it be the same King of Assyria that is mentioned in these two verses?*

Answer.—The fact that the name is not given in the second passage suggests that another king may be referred to, and another invasion, or another phase of the invasion, is dealt with. The history, as corrected by recent discoveries, shows that Tiglath-Pileser died in B.C. 727, and was succeeded by Shalmaneser IV., the king referred to above in verse 3. The refusal of Hoshea to continue the yearly tribute of ten talents of gold, and a thousand of silver, which Hoshea had promised to Tiglath-Pileser, brought Shalmaneser into the West. He unsuccessfully besieged Tyre, but carried Hoshea away captive, and commenced a blockade of Samaria, which lasted for three years. During this blockade Shalmaneser died, and the crown was seized by one of the Assyrian generals. He assumed the name of Sargon, in memory of the famous Babylonian monarch who had reigned so many centuries before. The later phases, therefore, of the taking of Samaria, and the deportation of the inhabitants, belong to Sargon rather than to Shalmaneser, though Sargon did but carry out the scheme which Shalmaneser had devised and commenced. The association of the two kings will explain the different form in which the reference in verse 5 is set.

The second invasion of Shalmaneser fell in the year B.C. 723, and the time given for the siege of Samaria is three years according to the Hebrew method of reckoning, but only two years according to our method.

The *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'The King of Assyria who took Samaria appears by the Assyrian inscriptions not to have been Shalmaneser, but Sargon. At least this monarch claims to have captured the city in the first year of his reign, which was B.C. 721

according to the Canon of Ptolemy, the very year of this capture, according to the Hebrew numbers. It will be observed that the writer of Kings does not say that *Shalmaneser* took Samaria, but only that the "King of Assyria" did so; and in ch. xviii. 10 he is still more cautious; for, having stated that "Shalmaneser came up against Samaria and besieged it," he adds, that "at the end of three years *they* took it."'

Nothing is known respecting the death of Shalmaneser; but Sargon reports concerning himself, in the great inscription published by Botta: 'The city of Samaria (Samerîna) I assaulted, I took; 27,280 men dwelling in the midst thereof I carried off; fifty chariots among them I set apart (for myself), and the rest of their wealth I let (my soldiers) take; my prefect over them I appointed, and the tribute of the former king upon them I laid.'

Dr. Lumby in a note on ch. xviii. 10, observes that the consonants might be fitted with vowel-points, making them read, 'he took it.' But the vowels for the plural form, *they*, as given by the Massoretes, can only be the result of a long-retained tradition.

The various Fates of the Scapegoat.

LEVITICUS xvi. 21, 22: 'And shall send him away by the hands of a man that is in readiness into the wilderness; and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a solitary land: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.'

Difficulty.—*This requirement would have to be modified when the people no longer lived in the desert districts. Are there any traces of the later fulfilment of the injunction?*

Explanation.—According to the law of Moses, the scapegoat was led into the wilderness, and there set free. But on one occasion the animal returned to Jerusalem, and the omen was thought so bad that afterwards it was led out to a high mountain, called Sook, and there pushed over the precipice, and dashed to pieces. It was taken out on the Sabbath day. To evade, therefore, the law of the Sabbath-day's journey, a tabernacle was erected at every term of 2,000 cubits, in which the messenger ate and drank, after which he was legally enabled to travel another stage. Ten such tabernacles were constructed between Sook and Jerusalem, and the distance was ninety Ris, or about six and a half English miles. The district was called Hidoodim, and the high mountain, Sook, the first meaning *sharp*, the second *narrow*, both applying well to the knife-edged ridges of the desert and hill. The distance of ninety Ris, measured from Jerusalem, brings us now to a great hill called El Muntâr;

beside the ancient road from Jerusalem there is now a well called Sûk, while in the modern Hadeidûn, which is applied to a part of the ridge, we may recognise the earlier Hebrew word *Hidoodim*. Captain Conder, R.E., who suggests this identification, thinks we have in the present El Muntâr the scene of the destruction of the scapegoat. ('*Biblical Things.*')

There are now no sacrificial priests, and of course the 'scapegoat,' or goat of Azazel, is not sent into the wilderness.

The curious feature of the modern Day of Atonement is the sacrifice of a cock; and the greatest pains are taken to secure a *white* cock. 'The reason why they use a cock rather than any other creature is this: In Hebrew a man is called *Gever*. Now if *Gever* (man) has sinned, *Gever* must also sustain the penalty thereof. But since the punishment is heavier than the Jews can bear, the Rabbis have substituted for them a cock, which in the Chaldee dialect is called *Gever*, and thus the Divine justice is assumed to be satisfied; because as *Gever* has sinned, so *Gever*, *i.e.*, a cock, is sacrificed.' But no attempt is made to provide two cocks, and liberate one, which would seem to be the fitting reproduction of the older ceremony.

The Nature of Solomon's Idolatry.

1 KINGS xi. 4: 'For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.'

Question.—*Are there any qualifications that should be put on the apparent representation of Solomon as an apostate?*

Answer.—The Bible never represents Solomon as a personally pious man. He was officially religious. Religion for him belonged to kingship. It was a matter of state policy to uphold the national ceremonial, and to make it as magnificent as possible. But when a man's attention is attracted to ceremonial, he loses the sense of exclusiveness in religion, and becomes interested in various ceremonials, and inclines towards the most magnificent.

But Solomon's grave peril lay in the exaggerated liberalism of the religion he had. It was such liberalism as usually characterizes a commercial and wealthy age. It is especially pointed out, that Solomon's self-indulgence led him to take wives from the princely families of the neighbouring idolatrous nations, and it was inevitable that their religious preferences would have to be considered, and though Solomon would not go the length of introducing idolatrous altars or temples into Jerusalem, he did allow the hilltops round the

Holy City to become idolatrous 'high places.' He even went so far as to meet the wishes of his wives, and make the required provision for their worship. 'Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.'

It is pressing the narrative too hard to make it mean that Solomon became himself an idolater. His sin lay in his indifference to the exclusive claims of Jehovah in the land of Canaan. It lay in what he permitted rather than in what he himself did. The true-hearted servant of Jehovah cannot fail to be vigorous in his opposition to all rival deities. Jealousy of the Divine honour is a necessary feature of the 'perfect heart' towards Jehovah, which was characteristic of David, but could not be found in Solomon. Solomon was officially true to Jehovah right to the end of life. If he had been personally pious, heart-consecrated to Jehovah, he would have guarded Jehovah's claim, and Temple, and land, from every encroachment of idolatry. It was in *that* he so shamefully failed, through a false liberalism, which almost persuaded him to say: 'Each man's religion is the best for himself.' 'One religion is as good as another.'

As careful estimates of Solomon's religious character are seldom made, it may be helpful to select, from the foremost writers on the Old Testament history, some judicious criticisms. One writer says: 'Brought up from his infancy in wealth, he never knew poverty, hardship, or trouble, and consequently sides of his nature must have been undeveloped. We never find in him that heart-crying for God which distinguished his suffering and persecuted father. His religion had not been a thing of personal struggle, and was always viewed by him as intended for the practical guidance of conduct; it did not possess him as a Divine force, finding expression first in communings with God, and then in a life of holiness. . . . Very much importance attached to the personal character of the king, and that very sadly deteriorated towards the end of his life. It may fairly be disputed whether he ever gave up the worship of Jehovah and became an idolater. We incline to think that he did not, and that his sin was the laxity with which he regarded the introduction of foreign and idolatrous customs, and the luxury of living which he permitted to himself and his court.'

Professor Wilkins writes as follows concerning the restoration of the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth: 'In the days of Solomon, partly no doubt from policy, partly from a dangerous latitudinarianism, taking the form of a desire to recognise the germ of good that might under-

lie the evil of foreign religions, partly, as the Scripture narrative distinctly asserts, from the fascination of "strange women," he went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians. Perhaps we may accept the opinion of Ewald, supported by many forcible arguments, that Solomon did not himself fall into idolatry, but only sanctioned the hereditary worship of his Sidonian, Ammonite, and Moabite wives. And Dean Milman has well reminded us that the extent of Solomon's empire enforced either toleration or internecine persecution. "When the king of the Jews became king of a great Eastern empire, he had no course but to tolerate the religion of his non-Jewish subjects, or to exterminate them."'

In the most recent 'Life of Solomon,' *Archdeacon Farrar* takes the severest view of Solomon's apostasy. 'For an apostasy we must call it, as St. Augustine does.' 'For the sake of his other wives (other than Pharaoh's daughter) he lent to idolatry the sanction not only of tolerance, not only of acquiescence, but of direct participation in the most revolting forms of superstition. The bare mention of the fact in the Book of Kings affords us no measure of the depth of his fall. If we are to take the statement literally, he offered burnt offerings and thank offerings on stated occasions during all his life upon the great brazen altar, and also burnt incense. The case is thus made much worse. The worship of Jehovah was rigidly and jealously exclusive whenever it was in any way sincere. But Solomon's devotions became not merely eclectic, but were a syncretism of the most glaringly contrasted and violently opposing elements, between which no union was for a moment possible. Like the dregs of a mixed population which the kings of Assyria placed in Samaria—an ignorant multitude, who "feared the Lord and served their own gods"—so Solomon, but with infinitely less excuse, worshipped alike in the Temple of Jehovah and in that of Chemosh, and that not only in secrecy, but publicly on the hill opposite his own palace and Temple. For Solomon "went after"—in other words, idolatrously worshipped—Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians.'

The Altar of Ed.

JOSHUA xxii. 10: 'And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.'

Question.—*Has any light been thrown, by recent explorations, on the position of the hill on which this altar was erected?*

Answer.—The question is an interesting one, as showing the importance of the work done by the 'Palestine Exploration Society.'

The site of this altar seems to have been entirely forgotten; and until recent times, no successful attempt had been made to recover it; and yet its identification would be a striking confirmation of the genuineness of the Old Testament history, and a remarkable survival of the old Biblical names.

All that was known was, that the altar was erected, purely as a monument, on some conspicuous position, near the Jordan, and on the western side. It stood to represent the rights of the Trans-Jordanic tribes in the Holy Land. *Conder*, in his 'Survey of Palestine,' gave particular attention to this site, and the identification of it will ever be associated with his name. The following is the most interesting portion of his report on the subject:

'From the internal evidence we are able to point with tolerable accuracy to the approximate position and character of the great Witness Altar. It must be near and above Jordan, on some hilltop west of the river, between the modern village of Seilun and the ford of the Damieh, placed in a conspicuous position, and possibly giving ruins of some magnitude. In addition to which we should hope to find remains of the name in some modern Arabic word. There is but one spot in Palestine which will fulfil these very definite requirements, and that spot is perhaps the most conspicuous in the country. From the heights of Ebal its sharp cone stands out against the white valley; from the Castle of Kaukab el Hawa, near Gennesaret, it is visible at a distance of thirty miles; from the shores of the Dead Sea and the plains of Jericho it stands forth prominently as a great bastion closing the Jordan Valley; from the eastern highlands it is no less conspicuous, and from the Judæan watershed it is visible at a great distance. Every traveller who has been to Jericho has seen it; all have asked what it is, and been disappointed to find that it was of no historical importance, and had only a modern Arabic name. For nearly a month I lived at its foot, firmly convinced that so conspicuous a landmark must have played a part in history, yet utterly puzzled as to what that part could have been. To every explorer it has been a point of interest, and yet I hardly know of one who has examined it. The place in question is the high cone of the Kurn Surtabeh, the Surtabeh of the Talmud, and one of the most important of our trigonometrical stations on the eastern border of the survey. . . . Upon its summit remains to this day the ruin of a great monument of the kind indicated in the Bible account. At the foot of the mountain lie the Gelilloth of Jordan, the ground being of that peculiar broken character to which I suppose the word specially to refer. When, in addition to these indications, we find a trace of the

original name, the conclusion seems irresistible. For some time I sought this in vain on the map. It is a question which I leave to the learned whether there can be any connection between the name Surtabeh and the Hebrew Metzebeh—the altar. The remaining summits of the block are called respectively El Musetterah, Ras el Kuneiberah, and Ras el Hafireh. The real name, as often happens, has deserted the place itself, but may still be traced in the neighbourhood. I have already pointed out that the natural ascent to the Kurn is from the north. On this side I find marked on our map, as a valley name, Tal 'at Abn 'Ayd (*The ascent of the father of 'Ayd*). The peculiar use in the vernacular Arabic of the word Abn, as meaning that which produces, leads to, or possesses, would make the natural translation of this term to be, "The going up which leads to 'Ayd," or *Ed*. Though the monument itself has lost its real name, the ascent to the summit, by which the strong men of the two and a half tribes must have gone up, preserved the memory of the Witness Altar.'

The Assyrian Colonists of Samaria.

2 KINGS xvii. 33, *Rev. Ver.*: 'They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away.'

Question.—*Is the recognition of Jehovah by these colonists to be regarded as in any sense satisfactory or hopeful?*

Answer.—The removal of populations, in ancient times, was not done in the interests of religion, but of public and national policy. The idea that each kingdom and country had its own local gods prevented the ancients from attempting to extend their religions. No religion then was thought of as having exclusive claims to the allegiance of everybody, and even the Jews were under no obligation to propagate that really universal religion which had been entrusted to their care, until the fulness of the times had come. It was only an accident, therefore, and no settled intention of the conquerors, that the colonists brought their religion from their Eastern homes, and established it in Samaria.

It is difficult to recover the circumstances which made the wholesale removal of populations a wise policy. It may have been the ancient method of relieving districts that were overcrowded, and so it answered to the emigration schemes of modern times. It may have been the most efficient way of securing conquests that were made very rapidly; and the persons carried away may have been the leaders, who might head revolt against the conquerors. It was a vigorous way of dealing with turbulent populations, breaking them up into widely-separated

sections, beyond the power of inter-communication. Or it may have been a way of reoccupying devastated districts, so as to secure revenue from them for the conquerors.

We are to understand that the Assyrians carried away the aristocratic sections of the people of Samaria, and the artisan and trading classes, but left the poor and disabled. To take possession of houses, farms, etc., and carry on the ordinary life of the towns and villages, people of the commercial and the working classes were brought from various parts of Assyria. Purposely people from different districts had been selected, so that there might be conflicting interests, and no chance of combination to secure independence. At first these colonists were scattered over the country, and not sufficient in number to till all the land, or even preserve themselves from the increase and inroads of the wild beasts. This particular evil, indeed, so grew upon them, that common counsel for the common protection became necessary. They could but think about the matter along their own lines, and the readiest solution to men who believed in gods belonging to each country was, that the god of the country of Samaria was taking this method of avenging himself for the neglect of his worship; and that the way to appease him was to give him a place among the gods of their own lands. Of course, their real interest lay in the gods with whom they were familiar, and those they really served with their hearts. It is significantly said, 'They *feared* the Lord,' because whatever worship they offered to Him was due only to anxiety about the safety of themselves and their property.

It is manifest that religion of this kind could be no satisfaction at all to Jehovah, nor could it unfold, in after generations, into anything better than a mixed religion, in which superstitious elements would be of much more importance than moral elements. Our Lord, in talking to the woman of Samaria, would not recognise the Samaritan religion as based on any sound foundations.

Geikie supports this view. 'Stripped of its inhabitants the land of Samaria threatened to relapse into a wilderness. Beasts of prey, and notably lions, increased so much as to become dangerous—a calamity which seemed to the superstitious foreign settlers scattered over it a judgment on them for their not knowing how to worship the local god. At their humble request, therefore, an Israelite priest was sent from Assyria to give them the needful instruction, and to set apart whom he could as his colleagues. But heathenism is difficult to eradicate, and the only result was the addition of the God of Israel to the gods of the different nations now in the land.'

C. J. Ball points out that the term 'fear of the Lord' is used, not

in the modern *ethical* but in the ancient *ceremonial* sense, and says: 'In the interval between the Assyrian depopulation and the repeopling of the land, the lions indigenous to the country had multiplied naturally enough. Their ravages were understood by the colonists as a token of the wrath of the local deity on account of their neglect of his worship. The sacred writer endorses this interpretation of the incidents, probably remembering Lev. xxvi. 22.' The remnant of the ten tribes who amalgamated with the new settlers seem to have accepted the mixed religion which they adopted; but we must keep in mind that the people of Israel had become virtual idolaters before the Samaritan kingdom was destroyed.

Speaker's Commentary meets the question why the colonists could not learn the manner of the old worship from the 'remnant of Israel,' if any were left in the land. 'The answer seems to be, that the *arcana* of the worship would be known to none excepting the priests who had ministered at the two national sanctuaries of Dan and Bethel; and that these, as being important personages, had been carried off. The expression, "One of the priests *whom ye brought from thence*," shows that the colonization had taken place, the affliction from the lions been suffered, and the embassy sent, while the original captives were still living—therefore long before Esar-haddon.'

Commenting on this attempt to unite Jehovah worship with idolatry, *Bishop Hall* says: 'This they did, not for devotion, but for impunity. Vain politicians, to think to satisfy God by patching up religions! What a prodigious mixture was here, true with false, Jewish with paganish, Divine with devilish! No beggar's cloak is more pieced than the religion of these new inhabitants of Israel. I know not how their bodies sped for the lions. I am sure their souls fared the worse for this medley. Above all things, God hates a mongrel devotion. If we be not all Israel, it were better to be all Asshur. It cannot so much displease God to be unknown or neglected as to be consorted with idols.'

Dr. J. A. Alexander says the mistake of these people 'lay in imagining that forms of worship, extorted from them by their selfish fears, would be sufficient to propitiate the Most High, and secure them from His vengeance; while their voluntary service, their cordial and habitual devotion, was expended on His enemies and rivals.'

David and the Philistine Images.

2 SAMUEL v. 21, *Rev. Ver.:* 'And they left their images there, and David and his men took them away.'

1 CHRON. xiv. 12, *Rev. Ver.:* 'And they left their gods there; and David gave commandment, and they were burned with fire.'

Difficulty.—*One account seems to say they were 'taken away,' the other seems to say that they were 'destroyed.'*

Explanation.—In the Authorised Version of 2 Sam. v. 21, it is said that 'his men burned them;' but the marginal note is 'took them away,' and this has been properly put in the text of the Revised Version. The Hebrew word rendered 'took them away' is equivalent to 'destroyed them;' and then the statement found in 1 Chron. xiv. 12, is only an addition, giving the particular *way* in which they were destroyed.

We understand that the attack of David on the Philistines was a sudden raid, and the passage 2 Sam. v. 21 indicates the precipitancy of their flight, so they could not even attempt to save their gods, or the images which the nations of antiquity were accustomed to carry into battle with them, believing that there was virtue in the images themselves, and that military success would be obtained by means of them. The suddenness of the Israelite attack is likened to the bursting forth of a breach of waters.

Among the spoil these images, or gods, were discovered, and they were carried off by the people. Subsequently David found them an occasion of mischief, and therefore commanded that they should be burned. The first passage may simply narrate what took place on the day of battle; the second tells what ultimately was done with the images.

Canon Rawlinson may be cited as supporting this view. 'The present passage (1 Chron. xiv. 12) has been called a "contradiction" of the one in Samuel, but at the utmost it is an addition. We may either understand the phrase, "took them away," as equivalent to "destroyed them," or we may take it literally, and conclude that David, in the first instance, carried the images as trophies to Jerusalem, but that when he had exhibited them there, he obeyed the injunctions of the law (Deut. vii. 5, 25) and destroyed them with fire.'

Assyria Helping Ahaz.

2 KINGS xvi. 9: 'And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it.'
2 CHRON. xxviii. 20: 'And Tilgath-pilneser, king of Assyria, came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not.'

Difficulty.—*These verses give distinctly opposite accounts of the relations subsisting between Ahaz and the king of Assyria.*

Explanation.—Let us first see clearly what the contradiction appears to be. We read in the Book of Kings of a monarch who is said to have hearkened to another monarch's plea for help, and so far to have succeeded in rendering it as to have taken his enemy's capital, put its king to death, and carried its inhabitants away into captivity. Yet it is stated in the parallel narrative in Chronicles that the same monarch distressed the King of Judah, for whom he had done such a work of destruction, and strengthened him not.

The king referred to as the one from whom help was sought was Tiglath-Pileser, the Tiger-Lord of Assyria. And a tiger he proved himself to be to more than one party engaged in the strife. He slew Rezin, King of Syria; took possession of Damascus, its capital; sent its inhabitants into captivity, and broke up the kingdom, establishing himself upon its ruins. So far he hearkened to Ahaz, and helped him out of his impending difficulties.

But when we inquire what price Ahaz had to pay for this help, we find that it was no real help. The removal of peril in one direction involved the infliction of serious distress in another. Ahaz paid a dear price for his alliance with Assyria. He had to strip his own palace, and rob the house of God, of all the gold and silver in it; he had to rob the princes, rob the people, to bribe this heathen prince to render him assistance. So it came to pass that, while in one way Tiglath helped Ahaz, in another way he seriously distressed him, and both the Scripture representations are correct.

An illustration may be found in our own national history. The Britons invoke the Saxons to aid them against the Picts and Scots. They comply gladly enough, help them to repel the invaders, but forget to return, and remain masters of the country. The Saxons 'hearkened' to the Britons, but it is equally true that 'they distressed them, and strengthened them not.'

The expression 'distressed him,' refers to the King of Assyria's demands upon Ahaz, before and after the battle, and not to any failure on his part in the performance of his compact relating to the Syro-Israelitish invasion.

Abijah's Mother.

2 CHRON. xi. 20: 'Maachah the daughter of Absalom.'
2 CHRON. xiii. 2: 'Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.'

Question.—*Who was the actual father of Maachah?*

Answer.—This subject is of interest as illustrating a class of Bible difficulties—those which are created by the *incompleteness* of the information that is at our command. Common-sense usually suffices to supply the missing connections, and to adjust the various relationships. Here it is evident that *Michaiah* is a corruption of *Maachah*, as elsewhere *Michaiah* is a man's name. The Sept., Syriac, and Arabic versions read *Maachah.*

In 1 Kings xv. 2, Maachah is called 'the daughter of *Abishalom*,' which is evidently another spelling of *Absalom.* But Absalom is reported to have had only one daughter, Tamar (2 Sam. xiv. 27); and therefore Maachah must have been grand-daughter of Absalom, and not daughter. We are left to assume that Tamar married Uriel of Gibeah, and Maachah was the offspring of this marriage. She took her name from her great-grandmother, Maachah of Geshur, wife of David and mother of Absalom.

Joseph confirms the supposition that Maachah was the daughter of Tamar. (Ant. viii. 10, 1).

Observe with what simplicity a series of divergences may be harmonized. Here are two forms of the name Maachah. Two forms of the name Absalom. The assertion that Maachah was the daughter of Absalom, and the assertion that Maachah was the daughter of Uriel. And yet every difficulty fades away when the indistinctness of Eastern relationships is once recognised, and daughter is in the one case understood to mean grand-daughter.

Very many similar difficulties in the historical books simply need a similar common-sense treatment.

Solomon's Ascent to the Temple.

1 KINGS x. 5: 'And his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord.'

Question.—*Is there any independent information at command, which will help us to understand what this so-called 'ascent' was?*

Answer.—There is a preliminary difficulty which must be considered. The word translated 'ascent,' in this passage, is not precisely the same as the word translated 'ascent' in 2 Chron. ix. 4. Strictly the word found in Kings should be rendered, 'and his burnt

offering.' This rendering is placed in the *margin* of the Revised Version, as an alternative reading. The difference between the original words is, however, so slight, that it is probably due to an error of the copyist. The authors of the Revised Version have recognised this, and preferred to harmonize the text in Kings with that in Chronicles. Some kind of building certainly suits better the very material things with which the ascent is associated in this verse. There was nothing specially to surprise the Queen of Sheba in Solomon's mode of sacrificing burnt offerings.

Assuming that some sort of *erection*, of a novel character, is meant, we may choose between the following suggestions. *Archdeacon Farrar* says: 'As the palace stood on a lower elevation than the Temple, the king built for his private use a staircase of the red and scented sandal-wood, which now became an article of import for the wealthy. This precious staircase led to the seats in the Temple, which were specially used for the king on state occasions, of which one seems to have stood in the inner court surrounded by a balustrade, and another was supported on a platform or pediment of brass.' (See 2 Kings xi. 14; xvi. 18; xxiii. 3; 2 Chron. vi. 13.)

Lewin, in his work 'Jerusalem,' says: 'The palace of Solomon was below the Temple platform, and in laying the solid foundations of Millo, provision had been made for a double passage from the palace to the Temple, about 250 feet long and 42 feet wide, formed of bevelled stones, and rising by a gentle incline to one of the gates of the inner Temple. This marvellous subterranean approach, impregnable from its nature to the ravages of time, still remains, though painfully disfigured: it is called, to this day, the Temple of Solomon.'

Porter gives an account of the recent discoveries, which appear to throw light on the question before us, but suggest quite a different explanation: 'The palace of King Solomon was built on Mount Zion, while the Temple stood on the summit of Moriah. Between these two hills was a deep valley or ravine. Recent research has brought to light the remains of a colossal bridge which spanned this ravine, and connected the palace and the Temple. It must have been one of the most splendid architectural works in the Holy City. The masonry is unquestionably Jewish, but of what period of Jewish rule cannot be yet said to have been fully ascertained. One of the stones in the fragment of the arch still remaining measures twenty-four feet in length, and another twenty. Calculating by the curve of the arch, and the distance from the Temple wall to the rocky side of Mount Zion opposite, the bridge when complete would seem to

have been composed of five arches, each about forty-one feet in span; and its elevation above the bottom of the ravine could scarcely have been less than a hundred feet. The first definite mention of this bridge is in connection with the siege of Jerusalem by Pompey, twenty years before Herod ascended the throne. It was not, therefore, a work of Herod. It was built long before his day. There are no data, however, by which to connect it with the "ascent" of Solomon. The Hebrew word is correctly rendered "ascent," and it may either be by stairs or otherwise. The same ascent is apparently referred to in 1 Chron. xxvi. 16: "To Shuppim and Hosah the lot came forth westward, at the gate Shallecheth, *by the causeway of the going up.*" The word translated "causeway" means a viaduct of any kind, and then a staircase. Would it not strike one, on reading the whole narratives, that some very remarkable approach to the Temple is referred to by the sacred writers; and that it was in some way appropriated to the use of the king? If such a bridge as that, whose ruins are now seen, existed in Solomon's day, it would, unquestionably, make a profound impression on the mind of the Queen of Sheba.'

The Pharaoh who Advanced Joseph.

GENESIS xli. 14: 'Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon.'

Question.—*Have recent researches settled whether this Pharaoh was, or was not, one of the Hyksos sovereigns?*

Answer.—Difficulty in coming to a decision is created by the condition of the Egyptian dynastic records. We have the names of the 12th dynasty, closing with Amenemha IV., B.C. 2266. Then for 500 years there is a break, during which the dynasties 13 to 17 were established. The 'Shepherd Kings' come in somewhere during this 500 years. The list is resumed with the 18th dynasty, the first name being Ahmes, B.C. 1700.

Professor George Rawlinson says: 'How long the Egyptians groaned under the tyranny of the "Shepherds," it is difficult to say. The epitomists of Manetho are hopelessly at variance on the subject, and the monuments are silent, or nearly so. Moderns vary in the time which they assign to the period, between two centuries and five. There is but one dynasty of "Shepherd Kings" that has any distinct historical substance, or to which we can assign any names. This is a dynasty of six kings only, whose united reigns are not likely to have exceeded two centuries. After the dynasty had borne rule for five reigns, covering the space perhaps of one hundred and fifty years, a

king came to the throne named Apepi, who has left several monuments, and is the only one of the "shepherds" that stands out for us in definite historical consistency as a living and breathing person. Apepi built a great temple to Sutekh at Zoan or Tanis, his principal city, composed of blocks of red granite, and adorned it with obelisks and sphinxes. The pacific rule of Apepi and his predecessors allowed Thebes to increase in power, and her monuments now recommence.'

There was an ancient tradition, that the king who made Joseph his prime minister, and committed into his hands the entire administration of Egypt, was Apepi. George Syncellus says that the synchronism was accepted by all. It is clear that Joseph's arrival did not fall, like Abraham's, into the period of the Old Empire, since under Joseph horses and chariots are in use, as well as waggons or carts, all of which were unknown until after the Hyksos invasion. It is also more natural that Joseph, a foreigner, should have been advanced by a foreign king than by a native one, and the favour shown to his brethren, who were shepherds, is consonant at any rate with the tradition that it was a 'Shepherd King' who held the throne at the time of their arrival. A priest of Heliopolis, moreover, would scarcely have given Joseph his daughter in marriage unless at a time when the priesthood was in a state of depression. Add to this that the Pharaoh of Joseph is evidently resident in Lower Egypt, not at Thebes, which was the seat of government for many hundred years both before and after the Hyksos rule.

If, however, we are to place Joseph under one of the 'Shepherd Kings,' there can be no reason why we should not accept the tradition which connects him with Apepi. Apepi was dominant over the whole of Egypt, as Joseph's Pharaoh seems to have been. He acknowledged a single god, as did that monarch (Gen. xli. 38, 39). He was a thoroughly Egyptianized king. He had a council of learned Scribes, a magnificent court, and a peaceful reign until towards its close. His residence was in the Delta, either at Tanis, or Avaris. He was a prince of a strong will, firm and determined; one who did not shrink from initiating great changes, and who carried out his resolves in a somewhat arbitrary way. The arguments in favour of his identity with Joseph's master are, perhaps, not wholly conclusive; but they raise a presumption, which may well incline us, with most modern historians of Egypt, to assign the touching story of Joseph to the reign of the last of the shepherds.

Canon Bell, in his interesting work 'A Winter on the Nile,' reports a visit to Bubastis, the Pi-beseth of the Bible, in order to examine

the excavations proceeding under the direction of M. Naville, and quotes the following passage from a letter sent by M. Naville to the *Times*, of April 6, 1888:

'Our most important discovery up to the present time was made yesterday morning. I had noticed on Friday the corner of a block of polished black granite which I thought might belong to some good monument, and I had it unearthed yesterday. It proved to be the lower half of a life-size figure of very beautiful workmanship, with two columns of finely-cut hieroglyphics, engraved down each side of the front of the throne to right and left of the legs of the statue. These inscriptions give the name and titles of an absolutely unknown king, who, judging from the work, must belong to the Hyksos period, or, at all events, to one of the obscure dynasties preceding the Hyksos invasion. I forward a copy of the inscriptions. One cartouche contains a sign which is quite new to me, and which I therefore cannot decipher. The other reads "Jan-Ra," or "Ra-ian"—a name unlike any I have ever seen. He is described, most strangely, as the worshipper of his Ka (*i.e.*, his ghost, or double). . . . Since writing the above, I have been over to Boulák, and have shown my copy of the inscriptions to Ahmed-Kemaled Deen Effendi, the Mohammedan official attached to the museum. He was deeply interested, and said at once, "That is the Pharaoh of Joseph. All our Arab books call him *Reiyán*, the son of El Welíd." He then wrote the name for me in Arabic, which I enclose herewith. For my own part, I know nothing of Arab literature or Arab tradition. I should not, however, be disposed to attach much weight to this curious coincidence. Still it *is* curious, and certainly interesting.'

Canon Bell adds: 'It may be well not to be too hasty in concluding that the statue with the cartouche, on which is the name Jan-Ra, is Joseph's Pharaoh, but it is possible that it is; and Mr. F. D. Griffith, student attached to the Egypt Exploration Fund, furnishes some additional evidence bearing on this possibility. He says: "The only Hyksos (shepherd) monument in the British Museum is a small lion in the northern vestibule. This monument is of Hyksos style, and bears a name that hitherto has baffled students. It is very indistinctly engraved. On examining it I feel convinced that the name is the singularly written throne name of Raian, as inscribed on the seat of the statue discovered by M. Naville. The date thus obtained is in harmony with the general opinion that Joseph ruled Egypt under one or more of the Hyksos Pharaohs."'

Naaman's Compromise.

2 KINGS v. 18: 'In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon; when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.'

Difficulty.—*Can we conceive of God as willing to accept private religion which a man was unwilling to let influence his official relations?*

Explanation.—Naaman's was but an imperfect conversion. To his mind Jehovah was simply the god of the country; one among the many gods of the many countries. He had even paid Jehovah some respect by being willing to submit his case to His consideration. In the sudden impulse of gratitude, he was prepared to recognise Jehovah as a superior God, as even the supreme God. But, if he had been truly converted—changed in heart—he would not have taken into consideration the peril of losing his official position through loyalty to Jehovah. Like all imperfectly converted persons, Naaman wanted his new religion to keep away from his life and relations. He was willing to have it as a private enjoyment. And true religion will not come to a man at all, unless the man is willing to let it be a life-controlling force. Naaman would not keep his Jehovah-religion long, if he went bowing with his master in the house of Rimmon. The Prophet Elisha in no way expresses approval of his suggestion. Elisha's 'go in peace' is merely a polite farewell, with the intimation that, on the question of bowing to Rimmon, he has nothing to say. The history tells us no more about Naaman, and we should always bear in mind that narratives introduced into Scripture concerning heathen lands or persons, are never introduced for *their sakes*, but only for the sake of the influence these had on God's people. Naaman's story was an impressive declaration of Jehovah's power to help; and it was made all the more impressive because it concerned the chief captain of one of the national enemies.

The request of Naaman for 'two mules' burden of earth' is explained by the common notion of the day, that the power and influence of each god was limited to the soil of the country to which he belonged. So by carrying the soil of Canaan to Syria, and standing on it when he prayed to Jehovah, Naaman thought he could ensure the acceptableness of his prayers and worship. Elisha expressed no sort of approval of this notion. Indeed, his relations with Naaman were almost curt. He evidently did not feel it any duty of his to rejoice over this sudden convert to Jehovah. He had

done his duty to God in cleansing the man; but he did not wish to have any more to do with him.

Dr. Lumby sees more in Elisha's simple answer to Naaman than we do, but, in general, he supports the explanation given above. 'Naaman can see the inconsistency of his conduct. He will offer no more sacrifices to Rimmon. But the king his master worships in Rimmon's temple, and Naaman must be in attendance, and must bow when the king bows down, or he will give offence. He sets his difficulty before Elisha, and Elisha, regarding the degree of his faith and obedience as all that could be expected from his amount of light, gives him a comforting answer. We must judge both Naaman and the prophet according to the times in which they lived. It was impossible for the former at once to cast away all his old ideas. His strongest wish, for some of the soil of the holy land to carry home, bespeaks the darkness in which he had lived and was living, and a new creature is not to be made in a moment out of men like Naaman. Elisha, on the other hand, had no light such as we have concerning God's message to the heathen; the Jew has not, either in ancient or in modern times, been a missionary, and we need not judge Elisha hardly, because he felt no call to rebuke the half-converted heathen for his imperfect service. The Lord had not yet given His message to any of the chosen people—"Go ye out into all the world." . . . We are not to consider Elisha's answer as implying that service of God and service of Rimmon might be combined without any incongruity. The prophet appears rather to be willing to leave the good seed already sown to bear fruit in due season.'

Geikie treats Elisha's answer as an approval of the suggested compromise. 'It is in keeping with the ideas of the age, that the grateful Syrian should ask leave to carry back to Damascus two mules' burden of earth to build an altar to Jehovah on the soil of his own land: on which alone, men would then think, He could be rightly honoured. The altar, moreover, would be a memorial to the God of Israel in a foreign land, like the synagogue raised, ages later, by the Jews of Nahardea, in Persia, all the stones and earth of which had been brought from Jerusalem. He makes only one request more, and this the prophet, with a fine anticipation of Christian charity, tacitly grants. When his master, leaning on his arm, required him to go into the temple of Rimmon, and he had to prostrate himself before the god; he trusted it would not be reckoned disloyalty to Jehovah, whom alone he would henceforth worship.'

Matt. Henry says: 'Naaman's dissembling his religion cannot be approved; yet by promising to offer no sacrifice to any but the God

of Israel, and by asking pardon in this matter, he showed such ingenuousness as gave hope of further improvement; and young converts must be tenderly dealt with.'

Kitto strongly objects to the idea that Naaman proposed to build an altar with the earth. Such an idea was not likely to enter Naaman's mind. 'If we look to the uses to which the Easterns apply the soil of places accounted holy, it is possible we may discover the right reason for Naaman's singular request. To Mohammedans the sacred soil is that of Mecca; and the man accounts himself happy who has in possession the smallest portion of it for use in his devotions. He carries it about his person in a small bag; and in his prayers he deposits this before him upon the ground in such a manner that, in his frequent prostrations, the head comes down upon this morsel of sacred soil, so that in some sort he may be said to worship thereon. May it not be that Naaman contemplated forming, with this larger portion of the soil of the sacred land, a spot on which he might offer up his devotions to the God of Israel?'

Burder suggests that Naaman may have asked for the earth with a view to purification, and gives the following illustrations: 'If the Arab Algerines cannot come by any water, then they must wipe themselves as clean as they can, or they must smooth their hands over a stone two or three times, and rub them one with the other as if they were washing with water.' In a Mohammedan treatise on prayer, it is said: 'In case water is not to be had, that defect may be supplied with earth, a stone, or any other product of earth, and this is called *tayamum*, and is performed by cleaning the insides of the hands upon the same, rubbing therewith the face once; and then again rubbing the hands upon the earth-stone, or whatever it be, stroking the right arm to the elbow with the left hand, and so the left with the right.'

Canon Rawlinson deals very considerately both with Naaman and with Elisha. 'Naaman was not prepared to offend his master, either by refusing to enter with him into the temple of Rimmon, or by remaining erect when the king bowed down and worshipped the god. His conscience seems to have told him that such conduct was not right; but he trusted that it might be pardoned, and he appealed to the prophet in the hope of obtaining from him an assurance to this effect. Elisha avoided any expression of either approval or disapproval. He saw Naaman's weakness, but did not feel that it was necessary to rebuke it. Perhaps he was wrong not to be harder and more uncompromising, for the Old Testament saints are far from perfect characters. He was tender and soft-hearted, not stern and

rugged, like Elijah. He was drawn to the new convert, and inclined to hope the best for him. Moreover, he had no distinct message to the heathen, and no means of knowing with any certainty what God would require of them. Elisha may be pardoned if he did not himself clearly see the obligation of the convert to refuse all participation in idolatry.' 'As a parting benediction, he wished that Jehovah's peace might rest on the Syrian general, and thus committed him to the Divine guidance without answering his closing words.'

South calls the truth 'that we are neither to worship or cringe to anything under the Deity, a truth too strict for a Naaman; he can be content to worship the one true God, but then it must be in the house of Rimmon. The reason was implied in his condition; he was captain of the host, and therefore he thought it reason good to bow to Rimmon rather than endanger his place; better bow than break.'

Porter's summary of the narrative may be regarded as satisfactory. 'Naaman was no true convert to Judaism. He had experienced the omnipotent power of the God of Israel: he resolved henceforth to acknowledge God as Supreme God, but he would not go so far as to give up his rank, or to risk his worldly power, by refusing to join with his sovereign in the worship of an idol. He was an intellectual convert, but his heart remained untouched by Divine grace. Even his knowledge was yet very imperfect. His old superstitious feelings remain, though they have received a new object. He thinks Jehovah can only be worshipped aright on the soil over which He specially ruled. We are not informed whether he was ever fully instructed, or whether the germs of intellectual belief implanted in his mind were ever changed by the power of the Divine Spirit into saving faith. Elisha's answer to the plausible, but really humiliating, plea of Naaman throws no light on this point. "Go in peace," was, and is still in the East, the ordinary parting salutation. It neither approves nor disapproves of Naaman's pleas or plans.'

The Site of Ebenezer.

1 SAMUEL iv. 1: 'Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Ebenezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek.'

Question.—*Has it been found possible to recover, with any certainty, the precise situation of Ebenezer?*

Answer.—The following suggestions, made by *Dr. T. Chaplin*, appeared in one of the 'Palestine Exploration Fund' reports. A critical note on the theory, or proposed identification, is added by *Capt. C. R. Conder.*

Many years ago, after considerable study of the subject and repeated examination of the ground, I formed the opinion that the place of Ebenezer is now occupied by the village of Beit Iksa, and, notwithstanding that another site has been advocated by distinguished investigators, I still venture to think that this is the only spot which satisfactorily meets all the requirements of the case.

1. The spot should be 'between Mizpah and Shen,' and, as we may suppose, be a prominent and conspicuous spot. Such a spot is Beit Iksa. Taking Neby Samwîl to be Mizpah, and Deir Yesin to represent Shen, an examination of the map will show that a line drawn from one to the other would intersect this village. It is also remarkable that, owing to an opening in the hills, a person standing at Deir Yesin and looking towards Neby Samwîl has Beit Iksa in full view, although at a short distance to the right or left it is not visible at all. From many other points it is very conspicuous, owing to its position near the summit of a hill abutting on the great valley of Beit Hannîna, which is there very open.

2. The locality should be adapted for the camping-ground of a large army (1 Sam. iv. 1), have a supply of water, be easily defensible, so situated as to render communications with the interior of the Israelite territory easy, and afford a ready means of retreat in the event of an unsuccessful battle with the Philistine invaders. All these characterize the position of Beit Iksa. The hill on which it is built is nearly surrounded by deep valleys, whose steep, and in some parts precipitous, sides render the place almost impregnable in that direction, whilst a narrow ridge connects it with the only road along which the Philistines could march to the attack, which road, moreover, would expose the flank of the attacking force to an assault from the side of Mizpah. There is some water at the place itself, still more at Neby Samwîl, and an unlimited supply at the neighbouring fountain of Lifta, which must have been well within the Israelite lines.

3. There should be in the near neighbourhood some spot meriting the name of Aphek, the stronghold, in which the Philistines could securely encamp, and from which they could make their attack on the Israelite position. Such a spot is Kŭstŭl, *castellum*, which commands the modern road between Jerusalem and Jaffa. To the north of the miserable hamlet called by this name there is a broad plateau which affords evidence of having been used for a camping-ground in ancient times, being still surrounded by the remains of a rampart of large stones. From this position the Philistines could march in great security along the summit of the hill, past the site of the present Beit Surîk, until they came to where Biddu now is, when turning to the

right they could direct their attack against either Mizpah or an enemy on the hill to the south, where Beit Iksa is situated.

4. The place should be so situated that a runner could reach Shiloh from it in a few hours. 'There ran a man of Benjamin out of the army and came to Shiloh *the same day*,' bearing news of the defeat of the Israelites, and loss of the ark. From Beit Iksa this might be accomplished by an eager and active messenger in four hours, or less; the distance being about eighteen miles. From Deir Abân Shiloh is eleven or twelve miles further.

5. Mizpah should be so situated that an attacking force, if badly beaten, seized with panic, and thinking only of escape to its own territory in the south-western plain, would naturally flee down the valley which passes 'under Beth Car,' and that the pursuing Israelites, especially if they happened to be imperfectly armed (Josephus, Ant., 6, 2, 2), would not deem it prudent to follow the fugitives further than that. The valley which divides the hill of Beit Surîk from that on which Beit Iksa stands affords such a means of retreat from Neby Samwîl, and it was probably down this valley, past 'Ain el 'Alîk and 'Ain Beit Tulma, that the terrified Philistines (2 Sam. vii. 10, 11) reached the great watercourse which they knew would conduct them to their own country. Pressed by their pursuers, they would rush on by Motza (Kŭlonîeh) under their late camping-ground at Aphek, over the boulders and rocks in the bed of the wady, and through the olive gardens at its sides, until they came 'under Beth Car,' which may be taken to be the village now called 'Ain Karim, where their foes would give up the pursuit, lest, becoming entangled in the narrow and stony valley, they should expose themselves to great risk in the event of the discomfited host rallying and turning upon them.

It may be objected to this identification that Neby Samwîl has never been *proved* to be Mizpah, Deir Yesin Shen, or 'Ain Karim Beth Car. Yet, when all the circumstances connected with the events narrated being taken together support this theory; when it is found that the ancient names of two of the places are still retained; when it is remembered that the position of Neby Samwîl and the tradition connecting it with that prophet are by almost all investigators held to favour the supposition that it is Mizpah; and when it is considered that the identification of each of these four places in a very remarkable manner supports that of the others, there is surely a strong presumption that we need go no further in search of the site of this famous monument of the last of Israel's Judges.

It may not be altogether idle to inquire why Samuel placed his

memorial 'between Mizpah and Shen' instead of at Mizpah. The latter was not only a very conspicuous spot, as its name implies, but it was also a seat of government, and a centre of the religious life of the people. It was not to Shiloh, where the Tabernacle was, but to Mizpah that Samuel gathered all Israel and drew water and poured it out before the Lord and prayed to the Lord for them. Perhaps the answer to such an inquiry is, that he placed his monument where the ark of God had once stood. We are taught in the second Book of the Chronicles (viii. 11), that a place whereunto the ark of the Lord had come was regarded as holy, and what more natural, after the signal deliverance which had been experienced, than that the great ruler and guide of the nation should erect 'the stone of help' upon the spot once sanctified by the sacred emblem of the Divine strength? Josephus tells us the stone was called ισχυρος, 'the stone of *strength*.' In Psalm lxxviii. 61, we have, 'And delivered *his strength* (*i.e.*, the ark) into captivity;' and again in 2 Chron. vi. 41, 'Arise, O Lord God, into Thy resting-place, Thou and the *ark of Thy strength*;' in the Septuagint, ἡ κιβωτος της ἰσχυρος σου. If the memorial came to be called in late times by its Greek name, it is not impossible that in *Iksa*, a word the derivation of which no one seems to know, we have a corruption of *ischuros*, like Amwas of Emmaus, Nablus of Neapolis. I have heard the place called Beit Iska, and a Mohammedan sheikh once told me that that is the right name. The point is not of importance. The tendency of the Arabs to transpose consonants is well known.

It would seem that this idea of Ebenezer having marked the place on which the ark was once set, misled Eusebius and his translator into supposing that the monument occupied the spot to which the Philistines brought back the ark. It is needless to say that there is no indication of this in the Bible; and it may reasonably be supposed that if Samuel had erected his trophy at Bethshemesh, or in the field of Joshua the Bethshemite, the narrative would have said so.

I have often questioned with myself whether these struggles with the Philistines did not (as some seem to suppose) take place nearer to the Philistine frontier than Neby Samwîl and Beit Iksa are. But I find no confirmation of this suggestion in the sacred text. Other important battles against the same foes took place still further in the heart of the Israelite country, as at Michmash and on Mount Gilboa.

Note by Capt. C. R. Conder.—Dr. Chaplin having kindly sent me the proof of his paper on Ebenezer, I have only one or two remarks to offer on the subject.

I do not hold it to be proved that Deir Abân is Ebenezer, but, as I have pointed out in the 'Memoirs,' Deir Abân is the place which Jerome supposed to be Ebenezer. It is quite possible that Jerome was wrong in this as in other cases. The site of Mizpah is uncertain, as it may be either at Neby Samwîl, or perhaps at Shâf'at. The identity of Shen and Deir Yasin seems to me doubtful, because names with Deir preceding are usually of Christian origin. 'Ain Kârim is, I believe, the Biblical Beth Haccerem, but it might be Beth Car also. On two occasions I have searched the country south of Neby Samwîl, hoping to find some monument such as Ebenezer, but we never found anything of the kind. I agree with Dr. Chaplin, however, in thinking that the distance from Deir Abân to Shiloh is an objection to the fourth century traditional site.

David's Introduction to Saul's Court.

1 SAMUEL xvi. 21 : 'And David came to Saul, and stood before him ; and he loved him greatly ; and he became his armour-bearer.'

Difficulty.—*As Saul had personal knowledge of, and interest in, David, his settlement at court could not have preceded the introduction of David to Saul after the slaughter of Goliath.*

Explanation.—It is not possible, with any amount of ingenuity, to fit into a natural historical order the earliest records concerning David. We have to bear in mind that the historical books of Scripture are compilations of fragments, and chronological considerations do not seem to have controlled the placing of them together. One account seems to deal with David's visits to the court as a minstrel, but how this stands related to the slaughter of Goliath, which another fragment makes David's earliest introduction to Saul, does not appear. In these cases it is altogether better to deal honestly with the records, and admit confusion of the accounts, the earlier including relations to the king and court, which, in actual fact, occurred later on.

If an attempt might be made to put the passages in chronological order, we should say that the minstrelsy of David at the court belongs to a period some years preceding the conflict with Goliath, and that David was then quite a youth. While a minstrel only David may not have come into personal contact with the king ; and the verse heading this paragraph represents the response to a request made of Jesse for David's entire service at the court. This request was made after the victory over Goliath ; then it was that Saul became personally attached to David, and made him his armour-bearer. The

narrative of the seventeenth chapter is omitted from the earlier fragment, and consequently ch. xviii. 2 repeats the fact, presented under differing circumstances in ch. xvi. 22, that David became permanently attached to the court.

We then have the following order: David called to court occasionally as a minstrel. Saul's mental condition improved for a time. David returned to his shepherding. Some years pass without need for calling David, and he is quite forgotten. Incident of Goliath. David not recognised by the officers, because much changed in appearance. After the victory inquiries are made, and David reminds the king who he is, by saying, 'I am *the* son of Jesse,' evidently meaning, 'the son of Jesse whom, you remember, once played for you in your illness.' This wakening of recollections made Saul resolve to have David with him permanently at court, so he became first one of the king's armour-bearers, and then was gradually advanced until he reached some of the chief places of trust and honour in the army.

It may not be wise to assert that this *is* the order of events; but it may be said that this is a reasonable and natural order, and may be maintained without doing any violence to the records, as we have them preserved in the Word.

R. F. Horton regards the narrative which is now before us as a proof that the author of the Books of Samuel had before him two different accounts. He says: 'Reading the account of David's introduction to Saul in 1 Sam. xvi., we first of all hear of Samuel anointing David at Bethlehem; then at ch. xvi. 18, David is brought before the king as not only "cunning in playing," but "a mighty man of valour and a man of war." He stands before Saul because he has found favour in the king's sight. Then in ch. xvii. we are surprised to meet with David as a mere shepherd lad coming up from the country to the army, slaying Goliath, and so being introduced to Saul for the first time. In fact, as he goes out to the combat, Saul sends Abner to inquire who he is; and in consequence of this episode the young man is enlisted in the king's service. Now there cannot be any reasonable doubt that this confusion arises from the existence of two accounts of David's first introduction to Saul. According to the one, he was sought out in Saul's mental distress as a cunning player on the harp. According to the other, he attracted the king's attention by an act of heroic valour in the army. So distinct are these accounts, that even in the welded narrative, it is quite easy to separate them. Read ch. xvi. 14-33 and then go on at ch. xviii. 6, and you see you have a straightforward narrative: the

section ch. xvii-xviii. 5 appears plainly as a separate piece coming no doubt from a separate source.'

Edersheim reminds us that the credit of being 'a mighty, valiant man, and a man of war,' need only refer to his recognised fearlessness and prowess as a shepherd. David could have had no experience of actual warfare, with national enemies, save through connection with Saul's armies. *Edersheim* remarks: 'David, who had never been permanently in Saul's service, had, on the outbreak of war, returned to his home.' And he makes the following contribution to the solution of the difficulty which is being treated in this paragraph: 'There is considerable difficulty about the text as it now stands. That the narrative is strictly historical cannot be doubted. But, on the other hand, verses 12-14, and still more verses 55-58, read as if the writer had inserted this part of his narrative from some other source, perhaps from a special chronicle of the event. The LXX. solve the difficulty by simply leaving out verses 12-31, and again verses 55-58; that is, they boldly treat that part as an interpolation; and it must be confessed that the narrative reads easier without it. And yet, on the other hand, if these verses are interpolated, the work has been clumsily done; and it is not easy to see how any interpolator would not at once have seen the difficulties he created, especially by the addition of verses 55-58. Besides, the account in verses 12-31, not only fits in very well with the rest of the narrative —bating some of the expressions in verses 12-14—but also bears the evident impress of truthfulness. The drastic method in which the LXX. dealt with the text, so early as about two centuries before Christ, at least proves that, even at that time, there were strong doubts about the genuineness of the text. All this leads to the suggestion, that somehow the text may have become corrupted, and that later copyists may have tried emendations and additions, by way of removing difficulties, which, as might be expected in such a case, would only tend to increase them. On the whole, therefore, we are inclined to the opinion that, while the narrative itself is strictly authentic, the text, as we possess it, is seriously corrupted in some of the expressions, especially in the concluding verses of the chapter. At the same time it should be added, that its correctness has been defended by very able critics.'

We naturally turn to Josephus, to see what help he can give us in arranging the story. And it is plain that the materials at his command were the same as those with which we have to deal; but he seems not to have before him the confusing conversation between Saul and Abner, given in verses 55-58, and so he does not feel our

difficulty. His record may not be at the ready command of our readers, and we give it as showing that a consecutive story can be reasonably constructed from the record, as we have it. On the recommendation of the court physicians, 'Saul did not delay, but commanded them to seek out a skilful harper; and when a certain stander-by said he had seen in the city of Bethlehem a son of Jesse, who was yet no more than a child in age, but comely and beautiful, and in other respects one that was deserving of great regard, who was skilful in playing on the harp, and in singing of hymns (and an excellent soldier in war), he sent to Jesse, and desired him to take David away from the flocks, and send him to him, for he had a mind to see him, as having heard an advantageous character of his comeliness and his valour. So Jesse sent his son, and gave him presents to carry to Saul; and when he was come, Saul was pleased with him, and made him his armour-bearer, and had him in very great esteem. . . . He sent to Jesse, the father of the child, and desired him to permit David to stay with him, for that he was delighted with his sight and company, which stay, that he might not contradict Saul, he granted.' 'Now, while this war with the Philistines was going on, Saul sent away David to his father Jesse.' Then follows an account of the battle with Goliath, in which Josephus assumes that David was quite well-known to Saul, who was anxious for the safety of one whom he cared for; and the first sign of jealousy Josephus associates with the unwise ascription of chief merit to David; and he adds: 'Accordingly, he removed David from the station he was in before, for he was his armour-bearer, which, out of fear, seemed to him much too near a station for him; and so he made him a captain over a thousand, and bestowed on him a post better, indeed, in itself, but, as he thought, more for his own security; for he had a mind to send him against the enemy, and into battles, as hoping he would be slain in such dangerous conflicts.'

Canon Spence gives the explanation which is likely to commend itself more and more to thoughtful students. It sustains the suggestions given above. 'The real solution of the difficulty probably lies in the fact that this and the other historical books of the Old Testament were made up by the inspired compiler from well-authenticated traditions current in Israel, and most probably preserved in the archives of the great prophetic schools.' (May we not rather think, preserved in unwritten form, as 'Folklore'? *Ed. B.D.*) 'There were, no doubt, many of these traditions connected with the principal events of David's early career. Two here were selected which, to a certain extent, covered the same ground. . . . As for the

great love of the king, and position of royal armour-bearer, these things we have little doubt came to David *after* the victory over the giant Philistine, and very likely, indeed, in consequence of it.'

The Stronghold of Zion.

2 SAMUEL v. 7: 'Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion; the same is the city of David.'

Question.—*Have recent researches brought to light any relics of this very interesting fortress?*

Answer.—Josephus gives a magnificent account of the defences of the city, natural and artificial, in his day, and specially at or about this point. The first of its three walls ran round the summit of Mount Zion. It had sixty towers. 'The largeness of the stones,' he says, 'in three of these was wonderful.' They were white marble (*mizzey*), 27 feet long, by 10 feet broad, and 5 feet deep.

In 1874, Mr. Henry Maudslay, following the former work of Sir Charles Warren, fully explored and laid bare the rock foundation of this wall on the south-west brow of Mount Zion, in all probability the famous Jebusite fortress, 'the stronghold of Zion.' It proved, indeed, a magnificent natural fastness, rendered by human art practically impregnable. The limestone crag at this point appeared as a perpendicular scarp—that is, cut smooth and straight as a wall—to an average height of 30 feet, as far as the Turkish authorities would allow him to lay it bare, a distance of some hundred and thirty yards. A base of a huge tower was exposed to view, in the shape of a projecting buttress 45 feet square, also scarped—that is, cut straight as a wall. Thirty-six steps were seen cut in the face of this rock wall for the purpose of ascending to the top of a second smaller projecting square buttress, the base of a second tower. The bases of three towers were found to contain no less than eighteen *beers*, or water-cisterns, hewn in the rock. These 'cisterns to receive rain-water,' and these 'steps' are specially described by Josephus. A number of fallen stones, from three to four feet long, were found at the bottom with marks indicating Roman work. A ditch 20 feet wide was found at the foot of this scarp with a steep rough rock slope below, and, in one place at least, a second deeper scarp beneath the other, giving a rock-cut perpendicular face of some 50 feet in height.

This rock-cut scarp thus exposed, and which, if the authorities had not interfered, would doubtless have been traced round much of the city, must have formed part of the lofty, immovable foundation upon

which the mighty wall Josephus describes was reared. Towers of amazing strength, relative to ancient weapons and engines of attack, must once have stood out on the projecting buttress-like bases. But not one stone of these remains upon another. Well has Captain Conder, R.E., pointed out that this scarp is peculiarly 'valuable as showing that, however the masonry may have been destroyed or lost, we may yet hope to find indications of the ancient *enceinte* (boundary wall) in the rock scarps which are imperishable.' (*Palestine Exploration Reports.*)

Sir J. W. Dawson gives a sketch of the position of Jerusalem, as seen by the geologist, which enables us to realize the situation, the relations, and the importance, of the 'stronghold of Zion.' At 'Jerusalem we are on the summit of the ridge separating the Mediterranean slope from the more abrupt descent to the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley. The surface of the Dead Sea is 1,292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, while Jerusalem is 2,590 feet above that level, and consequently no less than 3,880 feet above the great depression which lies to the east of it. The city occupies a little promontory, connected on the north with the main table-land of the summit of the hills, and separated, on the east and west, by deep valleys from the neighbouring eminences. The promontory itself is divided by a furrow, the Tyropean Valley, into two unequal portions, so that it may be compared to a cloven hoof, with one toe longer than the other. The *longer or western toe*, separated from the adjoining hills by the Gihon or Hinnom Valley, is that which is usually identified with the ancient *Zion*, and on which the greater part of the city now stands, and its *southern part* must have been the site of the old Jebusite town, which was so strong that it retained its independence till the time of David. The smaller, or eastern toe, separated by the deep Kedron Valley from the Mount of Olives, is that of Moriah and Ophel, and on it stands the quarter known as Bezetha, and the great area of the Mosque of Omar, once the site of Solomon's Temple.

'Geologically, Jerusalem is on the eastern side of the ridge of the hill country, for the beds underlying it all dip eastward. This commanding position accounts for its importance as an ancient Amorite stronghold, and also for its selection by David as his capital. The geologist, on inspecting such a site, at once thinks of its original condition, and of the causes of the features which it presents. The former is not difficult to realize, for though there has been some filling of hollows with débris and some scarping and walling up of slopes, the relief of the surface is too decided to be easily obscured, and the

excavations of Colonel Warren and his colleagues have sounded the depths of most of the masses of rubbish. The clue to the latter is most easily to be found in the dip of the rock, as seen in the great quarries and excavations in the eastern ridge, which show that we have a general easterly dip, and consequently an ascending series from Zion to the Mount of Olives, the outcropping edges of the harder beds forming the ridges, and the cutting out of the soft layers producing the valleys. The rock of the western or Zion Hill is a hard, reddish and gray limestone, much used for building and paving stones, and capable of taking a good polish. It is called *Misie* stone —that is, hard or resisting.'

It is necessary to refer briefly to the theory, advocated by Mr. Ferguson, in Smith's 'Dictionary of the Bible,' that the evidence of the Old Testament distinctly leads to the identification of Zion with the *eastern* hill, on which the Temple stood. According to this view, the fortress captured by David occupied the northern part of the ridge, on which the Temple was afterwards built. Though this theory does certainly relieve some difficulties, it has not found general acceptance.

Under Saws and Harrows.

2 SAMUEL xii. 31 : 'And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln ; and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon.' (Marg. : 'made them labour at.')

Difficulty.—*It does not seem clear whether these terms mean modes of execution, or merely the punishment of subjection to hard forms of labour.*

Explanation.—The answering passage, 1 Chron. xx. 3, reads as follows, and the *Revisers* propose no alteration in it: 'And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes.' If the passage in Samuel may refer to 'slavish labour,' that in Chronicles certainly suggests 'torture.' Mercifulness in dealing with conquered enemies is quite a Western and Christian idea. It is a surprise to Easterns even in these days. We need not suppose that David rose superior to the common sentiments of his country and his times, and we should take due account of the fact that the Ammonites had offered a peculiarly unbearable insult in their treatment of David's ambassadors.

G. D. Copeland thinks that the sense of these passages is met if we only understand that David condemned the Ammonites to rigorous and painful toil. 'The English Version is, on the whole,

excellent, and has been honoured of God as no other. Yet the English Version is not an inspired translation, though the translation of an inspired original. Now it so happens that the original here is susceptible of a different rendering to that given in our translation; thus, instead of *under* saws and harrows, the word may be equally *unto* saws and harrows. This would imply only that David made slaves of his captives, reduced them to penal servitude, and made of them sawyers and so forth. Further, the word translated *harrows of iron* may also be rendered *iron mines*, implying that David put his captives to work in the mines. And again, the Hebrew word translated "*cut* them" with saws, in Chronicles, is almost exactly the same as that rendered *put* in Samuel, and is capable of the same interpretation, and, indeed, the majority of the Hebrew MSS. have the very word which means, "he put them to saws."'

While we would gladly relieve the records of David's life of such inhumanities as are suggested by the Authorised Version, we fear that the older view of our text must be regarded as the true one. The latest writers are obliged to recognise in it descriptions of torturing and degrading modes of capital punishment in accordance with the spirit and sentiment of the age. We may helpfully set together the views of the passage taken by leading Bible writers.

Cambridge Bible (*A. F. Kirkpatrick, M.A.*): '"Put them upon saws," or perhaps we should read as in Chronicles, "Sawed them with saws." This barbarous practice was not unknown at Rome. See Heb. xi. 37. "Threshing-sledges of iron." Sledges or frames armed on the underside with rollers or sharp spikes used for the purpose of bruising the ears of corn and extracting the grain, and at the same time breaking up the straw into small pieces for use as fodder. "Burned them in brick-kilns." The phrase is chosen with reference to the idolatrous rite practised by the Ammonites of "making their children pass through the fire" in honour of Moloch. These cruel punishments must be judged according to the standard of the age in which they were inflicted, not by the light of Christian civilization. The Ammonites were evidently a savage and brutal nation (1 Sam. xi. 1, 2; 2 Sam. x. 1-5; Amos i. 13), and in all probability they were treated no worse than they were accustomed to treat others. It was the age of retaliation, when the law of "like for like"—the *lex talionis*—prevailed (Judg. i. 7; Lev. xxiv. 19, 20). They had foully insulted David, and it is not to be wondered at if he was provoked into making a signal example of them by this severity. In this respect he did not rise above the level of his own age. Modern history has its parallels, not only in the barbarities perpetrated at Alençon by a

ruthless soldier like William the Conqueror, but in the merciless massacre by which the Black Prince sullied his fair fame on the capture of Limoges.'

Ellicott's Commentary (*Dr. F. Gardiner*) takes the view that tortures are referred to, and says: 'In the infliction of these cruelties on his enemies, David acted in accordance with the customs and the knowledge of his time. Abhorrent as they may be to the spirit of Christianity, David and his contemporaries took them as matters of course, without a suspicion that they were not in accordance with God's will.'

Ewald writes thus: 'The captive warriors of this and the other cities of the country David punished with great severity on account of the original cause which had led to the war. He mangled them with saws, iron flails, and iron-shearing machines, or roasted them in burning kilns.'

Dean Stanley makes the following reference: 'The expressions agree well with the cruel extermination of the conquered inhabitants by fire and by strange and savage tortures—a vengeance to be accounted for, not excused, by the formidable resistance of the besieged.'

Wordsworth says of the severer reading of the text: 'This seems to be the right interpretation, though controverted by some.' And he refers to *Keil* and *Kitto.*

Speaker's Commentary (*Bishop Hervey*) has this note: 'The cruelty of these *executions* belongs to the barbarous manners of the age, and was provoked by the conduct of the Ammonites.'

Critical Commentary (*Jamieson*) brings out another point: 'This excessive severity and employment of tortures, which the Hebrews on no other occasion are recorded to have practised, was an act of retributive justice on a people who were infamous for their cruelties.'

Kitto gives the milder view, but is not able to accept it as the correct one: 'The common, and as it seems to us the true, interpretation is, that they were put to deaths of torture. We would very gladly, were it in our power, agree with Dantz, who, followed by Delany, Chandler, and other writers, contends that David merely condemned his Ammonitish captives to severe bodily labours, to hewing and sawing wood, to burning of bricks, and to working in iron mines. But this interpretation has little real foundation. It does much violence to the Hebrew words, which it takes in an unusual and previously unimagined acceptation.' See 'Biblical Difficulties,' Series I., p. 316.

SUMMARY AND REVIEW OF SECTION.

THE PECULIARITIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT HISTORIES.

In an article by *Professor William R. Harper, Ph.D.*, contributed to the American *Sunday School Times*, the points of chief interest connected with the Bible histories are carefully treated, with competent knowledge, and in a liberal spirit. Dr. Harper's conclusions will commend themselves to all earnest and devout students who are willing to learn what the Bible *really is*, and cannot be satisfied with any decision beforehand as to what man thinks God's Bible for the race *ought to be*. A critical examination of the actual contents of the Old Testament, and a scientific attempt to discover the original material, and to trace the processes of compilation and of editing, are quite consistent with a reverent love for God's Word, and a devout recognition of its inspiration as the world's rule of faith and morals. What is needed is that the critical study of Holy Scripture should be undertaken by godly and devout men, who will honestly point out what can be known, and will jealously preserve all that can be honestly maintained. That which is 'of God' even adverse and over-confident criticisms cannot overthrow.

Professor Harper notices that:

1. There is in many portions of the historical books a lack of chronological order. The writer does not always feel it incumbent upon him to describe the events in the order in which they took place. (1) Judg. xii. 8-15 covers a period from the death of Jephthah to the death of Abdon; but this overlaps chs. xiii.-xvi., the story of Samson, while the story of Samson reaches down into the period covered by 1 Sam. i.-vi. (2) 2 Sam. xxi. 1-11, which describes a three years' famine, because of Saul's massacre of the Gibeonites, and the execution of Saul's sons, does not follow ch. xx., but belongs, without doubt, before the rebellion of Absalom (chs. xv.-xviii.); for in 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8; xix. 28 we find references to these events. (3) 2 Sam. xxii., David's thanksgiving for deliverance from Saul, belongs, of course, to the early period of his life. (4) 2 Sam. xxiii. 8-39, David's heroes and their exploits, is found in 1 Chron. xi. 11-41, after the account of David's becoming king. (5) 2 Sam. vi., the removal of the ark, is by some (*Professor Beecher*, in 'Old Testament Student,' vol. vii., p. 61 *et seq.*) regarded as having taken place after, not before, the sin with Bathsheba (ch. xi.). (6)

The chapters of Isaiah which are connected with that memorable year 701, the year of Sennacherib's invasion, are as follows: i. (?); x. 5 to xii. 6; xiv. 24-27; xvii. 12-14; xviii. 33, 36, 37. (7) The chapters of Jeremiah which belong to the reign of Jehoiakim are vii.-x., xxvi., xiv., xv., xviii., xix., xxv., xxxv., xlvi.-xlix., xxxvi.; while those of the period of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah are xiii., l., li., xxvii.-xxix.; xxi., xxii., xxiii., xxiv., xxxiv., xxxvii., xxxviii., xxx., xxxi., xxxii., xxxiii., xxxix., lii. (though some of these may possibly better be assigned to another period).

Other examples might be cited, but these are sufficient to show that the arrangement of matter which has come down to us, whatever may have been its origin, is in many cases not a chronological one. Now, either (1) the writer made an effort to put the matter in chronological order and failed; or (2) the original writer placed it in such order, but later copyists have disarranged it; or (3) the writer made no particular effort to secure a chronological order. In the case of the Book of Judges, the supposition that no effort was made to secure this order is strengthened by the fact that in the enumeration of periods, seven, twenty, forty, and eighty occur so frequently—'numerals which have the appearance of round numbers, rather than exact dates.'

2. There is found in many portions either no chronological indication, or at best a very defective one; that is, the text is not careful to point out the time when or during which the events described in it took place. Still further, what seems to be the meaning of the text is sometimes discovered from other portions of Scripture, or from outside sources, to be incorrect. (1) The fact that there have been proposed more than fifty ways of explaining the chronology of the Book of Judges would indicate that the chronological data of the book were, to say the least, defective. (2) It is only by the comparison of several passages that one discovers that Samson's great exploits were performed after the death of Eli, and just before Samuel's reformation. (3) At the time of Saul's election he was a young man. Chs. ix. and x. (1 Sam.) tell of his choice by Samuel and the people; ch. xi. tells of his victory over Ammon, which immediately followed; ch. xii. of Samuel's farewell address at the age of seventy; while in ch. xiii., which to all appearances, follows at once, Saul has a son Jonathan old enough to command a division of the army. We must suppose that the first period of his reign (perhaps ten or fifteen years) is passed over in silence (between chs. ix and xiii.). (4) One would scarcely suppose that a period of twenty years elapsed between verses 37 and 38 of Isaiah xxxvii.; yet such is the

case. (5) The great doubt as to the duration of the nation's stay in Egypt—whether 430 or 230 years—is due to the lack of clearness in the indication of chronological data. (6) It is not told us how long Samuel judged, or how long his sons were judges. (7) While the prophecies of Ezekiel are in nearly every case clearly and definitely located, so far as concerns the time of their utterance, and while those of Jeremiah are frequently so designated, Isaiah's material is in the majority of instances left in great doubt, the order and position having often to be determined solely by internal evidence. (8) The lack of any direct statement in reference to the date of Joel, though the book abounds in historical material as distinguished from the prophetic, has left its position to be determined wholly by internal evidence. (9) All are familiar with the difficulties which are connected with the question of Solomon's age when he ascended the throne, and with the exact chronology of the kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, as indeed of many others of Israel's and Judah's kings.

It is quite certain, therefore, that, in striking contrast with the habit of some writers—for example, Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah—many of the Old Testament writers seem to have cared little about giving such statements as would have made the time of writings and events certain. In other words, there are in certain periods few, if any, indications of chronology. If it is asked whether, in the absence of such data, there is evidence of some other system of arrangement, it may be answered that in some cases—for example, 2 Sam. xxii. 24—the material seems to have been roughly thrown together in the form of an appendix. In others, as in the arrangement of the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, no particular system has as yet been discovered.

3. In reading these various histories, one is frequently struck with the incompleteness, the fragmentary character, of the narratives. This is something different from that brevity of statement for which the sacred writers are so justly praised. It is rather the omission of what seem to us to be important facts; and these omitted facts are, in some cases certainly, necessary to any full or satisfactory understanding of the matter in hand, looked at from an historical point of view. Their omission, indeed, gives an impression which is sometimes entirely wrong. (1) In the story of Saul's reign we have, according to the best interpretation of the material, no record of the first ten or fifteen years: the impression produced by the narrative is that Saul disobeys Samuel, and comes into conflict with him almost immediately after his appointment. When, however, we discover

that this long period has been omitted, the whole case becomes more intelligible, and the development of the evil side of Saul's nature is explained. (2) Jonathan, as will be remembered, suddenly appears as the leader of a part of the army, though no mention of him had before been made in any connection. (3) From a strictly historical point of view, one is scarcely satisfied to find the writer of 2 Samuel, after furnishing such minute details of every other part of David's life, omitting any reference to his death; nor is this feeling changed when we find the death recorded in two verses in 1 Kings. (4) Jehoshaphat's war with Moab and Ammon (2 Chron. xx.) is passed without mention by the writer of Kings; nor is anything said of Uzziah's victories over the Philistines, or of Manasseh's capture by Assyria. (5) Shishak's capture of Jerusalem, a most important event, receives only two verses (1 Kings xiv. 25, 26); Abijam's war with Jeroboam, one (1 Kings xv. 6); Josiah's contest with Pharaoh-Necho, one of the most critical in sacred history, only one (2 Kings xxiii. 29). (6) The writer or compiler of Chronicles thought it unnecessary, or foreign to his purpose, to make any mention of (*a*) the reign of David at Hebron, or the civil war between David and Saul's house (2 Sam. i.-iv.); (*b*) David's adultery and punishment (2 Sam. xi., xii.); (*c*) Absalom's vengeance upon his brother and his rebellion (2 Sam. xiii.-xx.), together with several other matters of minor importance. One feels that an account of David's life, with the story of Bathsheba and the consequences of that crime omitted, is exceeding fragmentary and incomplete. (7) The writer of Samuel has also omitted many facts, a knowledge of which is essential to any just comprehension of the history of religious worship in the time of David and Solomon (1 Chron. xiii. 1-5; xv., xvi., xxii., xxiii.-xxvii., xxviii., xxix.). (8) In the story of Jonah, which, after all, must be taken along with the Elijah and Elisha stories as historical, and not, with many modern critics, as fiction or allegory, one searches in vain for (*a*) the location of Jonah's abode, (*b*) the spot where he was vomited up, (*c*) an account of his long, wearisome journey to Nineveh, (*d*) the name of the Assyrian king, (*e*) his fate after his rebuke by God, (*f*) his subsequent relations to Nineveh.

These are but a few of the more striking omissions—omissions which leave us in greater or less confusion of mind. It may be said this is only the result of the brief and condensed method which the writer was compelled to adopt; a book which covers so much ground must, in places, be fragmentary and incomplete. This is true; but notice must also be taken of the fact that the Old Testament, brief as it is, contains a great many repetitions; for example, (*a*) of the

account of the tabernacle in Exodus; (*b*) and of the laws in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; (*c*) of the history of David and the later kings in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles; (*d*) David's thanksgiving (2 Sam. xxii.; Psa. xviii.); (*e*) the historical portions of Isaiah (Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix.; 2 Kings xviii.-xx.). And, in view of these repetitions, one, speaking now wholly from the historical standpoint, could wish that the space taken up by them had been used in presenting other matters from which something of interest might have been gained in reference to the subject in hand.

4. Something distinct from this is seen in the emphasis laid upon certain special items selected from what must have been a large number, the remainder being entirely omitted, or passed over very lightly. (1) In Judges, five chapters are given to Gideon with his son, four to Samson, two each to Jephthah, Micah the Danite, and the outrage at Gibeah. Five subjects thus take fifteen out of twenty chapters in a book covering 300 years. (2) In 1 Samuel, ten (1 Sam. xviii. 10 to xxvii. 12) out of thirty-one chapters (nearly one-third) are given to the persecution of David by Saul, and the former's wanderings in the wilderness as an outlaw; Saul's reign, outside of this, receiving only five chapters (1 Sam. xiii.-xvii.), unless we include the story of the Witch of Endor (1 Sam. xxviii.) and the battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. xxxi.). (3) It is worthy of note that the story of the Witch of Endor takes twenty-five verses, the plunder of Ziklag by David thirty-one; while the battle of Gilboa, including the account of the defeat of the army, the death of Saul and Jonathan, the treatment of their bodies, the heroic rescue and burial by the men of Jabesh-Gilead, is given in thirteen verses. (4) In 2 Samuel, David's reign at Hebron and the civil war with Saul's house take four chapters, yet this is altogether omitted by the writer of Chronicles. David's adultery and punishment, the latter including Absalom's rebellion, take ten chapters, nearly one-half of the book; this also is omitted by the writer of the Chronicles. (5) The twenty-four chapters of 2 Samuel with the last chapter of 1 Samuel cover the same historical ground taken up in 1 Chronicles x.-xxix.; that is, nineteen chapters. Of the twenty-five Samuel chapters, about nine (counting roughly) are found in Chronicles; of the nineteen Chronicles chapters, about eight are found in Samuel. In other words, two writers preparing a history of the same period, employing for the most part the same sources, using in many passages the same language, differ so much from each other that the matter possessed in common amounts, in one case, to a little more than one-third of his material; in the other, to a little less than one-half. (6) Of the forty-seven chapters of

Kings which cover the period 1015-562 B.C., about 450 years, (*a*) nearly one-fourth (eleven chapters) is given to the first forty years (the reign of Solomon); (*b*) about one-fifth (nine chapters) is given to the narratives of Elijah and Elisha; (*c*) the division of the kingdom, the most important event in Israelitish history after the Exodus, is treated in twenty-four verses, the story of the man of God in thirty-two; (*d*) the history of twenty-five kings and queens, from Albatiah (query, Ahaziah) to Zedekiah, and from Jehu to Joash (query, Josiah), including the account of the destruction of both kingdoms—the history of two nations for 322 years—is given in fourteen chapters, only one-half more than the number of chapters given to Elijah and Elisha, one-fourth more than the number given to Solomon.

Many more facts similar to these might be cited; but these are sufficient to show that proportion in treatment—at least, the proportion which would be observed by a modern historian—is not found in the sacred histories. There are, of course, reasons for all this, and these reasons should be carefully considered.

5. A careful study of the principal books—Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles—reveals still another important characteristic connected with their origin; namely, that they are the work of compilation. The author compiled the material from several writings, and, as Professor Beecher has said ('Old Testament Student,' vol. vii., p. 25): 'Instead of reading these writings, and remembering their contents, and stating them in his own language, as most modern writers would do, he did his work of compilation largely by the process of transcribing sections of earlier works.' The evidence of this fact is very abundant, and the fact is so well known and generally accepted that it need hardly be enlarged upon. (1) A comparison of parallel passages in Samuel or Kings and Chronicles shows the method of the author; for example, 2 Kings xiv. 17-22 with 2 Chronicles xxv. 25 to xxvi. 1: 'The transcribed portions the author of Chronicles commonly abbreviates and renders more fluent by dropping words and changing phrases. Occasionally he adds a fact or a comment, often in Hebrew, that is linguistically quite different from the transcribed portions.' (2) The books themselves tell us in many instances that the material has been taken from some particular source, and give in detail the title of the source. For such references see 1 Chron. xxix. 29; xxvii. 24; 2 Chron. xii. 15; xiii. 22; xx. 34; xxvi. 22; xxxii. 32; xxxiii. 18, 19. (3) Still farther, there is evidence that Samuel, Gad, and Nathan left behind them works of some kind, to which we are largely indebted for the Books of Samuel; for passages which show Gad and Nathan to have been in

close communication with David, see 1 Sam. xxii. 5; 2 Sam. vii. 2, 3; xii. 1, 2, 25; xxiv. 11-13; 1 Kings i. 8-10. (4) The statistical part of the material in the histories of the Kings—summaries of wars, list of officials—may well have been derived from such royal records as those ascribed to King David (1 Chron. xxvii. 24). (5) There must also have been some poetical work from which were taken such passages as Hannah's song (1 Sam. ii. 1-10); the song of the bow (2 Sam. i. 17-27); David's lament for Abner (2 Sam. iii. 33, 34); David's thanksgiving (2 Sam. xxii.; Psa. xviii.); the last words of David (2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7). Indeed, special reference is made (2 Sam. i. 18) to such a work, known as the Book of Jasher. (6) There is no reason to doubt, and good reason to believe, that oral tradition supplied the compiler with some of his material. All this is of great importance for any careful study of the Old Testament histories.

6. We come now to the last and most important feature, namely, the prophetic character of the Old Testament histories; and it is here that they part company with the writings of all other nations. The word 'prophetic' is to be used in a broader sense than as meaning 'predictive.' Prophecy has been well defined as 'the declaration and illustration of the principles of Divine government,' and we must not forget that there was a prophecy of the past and present as well as of the future. When the man of God looked about him, and saw this condition of things here, and that condition there; when he assured those within the reach of his voice that the one was contrary to God's will, and that God was already sending upon them punishment because of it: that the other was as God would have it, and that the marks of Divine favour were already apparent, we may call this the prophecy of the present.

When one, inspired from above, recalled how God led individuals or nations, and writes the record of the past, the patriarch's devotion to the Almighty and his reward, or the nation's apostasy and the slavery into which it plunged them: a king's crime, with its severe and long-drawn-out punishment, a royal prayer, a miraculous deliverance, a prophet's mission, a city turned from sin—when he writes this down for the encouragement or warning of his friends and countrymen, and of those who are to follow him, we may call it a prophecy of the past.

Now, the chief characteristic of Hebrew history, the thing which is, above all else, peculiar to it, is this prophetical element. The fact is, these so-called historical books are not history at all (this does not mean that they are not historical); they are prophecy of the truest

and strictest kind. This point must be treated very briefly. (1) In the Hebrew Bible, the historical books are called 'prophets,' classified with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest, and thus distinguished, on the one hand, from the 'law,' and, on the other, from the 'writings' (Psalms, Job, etc.). (2) The material is everywhere prophetic in its character. Nothing is written down to serve any other than a religious purpose. (*a*) The Book of Judges describes 'the collapse of the Israelitish policy, the occasion of the collapse, namely, Israel's apostasy, and the treatment of Israel by her oppressors as the consequence of the collapse. All this is religious; it is preaching of the highest order. Every distinct narrative will be found to convey a religious lesson. (*b*) Consider the leading topics in 1 Samuel: the contrast between Samuel and the sons of Eli; Samuel's steady growth; Eli's weak character; the decay of religion; punishment of sin, as seen in the loss of the ark; the manifestation of Jehovah's power in defence of His ark; the wilfulness and superstition of Saul; the providential escapes of David; the gradual hardening of Saul's heart, etc. (*c*) Recall the great story of 2 Samuel, the sin of David and the punishment which followed, a story to which everything else is made subordinate. (*d*) In the Book of Kings this is seen not only in the prominence given to the work of the prophets, especially Elijah and Elisha, but also in the almost monotonous 'he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord,' or, 'he did that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord,' a judgment always based on prophetic insight. (3) The form and spirit of the material, as well as the material itself, furnishes evidence of this. There is not space here for a detailed comparison of the Hebrew historical writings with those of other nations, but if such a comparison could be instituted with, for example, the Assyrian and Babylonian material, what would it show? Many are now familiar with the character and contents of the Assyrian records, fragmentary, full of idle boasting, given chiefly to the describing of scenes of blood and pillage, lists of kings conquered, lists of mountains ascended, of rivers crossed, of countries subdued; without aim or purpose, save to boast; with no common bond; statistical records, not history; in almost every sense disappointing.

Put side by side with these records those of the Hebrews, complete from the point of view of the writer, that only being omitted which did not serve the great purpose of his work; containing, all told, less of the spirit of egotistical bravado than will be found in a single column of an Assyrian inscription; battles, to be sure, but battles which were fought for principles; statistics, to be sure, but only those which had to do with the interests of the kingdom of

God; from beginning to end written with a single purpose in view, and that to teach men (men of all times) how to live, how not to live; holding up as examples of the punishment which follows sin the lives of the nation's most revered leaders. The result of such a comparison, with whatever literature it may be made, will be the same, namely, to show the presence of a 'something' in the Hebrew historical writings which no other historical writings contain. That something is the prophetic element. The Old Testament pages with this element omitted would be as commonplace, as unsatisfactory, in short, as human, as the records of all other ancient nations are to-day.

The Old Testament histories, so far as concerns their literary form and character, when judged by the standard of modern historiography, show, it must be conceded, certain defects; but these defects, when examined, prove to be the necessary accompaniment of the ruling purpose of that history.

R. F. Horton concludes a careful consideration of the Old Testament History with the following remarks: 'We have seen, broadly speaking, that, regarded as historical compositions, they show the marks of an origin similar to that of most other ancient historical works. The writers, writing centuries after the events, rely upon existing records which were more or less contemporaneous with the things recorded in them. Using these historical materials, very much as historians use materials still, the writers endeavoured to extract from them a uniform and consistent narrative; but their endeavour is seldom quite successful, for a careful study of their books constantly reveals discrepancies which are best explained by recognising a combination of different sources. . . . From all this we are bound to infer that Inspired History is not history which in its method of composition and infallibility of detail is marked off from other Ancient History.'

NEW TESTAMENT.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

HISTORY A SECONDARY FEATURE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE New Testament records cover but a brief space of time, as compared with the long ages that are treated in the Old Testament. All the books of the New Testament, if actually written by those whose names they bear, must have been composed well within the first hundred years after the birth of Christ; and as the creation of a Christian literature could hardly have begun before A.D. 40, the New Testament represents the treasures preserved for us from the writings of only about fifty years.

Very few disputable questions of history, or chronology, are introduced, and those which do occur are chiefly associated with inexact quotations from the older Scriptures, or with the cases in which the Old Testament records are themselves uncertain.

Of our Lord's life, the only important disputable matters are, the exact date of His birth, and the precise length of His active ministry. As the Evangelists do not seem to have designed a strict chronological setting of the incidents of our Lord's life, it has been found impossible to construct any chronological order that can be universally acceptable, by fitting together the accounts of the four Evangelists. There are evident instances of duplicate records, but we may err in making statements that are nearly alike memorials of but *one* event.

The epistles bear very slight relation to history, and do but help to fix some of the dates given in the Acts of the Apostles.

It should be understood that the paragraphs contained in the following section are not strictly historical, but come under the heading which is chosen for the entire section, including both the Old and the New Testament—'Difficulties *relating to* Matters of History.'

Baptizing of Proselytes.

MATTHEW xxiii. 15: 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte.'

Difficulty.—*The rites associated with the admission of proselytes are not sufficiently known to form a ground for requiring any particular rite in cases of admission to the Christian Church.*

Explanation.—*Dean Plumptre* has collected what is known concerning these baptizing customs, which seem to apply to those who became proselytes of Righteousness, or, as they were also called, Proselytes of the Covenant, perfect Israelites. 'The proselyte was first catechized as to his motives. If these were satisfactory, he was first instructed as to the Divine protection of the Jewish people, and then circumcised. A special prayer was appointed to accompany the act of circumcision. Often the proselyte took a new name, opening the Hebrew Bible and accepting the first that came.

'All this, however, was not enough. The "convert" was still a "stranger." His children would be counted as bastards—*i.e.*, aliens. Baptism was required to complete his admission. When the wound (of circumcision) was healed, he was stripped of all his clothes in the presence of the three witnesses who had acted as his teachers, and who now acted as his sponsors, the "fathers" of the proselyte, and led into the tank or pool. As he stood there up to his neck in water, they repeated the great commandments of the Law. These he promised and vowed to keep, and then, with an accompanying benediction, he plunged under the water. To leave one handbreadth of his body unsubmerged would have vitiated the whole rite. The Rabbis carried back the origin of the baptism to a remote antiquity, finding it in the command of Jacob (Gen. xxxv. 2), and of Moses (Exod. xix. 10). The Targum of the Pseudo-Jonathan inserts the word "Thou shalt circumcise and *baptize*" in Exod. xii. 44. Even in the Ethiopic version of Matt. xxiii. 15, we find "compass sea and land to *baptize* one proselyte."'

But the questions which present difficulty are these: Was this ritual observed as early as the commencement of the first century? If so, was the baptism of John, or that of the Christian Church, in any way derived from, or connected with, the baptism of proselytes?

The following conclusions are arrived at by Dean Plumptre in a careful review of the materials that are at command: (1) There is no *direct* evidence of the practice being in use before the destruction of Jerusalem. The statements of the Talmud as to its having come

from the fathers, and their exegesis of the Old Testament in connection with it, are alike destitute of authority. (2) The negative argument, drawn from the silence of the Old Testament, of the Apocrypha, of Philo, and of Josephus, is almost decisive against the belief that there was in their time a baptism of proselytes, with as much importance attached to it as we find in the Talmudists.

This must therefore be admitted: the supposed Jewish ritual of baptism, before the time of Christ, is a matter of *presumption*, and not of *evidence*. The Christian rite cannot be safely founded on a mere assumption. Its authorization must be obtained in some other direction.

In further support of a position which may occasion some surprise, reference may be made to a note by *Dean Mansel*, who says: 'The Rabbinical writers represent the admission of proselytes as consisting of three successive steps—circumcision, baptism and sacrifice. The baptism of proselytes was regarded by the latter Rabbis as equally necessary with circumcision, but it is probable that in earlier times it was merely a purification, preliminary to the offering of sacrifice such as is enjoined in other cases. After the destruction of the Temple, when the sacrifice was no longer possible, the baptism seems to have assumed the character of an independent and essential rite, with special reference to the initiation of proselytes; but there is no evidence of its having had this character at earlier periods; and the absence of all mention of it in the Old Testament, or in any works written while the Temple was standing, may be regarded at least as a proof that it had not at that time assumed the importance which was afterwards attached to it.

'On these grounds it is concluded by Leyrer that the baptism of John was not directly derived from that administered to proselytes, though the same idea, that of repentance and conversion from spiritual uncleanness, was symbolized by both. But this symbolism may be also found in the purification commanded by the Mosaic Law, and it is probably to these, and to the figurative language of the prophets, that we should look to find a precedent for the baptism with water unto repentance administered by the forerunner of Christ.'

The Accounts of Saul's Conversion.

ACTS ix. 7: 'And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.'

ACTS xxii. 9: 'And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of Him that spake to me.'

ACTS xxvi. 14: 'And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language.'

Question.—*Do the differences in these narratives amount to discrepancies, which imperil the historical truthfulness of the records?*

Answer.—In such records of incidents as are given us in our daily newspapers we constantly find similar differences, which often amount to discrepancies and contradictions; but we readily allow such things to pass by, and never think of letting them spoil our general impression of the truth of the narrators. Each man will see things from his own standpoint, and only see what is in the field of his vision. Each man sees what he is disposed to see, and puts something of himself into his seeing. Absolute correctness belongs to no man's testimony, based on personal observation. We accept this fact universally, and so complete one man's witness by the witness of other men. We are constantly making efforts to see things all round; to see them from various points of view. We need not, therefore, wonder at the very slight diversity in the narratives of Paul's conversion.

The accounts given by Paul himself, in his two speeches, are in complete harmony: only the early one, given in a quieter mood, is more full and precise. In it he declares that the people did not hear, in such a way as to comprehend, the voice which he himself heard, and comprehended. In the latter speech he says *he* heard the voice, but does not make any remark about the people, leaving us to assume that he heard the voice, and they did not.

The Evangelist Luke seems to contradict this by declaring that the men who journeyed with him *heard a voice.* The passages, however, can be readily harmonized by understanding Luke to say the men heard a noise, as of a man's voice, but they did not comprehend what the voice uttered. 'They did not hear the words—could attach no meaning to the sounds which for Saul himself had so profound a significance.'

Olshausen says: 'How this difference is to be explained, in accordance with the principle that literal agreement must exist between the different narratives of Holy Writ, I do not see.' But his translator puts the following footnote: 'Surely the discrepancies commented upon

by the author are merely apparent, and too much has been made of them. The two statements: "they heard a voice but saw no man," and "they heard nothing, but saw the light," are by no means opposed to one another; for surely they might see the light and yet see no person, and they might hear the voice so far as the sounds of it were concerned, and yet not hear the words which were addressed to Paul. The two statements combined intimate that they saw the light, but saw not the person of Jesus, that they heard the sound of His voice, but did not catch His words.'

The Fate of Judas Iscariot.

MATTHEW xxvii. 3-8: 'Then Judas, which betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I betrayed innocent blood. But they said, What is that to us? see thou to it. And he cast down the pieces of silver into the sanctuary, and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.'

ACTS i. 18, 19: 'Now this man obtained a field with the reward of his iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it became known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch that in their language that field was called Akeldama, that is, The field of blood.'

Difficulty.—*Both the manner of Judas' death, and the circumstances of the purchase of the field, are so distinctly different as to be irreconcilable in any natural and unforced way.*

Explanation.—This must be granted. But it is evident that, upon such a matter, the Apostles would have no direct and personal knowledge; they would be wholly dependent on current reports, the gossip of the day, which was as inexact, and uncertain, as we well know it to be now. Peter's account wholly differs from Matthew's. Peter says Judas obtained the field, Matthew says, the chief priests bought the field with the money that Judas flung down. Peter says: Judas fell and killed himself in the field he had obtained; but Matthew says he hanged himself, and Matthew does not connect the death with the field; but naturally connects the name of the field with the betrayal of Jesus to His death.

If these two narratives were given in any ordinary book, we should at once say, that Matthew's account is manifestly the historical one, and Peter's the legendary and untrustworthy.

Professor Hackett gives the accepted harmonizing of the passages, which is, however, too strained and unnatural, to be readily accepted. 'These passages do not necessarily contradict each other. Matthew does not say that Judas, after having hanged himself, *did not* fall to

the ground, nor, on the contrary, does Luke say that Judas *did not* hang himself before he fell to the ground: and unless the writers affirm the reality of the events which they respectively mention in such a way as to assert or imply that if the one event be true the other must be false, it is obvious that they do not contradict each other. Of the precise relation of the two events in question to each other we have no information, and can affirm nothing with certainty. Some intermediate circumstance connected the one with the other as parts of the same transaction, but that circumstance has not been recorded. It is conjectured that Judas may have hung himself on the edge of a precipice near the valley of Hinnom, and that, the rope breaking by which he was suspended, he fell to the earth and was dashed to pieces. As I stood in this valley, and looked up to the rocky heights which hang over it on the south side of Jerusalem, I felt that the proposed explanation was a perfectly natural one; I was more than ever satisfied with it. I measured the precipitous, almost perpendicular walls, in different places, and found the height to be variously 40, 36, 33, 30, and 25 feet. Olive-trees still grow quite near the edge of these rocks, and, anciently, no doubt, these and other trees were still more numerous in the same place. At the bottom of these precipices are also rocky ledges on which a person would fall from above, and in that case not only would life be destroyed, but the body almost inevitably would be bruised and mangled.'

Dean Plumptre regards Acts i. 18, 19, as not an integral part of Peter's speech, but a note of explanation inserted by the historian: 'The whole passage must be regarded as a note of the historian, not as part of the speech of Peter. It was not likely that he, speaking to disciples, all of whom knew the Aramaic, or the popular Hebrew of Palestine, should stop to explain that Aceldama meant, "in their proper tongue," the Field of Blood.' 'The horrors recorded in Acts may have been caused by the self-murderer's want of skill, or the trembling agony that could not tie the noose firm enough.' *Olshausen* takes the view that verses 18, 19, do not belong to the original speech of Peter. He says: 'Rather than give assent to forced interpretations, we would prefer the supposition that a twofold tradition obtained concerning the fate of Judas, since in such secondary matters, disparities otherwise occur. Yet we must confess that the accounts may be so connected as to permit the conjecture that Judas hanged himself, and falling down, was so injured that his bowels gushed out.'

Buxtorf suggests that the expression of St. Matthew, 'hanged

himself,' might be rendered 'he was choked,' as if by asphyxia, from over-excitement and anguish. He says the Jews have so explained the end of Ahithophel, and that a like explanation might suit in the Gospel. *St. Chrysostom* uses the expression *to be strangled by conscience.* But these views suggest even more serious difficulties.

Theophylact seems to think there were two acts of suicide, one abortive and one successful, and by the aid of this suggestion reconciles the two accounts. He says the rope broke on the first attempt, and, after the resurrection of Christ, Judas flung himself off some height.

Alford says: 'The various attempts to reconcile the two narratives, which may be seen in most of our English commentaries, are among the saddest examples of the shifts to which otherwise high-minded men are driven by an unworthy system.' *Alford* thinks Luke's account in the Acts is precise, and that in Matthew general. 'It is obvious that, while the general term used by Matthew points mainly at *self-murder*, the account given in Acts does not preclude the catastrophe related having happened, in some way, as a Divine Judgment, during *the suicidal attempt.* Further than this, with our present knowledge, we cannot go.'

The Fate of Herod Agrippa.

ACTS xii. 23: 'And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.'

Difficulty.—*The description of the disease from which Herod suffered is not consistent with the sudden death that seems to be implied.*

Explanation.—It should always be borne in mind that the descriptions of disease given in Scripture are not strictly scientific. They represent ordinary observation, and, in such a case as that of Herod Agrippa, reproduce the talk of the court rather than any proper medical report, or any precise and direct knowledge of the Christian disciples. There are similar accounts of the deaths of men who have been infamous for their persecuting zeal, and there is a common notion that a kind of poetical justice is done when the persecutor who has tortured the bodies of others himself dies a miserable, degrading, and painful death. There are many cases in which historical truth is sacrificed for the sake of this sentiment concerning what *ought* to have happened. *Francis Jacox* has collected a number of illustrations of these 'retributive surprises.' 'So fond is popular history of teaching this sort of philosophy by examples, that examples

to the purpose are widely accepted which are not yet historical. Cardinal Balue, under Louis XI., is pointed out in his iron cage as a malignant inventor punished in and through his own invention; but Michelet has exposed the fallacy of supposing Balue the inventor of those iron cages, which had long been known in Italy. The French doctor Guillotïn is even now not uncommonly believed to have perished in the reign of terror by the instrument invented by, and named after, him; whereas he quietly died in his bed many, many years later than that.' But it is more to the point to recall how the persecuted Protestants in the active times of the Inquisition delighted at the reports that the leading Inquisitors had died dreadful and degrading deaths.

Herod the Great died of some terrible form of internal ulceration and corruption, and so did some of the most violent and self-indulgent of the Roman emperors. Without more careful and scientific description it would seem to be impossible to identify the disease. It is very doubtful whether there is such a disease as phthiriasis, or morbus pedicularis, which is usually assumed as the disease of Herod Agrippa; but peculiarly painful and offensive suffering sometimes ends the lives of those who have been unusually vicious.

In the case of Herod Agrippa we must distinguish between what the Bible states and what the reader assumes. The language of Luke is very general. He merely narrates signs of a sudden attack on the day when a grand state audience was given, the rapid development of disease, its taking revolting forms, and the patient's ultimate death. What is assumed, but not stated, by the writer, is that the beginning of the disease was on the day of audience, and that the death of the patient occurred on the day that he was smitten. However rapidly the disease may have progressed, all ulcerous and cancerous affections require certain time for development, and there is no reason why the miraculous features of this Divine judgment should be unduly extended.

Farrar says: 'The death of Herod Agrippa, like that of his grandfather, has been ascribed to phthiriasis, but not by the sacred historians. It is, however, an historic fact that many cruel tyrants have died of ulcerous maladies, which the popular rumour described much as Lactantius describes them in his tract *De Mortibus Persecutorum.* Instances are Pheretima (Herodotus), Antiochus Epiphanes (Maccabees II.), Herod the Great (Josephus), Maximius Galerius (Eusebius), Maximin (Eusebius), Claudius Lucius Herminianus (Tertullian), Duke of Alva, etc.'

Dr. Oswald Dykes, after referring to the blasphemous flattery of

the people, says: 'Presently, even as his ears drank in, well pleased, the impious homage, he was struck where he sat with sudden illness. An angel from God smote him, says St. Luke. In a state of violent pain he had to be carried from the theatre to his palace, a dying man. After this shocking interruption to the ceremony the crowd broke up in consternation. The town went into mourning. For *five days* long the king lay in the grip of his horrible and excruciating malady. On August 6 the king was dead. Then the false and heartless mob that had been ready to worship the sovereign while he lived, and had filled the streets with pretended lamentations for his seizure, gave themselves up, troops and populace together, to the most indecent and open rejoicings over his decease, toasting the tyrant's end in public banquets, and heaping cowardly and brutal insults on the royal princesses. So, amid lies and shame and execration, there passed away into corruption and the grave the godlike Herod.' For these facts the authority of Josephus may be cited. Dr. Dykes goes on to ask: 'Why should this old-world story be rehearsed in Sacred Writ? Is it that there was anything miraculous in this man's illness? or that putrid internal ulcers, of which Antiochus Epiphanes and Herod the Great had both died before him, is a disease specially fit to scourge the royal persecutors of the faith? or that the sudden death of wicked men is always to be looked for and accepted as a special judgment from Almighty God? No; but to teach us that God the Avenger, with His spiritual ministers of judgment, stands as close beside wicked and impious sinners, even in the hour of their proudest success, as, in the night of the saint's trial, there stands by him the angel of deliverance. The hand of Him in whom we live can reach up to the loftiest to pluck them down from their seats, as well as down to the lowliest to uplift. If here again we are not often suffered to see the end as it was seen in the case of Herod Agrippa, if no such dramatic *dénouement* should point the moral of a selfish life, nor loathsome death follow always like a satire on the heels of pride, it is not because God's angel of wrath has not been standing all the while beside the chair of state, or at the board of luxury; it is only that the wicked are kept a little longer for the day of their judgment.'

The chief portions of Josephus' narrative may be given for the sake of readers who have no ready access to libraries: 'Now when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judæa, he came to the city Cæsarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower, and there he exhibited shows in honour of Cæsar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety.

At which festival a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity throughout his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning, at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a dread and shuddering over those that looked intently upon it, and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place and another from another (though not for his good), that he was a god. And they added: "Be thou merciful to us, for although we have hitherto reverenced thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature." Upon this the king did neither rebuke them nor reject their impious flattery. But as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting upon a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him, and fell into the deepest sorrow. A violent pain also arose in his belly, having begun with great severity. He therefore looked upon his friends and said: "I whom you call a god am commanded presently to depart this life, while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me, and I who was called by you immortal am immediately to be hurried away by death. But I am bound to accept what Providence allots, as it pleases God, for we have by no means lived ill, but in a splendid and happy manner." When he had said this his pain became violent. Accordingly he was carried into the palace, and the rumour went abroad everywhere that he would certainly die in a little time. . . . And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his bowels for five days, he departed this life.'

The Scripture account seems to recall the narrative of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, as given in 2 Maccabees ix. 5: 'The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an incurable and invisible plague, for as soon as he had spoken these words a pain of the bowels that was remediless came upon him, and sore torments of the inward parts . . . so that the worms rose up out of the body of this wicked man.'

Saul's Life from Conversion to Ministry.

GALATIANS i. 15-18: 'But when it was the good pleasure of God . . . . to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.'

Difficulty.—*Saul's account differs, in material points, from that given in Acts* ix. 19-30, *which seems to imply an early visit to Jerusalem, and actual preachings in the Holy City.*

Explanation.—It is evident that the record in the Acts is not to be taken as a full and detailed account. It has to be completed, and even fitted up, by the insertion, in their proper places, of the personal references found in the Epistles. It is not difficult to form a connected narrative of St. Paul's early movements, by a careful comparison of the various notices which have been preserved.

Immediately after his conversion, he retired into Arabia, by which is usually to be understood the Sinaitic peninsula, though the desert districts lying eastward of Damascus would have provided, abundantly, the seclusion he sought. The time of his retirement cannot be known. He mentions three years, but if this is to be dated from the time of his conversion, it included the time of preaching in Damascus, which occasioned such active persecution that his life was imperilled. From Arabia he returned to Damascus, where he had made friends. Probably he hesitated about going to Jerusalem, as the Christians there could not know what the brethren at Damascus did concerning him. He was compelled to escape from persecution by going into the dangerous surroundings of the Holy City.

The question which is most difficult to answer is this: Did Paul (or Saul) begin to preach in the synagogues of Damascus *immediately* after his conversion; and did he excite opposition in Damascus before he retired to Arabia? This would certainly be the first impression of a reader of the Acts (ix. 19-30); but it may fairly be doubted, because the retirement would be sought for purposes of mental and spiritual preparation, and he was not likely to begin work before he felt prepared. The analogy of Moses, who had his desert experience before beginning his active ministry; and the case of our Lord, who retired into the wilderness districts immediately on His ordination to His mission, prepare us to expect that Saul (or Paul) would retire for spiritual preparations as soon as the new conviction had given fresh character to his life. There was so much he needed to think over.

Farrar takes this view, and gives reasons for his opinion drawn from the probable mental moods of the Apostle. 'A multitude of writers have assumed that St. Paul first preached at Damascus, then retired to Arabia, and then returned, with increased zeal and power, to preach in Damascus once more. Not only is St. Paul's own language unfavourable to such a view, but it seems to exclude it. What would all psychological considerations lead us to think likely in the case of one circumstanced as Saul of Tarsus was after his sudden and strange conversion? The *least* likely course—the one which would place him at the greatest distance from all deep and earnest spirits who have passed through a similar crisis—would be for him to have plunged at once into the arena of controversy, and to have passed, without pause or breathing-space, from the position of a leading persecutor into that of a prominent champion. In case of men of shallow nature, or superficial convictions, such a proceeding is possible; but we cannot imagine it of St. Paul. It is not thus with souls which have been arrested in mid-career by the heart-searching voice of God. Just as an eagle which has been drenched and battered by some fierce storm will alight to plume its ruffled wings, so when a great soul has "passed through fire and through water" it needs some safe and quiet place in which to rest. The lifelong convictions of any man may be reversed in an instant, and that sudden reversion often causes a marvellous change; but it is never in an instant that the whole *nature* and *character* of a man are transformed from what they were before. It is difficult to conceive of any change more total, any rift of difference more deep, than that which separated Saul the persecutor from Paul the Apostle; and we are sure that—like Moses, like Elijah, like our Lord Himself, like almost every great soul in ancient or modern times to whom has been entrusted the task of swaying the destinies by moulding the convictions of mankind—like Sakya Mouni, like Mahomet in the cave of Hira, like St. Francis of Assisi in his sickness, like Luther in the monastery of Erfurt—he would need a quiet period in which to elaborate his thoughts, to still the tumult of his emotions, to commune in silence and secrecy with his own soul. It was necessary for him to understand the Scriptures; to co-ordinate his old with his new beliefs. It is hardly too much to say that if Saul—ignorant as yet of many essential truths of Christianity, alien as yet from the experience of its deepest power—had begun at once to argue with and to preach to others, he could hardly have done the work he did. To suppose that the truths of which afterwards he became the appointed teacher were all revealed to him as by one flash of light in all their fulness is to suppose that which

is alien to God's dealings with the human soul, and which utterly contradicts the phenomena of that long series of Epistles in which we watch the progress of his thoughts. Even on grounds of historic probability, it seems unlikely that Saul should at once have been able to substitute a propaganda for an inquisition. Under such circumstances it would have been difficult for the brethren to trust, and still more difficult for the Jews to tolerate him. The latter would have treated him as a shameless renegade, the former would have mistrusted him as a secret spy.'

Professor Findlay says: 'The place of the Arabian journey seems to us to lie between verses 21 and 22 of Acts ix. That passage gives a twofold description of Paul's preaching in Damascus, in its earlier and later stages, with a double note of time (verses 19 and 23). Saul's first testimony, taking place "straightway," was, one would presume, a mere declaration of faith in Jesus: "In the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus (saying) that He is the Son of God" (R.V.), language in striking harmony with that of the Apostle in the text, Gal. i. 12, 16. Verse 22 presents a different situation. Paul is now preaching in his established and characteristic style.'

The First Christian Council.

ACTS xv. 6: 'And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter.'

Question.—*Did the Apostles and elders, at this first council, assume authority over the Churches?*

Answer.—The founders of the early Christian Church were Jews, born into, and trained in, Jewish associations. When they had to organize the Christian disciples, and arrange for the order and government of the new church, they could but take as models the system with which they were familiar. When separate worship had to be organized, it was inevitable that Christian services would be modelled on the pattern of synagogue services, such modifications or additions being made as the fresh circumstances and feelings demanded. In the same way, when churches arose in various places, and Christians, widely separated from each other, needed some central bond of unity, and some outside authority to settle questions of doctrine, and some direction towards securing uniformity of ritual, it was inevitable that a council should be formed, similar to the familiar council which regulated the ecclesiastical opinions and practices of Judaism.

Some knowledge of the Jewish Council will therefore help us in

an effort to understand the Council formed in the early Church. In a previous passage, the Sanhedrin has been fully described; and it is only necessary to add that every town, even every village, in Palestine, had a little local Sanhedrin of seven members, the seven who conducted the synagogue. Among these seven were three leaders, called *triumvirs*, who decided by themselves unimportant causes. They settled questions of inheritance. 'The triumvirs,' says Maimonides, 'ought to have seven qualifications: wisdom, gentleness, piety, hatred of mammon, love of truth; they should be loved of men, and be of good repute.' The seven were entrusted with the police of the town or village, and judged all causes not involving capital punishment.

The officers of a synagogue formed a college of *elders*. With their head they became a kind of *chapter*, managing the affairs of the synagogue, and possessing the power of excommunicating. Elders, in this sense, seem to have been appointed for what may be called the 'Christian Synagogue.' Only some of the Apostles remained at Jerusalem, and they would naturally be joined with the elders in the practical management of the Christian community. What is to be specially noticed is, that no authority on other churches was demanded by the Christian Council at Jerusalem. They only *advised* what was most suitable; and even the advice did not come from the officials, but from the whole body of the Church, which acted under their direction. So far as we can gather, the first council claimed no authority beyond that which came from the fact that the first organized Christian community was formed at Jerusalem, and had the advantage of the advice and counsel of the Apostles who had been with Jesus.

'It will be seen at once how closely the organization of the synagogue was reproduced in that of the Ecclesia. Here also there was the single presbyter-bishop in small towns, a council of presbyters under one head in large cities. The *legatus* of the synagogue appears in the *angelos*, perhaps also in the *apostolos*, of the Christian Church. The presbyters, or elders, discharged functions which were essentially episcopal—that is, involving pastoral superintendence. The existence of a body bearing the name of "elders" is implied in the narrative of Ananias (Acts v. 6). The order itself is recognised in Acts xi. 30, and takes part in the deliberations of the Church at Jerusalem in Acts xv. It is transferred by Paul and Barnabas to the Gentile Churches in their first missionary journey (Acts xiv. 23). Of the order in which the first elders were appointed, as of the occasion which led to the institution of the office, we have no record.'

What is quite clear is, that the authority belonging to the first Christian Council was the authority belonging to a *conference*, not to any individuals, or to any official position. Conferences and councils can never assert dominion over faith and ritual, save in a very limited sense. They cannot, indeed, be unanimous enough to claim more than the right of a majority. Their decisions always have this possible weakness in them—the right may be on the side of the few who dissent, or withhold their opposition. The result of a conference must always be submitted to the judgment, and voluntary acceptance, of those whom it may concern.

Dr. Dykes skilfully shows in what an informal way the early Church gained its organization. 'It is true that from the first there was order, for order is essential to healthy life. Without order of some sort there could have been no discipline, and Ananias and Simon show that from the first discipline was indispensable. It is no less true that as the church grew more independent of the synagogue, and realized better its corporate unity, officers were multiplied, regulations were laid down, and a polity and an order of worship became inevitable. The Church took its external mould under the slow pressure of providences. So far indeed was the Church from being launched in its perfect or final shape, that it is extremely difficult to say at what point of its slow development it really became the Church at all. In fact, it might be said that not till Jerusalem had welcomed Antioch, and Antioch greeted Jerusalem, was there really and truly a Church free of Mosaism or Catholic for all men. Even after this point was reached, questions of organization and legislation, about office-bearers, liturgy, discipline, and the like points of controversy, still slumbered among the unstirred difficulties of the future.'

Dean Plumptre says of this conference: 'The meeting rightly takes its place as the first in the long series of councils, or synods, which mark the course of the Church's history. It bore its witness that the government of the Christian Society was not to rest in the autocracy of a single will, but in the deliberative decision of those who, directly or indirectly, having been appointed by the choice, or with the approval, of the people, represented the whole community. Presbyters had an equal voice with the Apostles, whose position was analogous to that of the later bishops. Those whom we should call the laity were present at the deliberations, and, though we have no proof that they took part in them, gave their vote.'

The Situation of Golgotha.

MATTHEW xxvii. 33: 'And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull.'

Question.—*Can the late identification of this place, by the shape of a mound resembling a skull, be reasonably accepted?*

Answer.—This place is not mentioned by any Jewish writer, and until quite recently the position was wholly a matter of conjecture. 'A fourth century tradition identifies the spot with the building known as the Church of the Sepulchre. One eminent archæologist of our time (Mr. James Fergusson) identifies it with the Dome of the Rock in the Mosque of El Aksa. Both sites were then outside the city, but were afterwards enclosed by the third wall, built by Agrippa II.

There can be no doubt that the place was named Golgotha on account of its skull-like shape, and efforts have been directed to the discovery of such a mound or hillock, near the city. *Kitto* gives suggestive hints to those who make a search for it, when he says: 'The place of execution was always outside the walls of towns. At Jerusalem it was upon a swell of ground called Golgotha—the place of a skull—some say on account of the skulls of dead criminals that lay about there, forgetting that the Jews never suffered the bodies or bones even of criminals to remain unburied. The name was therefore, doubtless, derived from the skull-like shape of the hill; for we are not bound to credit the tradition, that it was thus named because the skull of Adam had been found there.' This tradition adds, that as the blood flowed from the sacred wounds on his skull his soul was translated to paradise.

Thenius was the first to suggest identification with the rocky knoll to the west of Jeremiah's Grotto, and later explorers confirm his suggestion. Sir J. W. Dawson, Dr. Selah Merrill, C. R. Conder, and others, give good evidence of the skull-like features of the place, and we strongly incline to the view that the traditional site must be abandoned, and this accepted as the 'most sacred spot of earth,' where 'our dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all.'

Sir J. W. Dawson gives a careful record of his own personal observations, which convince us of the probability that the true site has been at last recovered. After showing that the execution must have taken place on the table-land north of the city, near the road leading from the Damascus, or St. Stephen's, Gate, which is probably the 'old gate' of Nehemiah, he says: 'There is, however, one

positive indication given by the Evangelists which is of the greatest significance, and that is the name which they all agree in giving to the place of crucifixion. This name is *Golgotha*, "the skull," and in its Greek form, *Kranion*, translated by the Latin *Calvary*. Three of the Evangelists translate the name as meaning "skull-place." Luke gives it simply as "skull." There is no reason to suppose that the name arose from skulls being there, which, indeed, would have been very unlikely, considering the laws and habits of the Jews; and the name is not "place of skulls," but "skull-place," or "skull." The most probable reason of the name is that the place was a knoll or rising ground, which by its form suggested the idea of a skull, and so received that name. Now there happens to be outside the north wall of the city, but near to it, about 100 yards distant, a knoll of rock, of rounded form, and covered with shallow soil and grass which, in its form, and certain old tombs, which simulate sockets of eyes, has a remarkable resemblance from some points of view to a skull partly buried in the ground. This resemblance has suggested itself to many observers, independently of any supposition that it is Golgotha. It is true that such resemblances depend very much on point of view, and direction of light. But these conditions, as is well known, add to the effect, for it flashes out upon us suddenly and strikingly when least expected; and it is this that excites the popular imagination, and often gives rise to a name.'

'Jewish traditions, first ascertained by Dr. Chaplin, and cited by Conder, show that this hill was anciently used as a place of execution, and it is not improbably the place where Stephen the proto-martyr was stoned. It is now quite unoccupied, except by some Moslem graves. It is further to be observed that this place fulfils all the other indications of the Evangelists. It is near to the city, between the ancient roads leading from the Damascus Gate and Herod's Gate, not distant from the site of the Prætorium, and having gardens and tombs close to it. It is also so situated as to command a view of the whole city and the Temple, and of the amphitheatre of surrounding hills, and there is no other place which fulfils all these conditions. Dr. Fisher Howe argues, in an able manner, in favour of this site. He quotes Van de Velde, Robinson, and other travellers, in support of his view; and I found that my friends, Dr. Merrill and Dr. Chaplin of Jerusalem, who are thoroughly acquainted with the topography of the city, were of the same opinion, and it was also adopted by the late General Gordon, who had carefully surveyed the ground, and had caused a model of the hill to be prepared by the sculptor Paulus, of which I have a copy now before me, which, as one turns

it around, and exposes it to different lights, admirably shows the peculiar and often startling effect of the features of the skull.'

Recent writers on the Life of Christ, who have had this suggested identification of Calvary before them, have exercised their judgments on it, and the results may be briefly summarized. The general result is decided approval.

Farrar says: 'The data for anything approaching to certainty are wholly wanting; and, in all probability, the actual spot lies buried and obliterated under the mountainous rubbish heaps of the ten-times-taken city. It is hardly worth while to enter into elaborate arguments about the site, which may any day be overthrown by a discovery of the course of the second wall.'

Edersheim says: 'We cannot here explain the various reasons for which the traditional site must be abandoned. Certain it is, that Golgotha was "outside the gate," and "near the city." In all likelihood, it was the usual place of execution. Lastly, we know that it was situated near gardens, where there were tombs, and close to the highway. The three last conditions point to the north of Jerusalem. It must be remembered that the third wall, which afterwards surrounded Jerusalem, was not built until several years after the Crucifixion. The new suburb of Bezetha extended at that time outside the second wall. Here the great highway passed northwards; close by were villas and gardens; and here also rock-hewn sepulchres have been discovered, which date from that period. But this is not all. The present Damascus Gate in the north of the city seems, in most ancient tradition, to have borne the name of St. Stephen's Gate, because the proto-martyr was believed to have passed through it to his stoning. Close by, then, must have been the place of execution. And at least one Jewish tradition fixes upon this very spot, close by what is known as the Grotto of Jeremiah, as the ancient "place of stoning" (*Beth ha Segilah*). And the description of the locality answers all requirements. It is a weird, dreary place, two or three minutes aside from the high-road, with a high, rounded, skull-like rocky plateau, and a sudden depression, or hollow, beneath, as if the jaws of that skull had opened. Whether or not the "tomb of the Herodian period in the rocky knoll to the west of Jeremiah's Grotto" was the most sacred spot on earth—the "Sepulchre in the Garden," we dare not positively assert, though every probability attaches to it.'

Vallings says: 'Golgotha may have been rightly identified with the rounded knoll near Jeremiah's Grotto, just outside the present Damascus Gate. But the excavation of the newly-discovered wall must be completed before opinion can utter its last word. The knoll

is higher than the sacred rock of the Temple. "A sort of amphitheatre is formed by the gentle slopes on the west; and the whole population of the city might easily witness from the vicinity anything taking place on the top of the cliff. The knoll is just beside the main north road." "The hill is now quite bare, with scanty grass covering its rocky soil." It has been discovered to be the traditional place of stoning. And the probability of the identification gains ground. It is generally agreed that it was the usual place of execution.'

Stalker thinks the name Golgotha probably refers to the ghastly relics of the tragedies happening at the usual place of execution, which might be lying about. And he asserts that the place cannot now be identified.

The *Speaker's Commentary*, in an Additional Note, vol. i., p. 190, argues strongly in favour of the traditional site, the evidence in support of which it considers to be strong, and well-nigh conclusive; the only disputable question being whether it was within, or outside the second wall of the city. But it is doubtful whether the suggestion of Thenius, which is given above, and so ably supported, has received due consideration from the writer.

Canon Liddon, after referring to Mr. Fergusson's curious notion, that the true site of the sepulchre was that of the present so-called Mosque of Omar in the Temple area, adds: 'A more plausible opinion, warmly upheld, among others, by the late General Gordon, is that it is in a garden at the foot of the striking hill which is just outside the Gate of Damascus. This site is so much more picturesque and imposing than the traditional one, that, had there been any evidence in its favour in Constantine's day, it would certainly have been adopted. The old belief is likely to hold its ground unless one thing should happen. We know that our Lord was crucified and buried outside the Gate of Jerusalem. If excavations ever should show that the second—that is, in our Lord's day, the outer—wall of the city embraced the site of the sepulchre within its circuit, then it would be certain that the traditional site is not the true one.'

Differing Records of our Lord's Infancy.

LUKE ii. 39: 'And when they had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.'

MATTHEW ii. 22, 23: 'But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned of God in dream, he withdrew into the parts of Galilee, and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth.'

Difficulty.—*Matthew and Luke distinctly differ as to the time and the circumstances of the return to Nazareth.*

Explanation.—Omissions should never be confused with contradictions. Fuller information on matters of detail in no way impugns the correctness of a general account of the leading facts. Luke fixes the fact that the return to Galilee was subsequent to the presentation in the Temple, but he says nothing concerning the interval between the presentation and the return. Sequence he affirms, but *immediate* sequence he does not affirm, though that would be our assumption, if we had his words only, and no correction through Matthew's record of intervening events.

It should always be borne in mind that the four Gospels are not lives of Christ in any such sense as we now attach to that term. They are properly 'reminiscences,' we might even say 'contributions towards the formation of a life of Christ,' and therefore completeness is not to be looked for, but the records preserved by each are to be skilfully fitted to the records given by the others.

This matter is an interesting one, because it shows the genuineness of each narrative, the independence of each Evangelist. Matthew could not have compared his work with Luke's, or Luke with Matthew's, or such a simple divergency would have been rectified.

From Matthew we can fill in the interval between the presentation and the renewed residence at Nazareth. It probably included the visit of the Magi, the massacre of the infants, the flight into Egypt, and the Divinely-guided return, with the reason for not making a permanent settlement in Bethlehem.

Farrar says all that need be said on this subject: 'It is difficult to believe that either of the Evangelists had seen the narrative of the other, because the *primâ facie* inference from either singly would be imperfectly correct. They *supplement* each other, because they each narrate the truth, though probably neither of them was aware of *all* that has been delivered to us.'

Dates of John's Imprisonment and Death.

MATTHEW xiv. 3: 'For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison, for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.'

Question.—*Will not a decision on these dates aid in settling the order of events in our Lord's life?*

The materials for forming a decision are not at command. No one has succeeded in putting the events of either John Baptist's life or our Lord's life into an order that can be universally accepted. We may, however, consider what materials can be supplied as a basis on which a judgment may be formed.

Comparing together Matt. iv. 12, 'Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee,' and Mark i. 14, 'Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,' we learn that the imprisonment of John took place a little time before our Lord's second visit to Galilee. For the incidents of that second visit, see John iv. 43-54.

Another point seems to be well defined. The Baptist was living at the time of our Lord's third visit to Galilee, for he sent two of his disciples with an inquiry while our Lord was preaching in the cities of Galilee (Matt. xi. 2). He seems to have been put to death soon after, for the tidings came to Jesus while in Galilee, and towards the close of His third visit. This will make John's imprisonment to have lasted nearly twelve months, and his death to have occurred in our Lord's second ministerial year.

Very much depends on the decision we make concerning the *feast* referred to in John v. 1, 'After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.' It is usual to regard this as a Passover, but Wieseler, and some other modern critics, think it was *Purim*. (See a later paragraph on the 'Unknown Feast.') Then we can only fit together the narratives by assuming that John's imprisonment only lasted three weeks or a month. In favour of this view, it may be added that so unscrupulous a woman as Herodias was not likely to wait twelve long months before getting her revenge.

Dr. E. R. Conder thinks the imprisonment must have lasted the greater part of two years, from May, A.D. 27, to the spring of A.D. 29, when he was put to death by the Tetrarch of Galilee, Herod Antipas. 'Assuming the Passover named in John vi. 4 to be that of A.D. 29 (and the *third* in our Lord's ministry), we infer the date of John's death from the following facts: The account of the imprisonment

and murder of John is given in Matt. xiv. 1-11, Mark vi. 14-29, introduced in both cases with the statement that Herod, hearing the fame of Jesus, concluded that John was risen from the dead (comp. Luke ix. 7-9). Matthew relates that John's disciples, having buried his corpse, brought the tidings of his death to Jesus, and that after hearing of it, 'Jesus departed thence by ship into a desert place apart' (Matt. xiv. 12, 13). Mark and Luke state this retreat to the desert to have been in company with the twelve, immediately on their return from their mission (Mark vi. 30-32; Luke ix. 10).'

All that can confidently be said is that John's death occurred towards the close of the second year of our Lord's ministry; and we incline to the view that the imprisonment had lasted but a brief period.

Philippi as a Colony.

ACTS xvi. 12: 'And from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a Roman colony.'

Question.—*In what sense was Philippi a colony, and what significance attaches to the mention of the fact?*

It is singular that St. Paul should appeal to his rights as a Roman citizen, and that the magistrates of Philippi should be so gravely anxious when they found out that they had scourged a Roman citizen. St. Paul's appeal, and the alarm of the magistrates, are only explained by the fact that Philippi enjoyed the privileges of a Roman colony.

The references to Philippi in contemporary profane history are but slight. It received its name from Philip, King of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great, who rebuilt and fortified it. Its fame was increased by the defeat in its neighbourhood of Brutus and Cassius by Augustus Cæsar and Antony in the year B.C. 42.

Pliny, the celebrated heathen historian, who flourished in the same century as Luke, and who could not be suspected of any sympathy with him or his despised religion, makes mention of Philippi as a colony. And a number of coins have been found, some testifying of Philippi under the character of a colony, and one in particular stating that Julius Cæsar himself bestowed on this city the dignity and privileges of a Roman colony, which was afterwards confirmed and augmented by Augustus. The full title, 'Colonia Augusta Julia Victrix Philippensium,' is found on inscriptions.

Archdeacon Farrar sums up briefly the history of this town, and gives an explanation of the relation in which it stood to neighbouring towns. (Its being called the chief city, as in A.V., has occasioned

difficulty, as it was in no sense a capital.) 'The city of Philippi was a monumental record of two vast empires. It had once been an obscure place, called Krenides from its streams and springs; but Philip, the father of Alexander, had made it a frontier town to protect Macedonia from the Thracians, and had helped to establish its power by the extremely profitable working of its neighbouring gold mines. Augustus, proud of the victory over Brutus and Cassius—won at the foot of the hill on which it stands, and on the summit of which Cassius had committed suicide—elevated it to the rank of a colony, which made it, as St. Luke calls it, if not *the* first, yet certainly "*a* first city of that district of Macedonia."' (*Bishop Wordsworth* reads: 'the chief city of the *frontier* of Macedonia.') 'And this, probably, was why St. Paul went directly to it. When Perseus, the last successor of Alexander, had been routed at Pydna (June 22, B.C. 168), Macedonia had been reduced to a Roman province in four divisions. These, in accordance with the astute and Machiavellic policy of Rome, were kept distinct from each other by differences of privilege and isolation of interests which tended to foster mutual jealousies. Beginning eastwards at the river Nestus, Macedonia Prima reached to the Strymon, Macedonia Secunda to the Axius, Macedonia Tertia to the Peneus, and Macedonia Quarta to Illyricum and Epirus. (So says Livy.) The capitals of these divisions respectively were Amphipolis, Thessalonica—at which the Proconsul of the entire province fixed his residence—Pella, and Pelagonia. It is a very reasonable conjecture that Paul, in answer to the appeal of the vision, had originally intended to visit—as, perhaps, he ultimately did visit—all four capitals. But Amphipolis, in spite of its historic celebrity, had sunk into comparative insignificance, and the proud colonial privileges of Philippi made it in reality the more important town.'

Conybeare and Howson give the characteristic features of a 'colony,' which was a miniature resemblance of Rome, its citizens sharing in the privileges of the citizens of Rome. 'The city of Rome might be transplanted, as it were, into various parts of the empire, and reproduced as a *colonia;* or an alien city might be adopted, under the title of a *municipium*,* into a close political communion with Rome. A Roman colony was very different from anything which we usually intend by the term. It was no mere mercantile factory, such as those which the Phœnicians established in Spain, or on those very shores of Macedonia with which we are now engaged, or such as modern nations have founded in the Hudson's Bay Territory, or on

* A *colonia* was Rome transplanted: a *municipium* was an alien city adopted.

the coast of India. Still less was it like those incoherent aggregates of human beings which *we* have thrown, without care or system, on distant islands and continents. It did not even go forth, as a young Greek republic left its parent state, carrying with it, indeed, the respect of a daughter for a mother, but entering upon a new and independent existence. The Roman colonies were primarily intended as military safeguards of the frontiers, and as checks upon insurgent provincials. Like the military roads, they were part of the great system of fortification by which the Empire was made safe. They served also as convenient possessions for rewarding veterans who had served in the wars, and for establishing freedmen and other Italians whom it was desirable to remove to a distance. The colonists went out with all the pride of Roman citizens to represent and reproduce the city in the midst of an alien population. Though the colonists, in addition to the poll tax which they paid as citizens, were compelled to pay a ground tax (for the land on which their city stood was provincial land, and therefore tributary, unless it were assimilated to Italy by a special exemption), yet they were entirely free from any intrusion by the governor of the province. Their affairs were regulated by their own magistrates. These officers were named Duumviri, and they took a pride in calling themselves by the Roman title of Prætors (*stratêgoi*).'

'By the Lex Portia (B.C. 247), Roman citizens were exempted from degrading punishment, such as that of scourging. It was the heaviest of all the charges brought by Cicero against Verres, the Governor of Sicily, that he had broken this law. The words *civis Romanus sum* (I am a Roman citizen) acted almost like a charm in stopping the violence of provincial magistrates. These *stratêgoi* at Philippi, when they found the prisoners were Romans, evidently did not consider that their ignorance would be regarded as a sufficient defence. They had acted illegally, and the consequence of that illegality went further than they counted on; but they could not, therefore, shake off their responsibility. They were liable to a prosecution.' (*Dean Plumptre.*)

History of Jewish Stoning.

ACTS vii. 59: 'And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.'

Question.—*How was it that the Sanhedrin could do with Stephen as they dare not do with the Lord Jesus Christ?*

Answer.—In all probability, the absence of the Roman procurator made this tumultuous stoning possible. If this is not a satisfactory

explanation—and some may say, that the Roman authority would be delegated to somebody, if the governor was absent—then we may regard the riot as an unexpected tumult, and both the people and the Sanhedrin acted under powerful and sudden excitement, without thinking of the consequences of their act. Then we must suppose that the authorities would make necessary explanations to the Roman ruler after the deed was done, excusing themselves on the ground of the uncontrollable excitement of the people.

Dean Plumptre says: 'The violence reported presents a singular contrast to the general observance of the forms of a fair trial in our Lord's condemnation. Then, however, we must remember, the Roman procurator was present in Jerusalem. Now, all restraint was removed, and fanaticism had full play. That neither office nor age was enough to guard, under such conditions, against shameful outrage has been seen even in the history of Christian assemblies, as, *e.g.*, in that of the Robber Synod of Ephesus, in A.D. 449. The facts in this case seem to imply that the accusers, and perhaps also the excited crowd which they represented, were present as listening to the speech, as well as the members of the Sanhedrin.'

To understand how such an informal execution could be possible, it is necessary to remember that there were two kinds of stoning permissible; an official stoning, and a tumultuous stoning. The methods of these differed in some important respects.

'Stoning to death was the ordinary capital punishment among the Jews, just as much as hanging is with us, decapitation in France and Germany, and strangulation in Spain. The manner of execution was as follows: A crier marched before the man who was to die, proclaiming his offence, and the names of the witnesses on whose testimony he had been committed. This was for the humane purpose of enabling anyone, possessing knowledge of the parties and the circumstances, to come forward and arrest the execution until his further evidence had been heard and considered. Hence, usually, the tribunal which had sentenced the prisoner remained sitting to hear such evidence as might thus be produced, and did not rise until certified that the execution had taken place. The place of execution was always outside the town. Arrived at the place, the convict was divested of his clothing, except a small covering about the loins; and, his hands being bound, he was taken to the top of some eminence—a tower, a building, or a cliff—not less than twice a man's height. When the top was reached, the witnesses laid their hands upon him, and then cast off their upper clothing, that they might be the more ready for the active exertion their position imposed

—being virtually that of executing the sentence which had been the result of their evidence. All being thus ready, one of the witnesses cast the condemned down from that high place with great violence, endeavouring to do it so that he should fall upon a large stone, which was designedly placed below. The fall usually rendered him insensible, if it did not kill him; but if he was not dead, those below turned him upon his back, and then the other witnesses, remaining above, cast down a large stone aimed at the chest. This stroke was generally mortal; but if not, the people below hastened to cast stones at him till no life remained. Thus the execution was quickly over, and was attended by fewer revolting circumstances than must have ensued from that indiscriminate pelting by the people, which is commonly supposed to have constituted the stoning to death.' (*From Kitto.*)

There are also many examples of a more tumultuous kind of stoning, when, without judicial procedure, the people seized stones at once to put to death those whom they deemed guilty of flagrant crime. This is said to have been called the 'Rebel's beating': and it appears to have been regarded as permissible in the case of blasphemy, when a sudden vindication of the dishonoured name of God seemed to be called for, and aroused feeling could not wait for any judicial process. In some cases, such as that of Naboth and that of Stephen, the tumultuous and the judicial seem to be blended: the forms of law merely giving a kind of sanction to the popular, or class, excitement. Of manifestly tumultuous stonings we may mention that of Adoram, tribute-master to Rehoboam. 'Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones that he died' (1 Kings xii. 18). Of our Lord it is said, 'Then took they up stones to cast at Him.' 'Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.' And in a riot raised at Lystra by certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, the people 'stoned Paul, and drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead' (Acts xiv. 19).

'It is noticeable that we first hear of death by stoning in the deserts of *stony* Arabia; this mode having been suggested probably by the abundance of stones, and the fatal effect with which they were often employed in broils among the people.' What seems probable is, that at first the people merely pelted the bound criminal with the stones lying about until he died. But as this was found to excite passion, and lead to painful and demoralising scenes, the executions were regulated, and subjected to orderly arrangements, the object of which was to bring the criminal to his end as expedi-

tiously as possible, and to divest the punishment of a tumultuary aspect.

Kitto points out the tumultuous character of the proceedings in the case of Stephen. 'The defence itself is interrupted by the ungovernable rage of those who heard it; and when Stephen declared that he saw Jesus standing at God's right hand, they stayed to hear no more, but rushed upon him, and hurried him away to death. The matter reached a point at which they might have felt authorised to act without the usual formalities. The words Stephen uttered sounded in their ears as rank blasphemy; and, when that was the case, the Jews seem always to have been ready to stone a man on the spot without any trial.'

There is nothing, therefore, in so unusual a case as this, inconsistent with the view that the Romans had divested the Sanhedrin of the sovereign power of inflicting capital punishment.

Precise Date of the Last Supper.

MATTHEW xxvi. 17: 'Now on the first day of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where wilt Thou that we make ready for Thee to eat the Passover?'

Difficulty.—*A comparison of the Gospel records leaves us uncertain whether the usual Passover-day was anticipated on this occasion or not.*

Explanation.—We shall see precisely what this difficulty is if we put together the passages referring to the matter from the four Gospels, giving them in the Revised Version.

Besides the text given above, as the heading of this paragraph, Matthew says: 'Now when even was come' (evidently, even of the 'first of unleavened bread'), 'He was sitting at meat with the twelve disciples.' The day following was clearly not one of the feast days, since the arrest and trial and crucifixion were all completed before the sacred festal Sabbath day began.

But this suggests some further inquiries. Was the Passover meal always the eve of a Sabbath day? or did it only so happen on this particular year? If *all* the people observed the Passover on the same day as Jesus and His disciples did, we are landed in this very practical difficulty—the feast-time then began, and the next day was a sacred feast day; and we know that the high priest's party advised strongly against arresting Jesus 'on the feast day,' lest there should be an uproar of the people (Matt. xxvi. 5).

On the face of it, the reasonable suggestion certainly is, that Christ

anticipated the usual Passover-time, and observed the ordinance a day earlier. Only in the light of very clear proofs can this, our first impression, be removed.

Mark's references are precisely similar to those in Matthew.

Luke is more precise. 'Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.' 'And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the Passover must be sacrificed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the Passover, that we may eat.' We should certainly gather from this that the day was the *usual* day, and that our Lord kept the Passover when everybody else kept it.

John's record creates the great difficulty. Writing of procedures after the examination of Christ before the Sanhedrin, he says: 'They lead Jesus, therefore, from Caiaphas into the palace: and it was early; and they themselves entered not into the palace, that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.' The chief priests and the members of the Sanhedrin could not have partaken of the Passover at the same time as Jesus and His disciples, for it is clearly stated that they were anxiously keeping themselves undefiled in expectation of eating the Passover that night.

Matthew and John, the Evangelists who had personal knowledge of Christ's doings, and Mark, who represents Peter, who also had personal knowledge, can be fitted to the idea that our Lord anticipated the usual day, and held His Passover on the day previously. Luke's materials are second-hand, and if there is lack of precision anywhere, we may expect it in his *collection* rather than in the *reminiscences* of his fellow-Evangelists. But, examining Luke's expression carefully, we find it is more general than it appeared at first sight. His reference is fully satisfied if we take him to mean '*a* day of unleavened bread,' 'the time of the Passover sacrifice.'

This difficulty has been elaborately discussed by many Bible writers, but it will be of practical service to our readers if we take out the chief matters of fact and of argument, and present them as clearly and briefly as possible.

Dean Mansel carefully explains what may be meant by 'the first (day) of unleavened bread': 'Legally, the first day of unleavened bread was the *fifteenth* day of Nisan or Abib, commencing on the evening of the *fourteenth* day, after the Paschal lamb was eaten; and the feast of unleavened bread lasted seven days, till the evening of the twenty-first day of the month. *Josephus* speaks of the feast of unleavened bread as beginning on the fifteenth day of the month, the legal day commencing after sunset. But the day meant in Matt.

xxvi. 17 is clearly the fourteenth, being that on which the Passover was slain (Mark xiv. 12; Luke xxii. 7), which is also spoken of by Josephus in another place as the beginning of the feast of unleavened bread. On this day it was usual, though not necessary, to abstain from leaven; and by including it, the feast was sometimes reckoned as lasting eight days. A question may arise respecting the part of the day to which the Evangelist's words refer. If to the legal beginning—*i.e.*, to the evening following the sunset of the *thirteenth*—it is possible that the preparation might be made, and the Passover eaten by our Lord and His disciples *a day earlier* than the usual time. And this is, perhaps, the most natural mode of reconciling the account of the Synoptists with that of St. John.' 'According to the Mishna, it was customary in Judæa to work till noon on the day preceding the Passover—*i.e.*, Nisan 14—whereas in Galilee no work at all was done on that day, though the schools of Shammai and Hillel differed as to the lawfulness of work on the preceding evening. If this statement represents the practice in our Saviour's time, it would be natural for the disciples, who were Galilæans, even if they took the more liberal view as regards the evening, to commence their preparation immediately after sunset on the thirteenth—*i.e.*, at the legal commencement of the fourteenth—though the Jews of Judæa might postpone their task till the following morning. The disciples, in asking their question, may have had a view to a Passover to be eaten on the following day, though our Lord Himself gave directions for its being eaten the *same evening*.'

Dr. E. R. Conder argues strongly for our Lord's observance of the Passover on the usual day, Nisan 14, and endeavours to explain how it is that John fixes the day of the Crucifixion as Nisan 14, the day on which the Paschal lambs were sacrificed, so that the Last Supper took place on the evening of Nisan 13. His arguments do not, however, appear conclusive; and the difficulty seems to us to be insuperable, that if the priest-party had already kept their Passover, they could not possibly be anxious not to defile themselves, and so render themselves unfitted for keeping the feast. It is certainly easier to think of our Lord as adjusting Himself to circumstances He foreknew than to explain away the very distinct references made by the Apostle John.

Carr says: 'The events of the Passover are full of difficulty for the harmonist. It is, however, almost certain that the "Last Supper" was not the Paschal meal, but was partaken of on the fourteenth—that is, after sunset on Nisan 13. It is quite certain from John xviii. 28 that Jesus was crucified on the *preparation*, and although

the Synoptic narratives seem at first sight to disagree with this, it is probably only the want of a complete knowledge of the facts that creates the apparent discrepancy.'

Edersheim treats almost with scorn the bare idea that the feast kept by our Lord could be any other than the ordinary Paschal feast. He says: 'St. Luke's account of what actually happened, being in some points the most explicit, requires to be carefully studied, and that without thought of any possible consequences in regard to the harmony of the Gospels. It is almost impossible to imagine anything more evident than that he wishes us to understand that Jesus was about to celebrate the ordinary Jewish Paschal supper. "And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the Passover must be sacrificed." The designation is exactly that of the commencement of the Pascha, which was Nisan 14, and the description that of the slaying of the Paschal lamb. What follows is in exact accordance with it: "And He sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the Pascha, that we may eat it." Then occur these three notices in the same account: "And . . . they made ready the Pascha"; "and when the hour was come, He reclined" (as usual at the Paschal supper), "and the Apostles with Him"; and finally, these words of His: "With desire I have desired to eat this Pascha with you." And with this fully agrees the language of the other two Synoptists, St. Matt. xxvi. 17-20; St. Mark xiv. 12-17. No ingenuity can explain away these facts. The suggestion that in that year the Sanhedrin had postponed the Paschal supper from Thursday evening (Nisan 14-15) to Friday evening (Nisan 15-16), so as to avoid the Sabbath following on the first day of the feast, and that the Paschal lamb was therefore in that year eaten on Friday, the evening of the day on which Jesus was crucified, is an assumption void of all support in history or Jewish tradition. Equally untenable is it that Christ had held the Paschal supper a day in advance of that observed by the rest of the Jewish world—a supposition not only inconsistent with the plain language of the Synoptists, but impossible, since the Paschal lamb could not have been offered in the Temple, and, therefore, no Paschal supper held, out of the regular time.'

The subject is too controversial for further consideration here. It is certainly not possible to reconcile the references made in the four Gospels without some accommodation, and it seems to be St. Luke's Gospel that really occasions the difficulty. The most hopeful plan is to follow the lead of St. John, and then read the two earlier Evangelists in the light of St. John's references, subjecting St. Luke to the necessary accommodation, in view of the fact that St. Luke's materials

were wholly documentary and traditional. If there is lack of precision in the details of such a matter, we should naturally expect to find it in the Gospel that was prepared for the use of Gentiles, rather than of Jews, and by one whom we have no reason to think was a born Jew.

The History of Crucifixion.

MATTHEW xxvii. 35 : 'And they crucified Him.'

Difficulty.—*It seems strange that the Jewish rulers should have chosen for Jesus a distinctly foreign method of execution.*

Explanation.—Crucifixion was certainly a foreign invention, and it was never naturalized among the Jews. There are traces of its infliction by the Persians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Carthaginians, Indians, Scythians, Greeks, and Macedonians. Among the Romans it prevailed from very early times down to the reign of Constantine the Great, by whom it was abolished. Crucifixion should be distinguished from gibbeting, which was an exposure of the body after death.

Edersheim thinks that crucifixion was of Phœnician origin, although Rome adopted and improved on it. 'Crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of punishment, although the King Jannæus had so far forgotten the claims of both humanity and religion as on one occasion to crucify not less than eight hundred persons in Jerusalem itself. But even Herod the Great, with all his cruelty, did not resort to this mode of execution. It seems especially to characterise the domination of Rome in Judæa under every governor.' This is to be particularly noticed. It was the fate reserved for rebels against the Roman rule, and though Pilate repudiated the idea of Jesus being a rebel, he condemned Him as such, and He was therefore executed in the manner that *such* a rebel would be. The Jewish modes of execution were strangulation, beheading, burning, and stoning.

The Jewish enemies of our Lord were actuated by very mixed motives in desiring that Christ should be crucified, but their chief purpose was to relieve themselves from the responsibility of His death in the view of the people. They could always say : 'We did not put Him to death ; the Roman governor executed Him. See, He did not die in any of our Jewish methods.' And they were also quite willing to take advantage of the common sentiment concerning crucifixion, which was regarded as not only the most dreadful of deaths, but also the most disgraceful ; a kind of death reserved for slaves, and the vilest criminals. Christ's enemies were glad thus to put up to public shame the claims of the Nazarene impostor, as they re-

garded Him; and the exhibition of suffering helplessness on the cross they thought would settle for ever the pretensions of the new Messiah.

The sentiment concerning crucifixion, of which the enemies of Christ took ready advantage, is illustrated in the oldest pictorial representations that are extant. There is a picture of the Crucifixion in a Syrian Evangelarium, of the date A.D. 586, in the Laurentian Library at Florence. The treatment of the subject is exceedingly rude, bordering on the grotesque. The figure of our Lord is crowned with a nimbus, and clothed with a long purple robe. The soldiers on the ground are casting lots for His garments, and the sun and moon look down on the scene.

A few years since a drawing representing the Crucified was found upon the walls of the ancient palace of the Cæsars at Rome. Some heathen servant of the emperor is taunting his Christian fellow-servant with this contemptuous sign. The relic belongs to about the year A.D. 200, and is by far the most ancient crucifix we know of. But this, the oldest known crucifix, is an ironical one. It is a caricature of Christ, before which a Christian stands worshipping, and it bears the inscription: 'Alexamenos,' the name of the derided Christian, 'worshipping his God.'

The infamy of crucifixion is still preserved in the reproachful name *Talui*, in which the Talmud speaks of Jesus; and also 'Worshippers of the Hung,' which they apply to Christians, though, according to their fable, He was first stoned, and then hung on a tree.

Geikie's note contains some points of additional interest, and helps to explain the adoption of this method of execution in the case of Jesus. 'Death by the cross was the most terrible and the most dreaded and shameful punishment of antiquity—a punishment, the very name of which, Cicero tells us, should never come near the thoughts, the eyes, or ears, of a Roman citizen, far less his person. It was of Eastern origin, and had been in use among the Persians and Carthaginians long before its employment in Western countries. Alexander the Great adopted it in Palestine, from the Phœnicians, after the defence of Tyre, which he punished by crucifying two thousand citizens, after the place had surrendered. Crassus signalized its introduction into Roman use by lining the road from Capua to Rome with crucified slaves, captured in the revolt of Spartacus, and Augustus finally inaugurated its general use by crucifying six thousand slaves at once, in Sicily, in his suppression of the war raised by Sextus Pompeius.'

'It was not a Jewish punishment, for the cases mentioned in the

Old Testament of "hanging up" criminals or offenders refer only to their dead bodies, or were imitations of the heathen custom by some of the kings. For Jews to crucify a Jew, indeed, would have been impossible, as the national sentiment would have revolted from it. The cruelty of heathenism had to be called in by the corrupt and sunken priesthood, before such a death could be inflicted on any member of the nation, far less on one declared by the Procurator himself to be innocent. It was the punishment inflicted by heathenism —which knew no compassion or reverence for man as man—on the worst criminals, on highway robbers, rebels, and slaves, or on provincials, who, in the eye of Rome, were only slaves, if they fell into crime.'

By some writers the demand to crucify Jesus, as made by Jewish priests, by the Jewish Sanhedrin, and, under their leading, by the Jewish mob, is taken as indicating the state of wild and unreasoning excitement into which they had worked themselves, through fear that they would not be able to overcome the scruples of Pilate. 'The cry, "Crucify Him!" twice repeated deliberately and fiercely, shows more than common fury. This terrible word shows how thoroughly the evil passions of the people were excited. The death which the people deliberately chose for their King was that of a slave, of a criminal handed over to their secular and detested rulers.'

In the estimate of motives a place should also be given to another view, which we have not found elsewhere noticed. As the feast was so closely approaching, the priest-party would have been in extreme difficulty if Pilate had handed Jesus back to them to be executed in a Jewish mode. They must have kept Jesus over the feast, and that involved two perils—excitement would have died down, and public opinion in His favour would be aroused. The Romans might do what *they* could not do, lest they should defile themselves, and unfit themselves for the feast. So the Romans executed Jesus.

Chronology in Stephen's Speech.

ACTS vii. 6: 'And God spake on this wise, that His seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.'

Difficulty.—*This 'four hundred years' cannot be verified by the early records on any chronological system.*

Explanation.—It is unreasonable to look for historical or chronological precision in a prisoner's defence, uttered on sudden impulse under great excitement, and without any possibility of

verifying any statements that might be made under the pressure of passing emotion. None of us, under such circumstances, could ensure the correctness of our memory of historical details; and especially of details which we only wanted to use in a general way for purposes of illustration. So far as Stephen's purpose in his defence is concerned, it does not matter whether the number 'four hundred' is exact or not, because he only uses it casually, and as equivalent to 'a long period.'

The note given in the 'Speaker's Commentary' puts clearly and succinctly all that need be said on a subject which has caused much discussion: 'This verse 6 and the following verse are quoted, not with verbal exactness, from Gen. xv. 13, 14, according to the LXX. A parenthesis marked after the words *land* and *evil* would make it clear that the four hundred years are the length of the entire time throughout which Abraham and his descendants were to be sojourners —that is, to have no country which they could call their own. The Egyptian servitude did not begin until after the death of Joseph, and did not exceed two hundred and fifteen years. If the calculation is made from the weaning of Isaac, the interval is exactly four hundred years. In speaking, the round number of the prediction was used instead of the precise total of four hundred and thirty years, which is given in the historical statement, Exod. xii. 40, quoted Gal. iii. 17, which the received chronology makes to be the interval between Abraham's going down into Egypt and the Exodus. The same variation is found in Josephus, who states, II. xv. 2, that the Israelites quitted Egypt in the four hundred and thirtieth year; but in II. ix. 1, and in a report of a speech of his own, J. W., V. ix. 4, gives four hundred years as the length of their stay in Egypt. Between Jacob's going down into Egypt and the Exodus, Josephus reckoned two hundred and fifteen years, II. xv. 2. Isaac was born twenty-five years after Abraham's arrival in Canaan, was sixty years old at the birth of his twin sons, and Jacob was one hundred and thirty when he went down into Egypt, $25 + 60 + 130 = 215$. Again, from Jacob's going down into Egypt until the death of Joseph was an interval of seventy-one years; thence till the birth of Moses sixty-four years; and thence again till the Exodus eighty years, $71 + 64 + 80 = 215$.

It should be noticed that, as a *quotation*, Stephen's sentence is precisely correct. Quoting a passage does not necessarily involve even a belief in its correctness. Gen. xv. 13 reads: 'And they shall afflict them four hundred years.'

The History of the Sanhedrin.

MATTHEW xxvi. 3: 'Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas.'

Question.—*Does the history of the Sanhedrin enable us to decide the measure of authority and influence it had, and its composition, in the time of Christ?*

Answer.—There seems to be some uncertainty as to the origin of the Sanhedrin, *Wieseler* arguing that it was a Roman institution. *Edersheim* traces the Sanhedrin back to the time of Hyrcanus, and finds its origin in the 'eldership,' which, under the earlier Maccabees, was called 'the tribunal of the Asmonæans.' He thinks its power varied according to surrounding political conditions, and that, though at times absolute, it was usually shorn of all but ecclesiastical authority. The Jews find its origin in the appointment of the seventy elders by Moses (Num. xi. 16, 17, 24, 25). But that appointment seems to have borne a strictly local and temporary character. No further notice of such a body is found in the Old Testament. The earliest mention of a council at all like the Sanhedrin is found in the Apocrypha (see II. Macc. i. 10; iv. 44; xi. 27). It is probable, therefore, that it was constituted after the return from Babylon; and the name, Sanhedrin, is of Greek derivation, implying 'a body of assessors.' In the Mishna it is called Beth-dîn, or 'house of judgment.'

Dr. Edmond Stapfer summarises the information that is at command: 'In the first century, the administration of public affairs and of justice was divided between the procurators and tetrarchs on the one hand and the local authorities on the other. It is sometimes difficult to fix the limits of their respective functions. Subject to the supreme jurisdiction of the procurators, however, the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem was occupied almost exclusively with religious questions and internal affairs. This Sanhedrin was a permanent assembly, a senate, having its seat at Jerusalem. Its powers had been very extensive under the Maccabees. It is needless to say that Jewish tradition traced back its institution to Moses, and held that it was clearly set forth in the law; but it is equally needless to say that there was nothing in common between the Sanhedrin and the men of whom Moses speaks, who were chosen as representatives of the people. Nor is there any connection between this assembly and that subsequently formed. Even under Ezra, the Sanhedrin had as yet no existence. Ezra created what is called "the Great Synagogue,"

an improper term, which confounds that institution with the Synagogues properly so-called. It should rather be "the Great Assembly." This lasted until the year 300 B.C. It was a college of scribes to settle questions of theology. The Sanhedrin, on the contrary, was a governing body. We find the first traces of its existence under Antiochus Epiphanes (223-187 B.C.). Josephus speaks indeed of a *gerousia*, or *senate*, which was then acting. It is possible, therefore, that the Ptolemies may have permitted the Jews to form a Sanhedrin, in order to gain their affection by permitting them the semblance of self-government. But the power of this assembly must have been very limited under their administration and that of the Seleucidæ. It is evident that only under the Asmonæans can this *gerousia* have become powerful. From 162 to 130 B.C. we find no mention of its existence. Everything indicates that it was Hyrcanus who, in 130 B.C., organised, or re-organised, the Sanhedrin. He made it a sort of national representation; before this time the power belonged almost exclusively to the high priest. The Romans, when they took possession of Palestine (63 B.C.), allowed the Sanhedrin to remain, but curtailed its powers.

'The Sanhedrin had an official existence in the first century under the Herods and the procurators. It met and deliberated, and had a semblance of authority. It had seventy-one members. This figure is given us in the Mishna. It is borrowed from the law, and can scarcely be disputed. Josephus confirms it when he says that he established in Galilee a council of seventy elders, after the pattern of that in Jerusalem. The president was the seventy-first.

'The New Testament distinguishes, in this assembly, between the "High priests," the "Elders," and the "Scribes." The Mishna also gives us a similar division: "The Sanhedrin is composed," it says, "of priests, Levites, and Israelites whose daughters are permitted to marry the priests." By this last expression it means Israelites who, by producing their genealogical tables, could prove the purity of their Jewish origin. Such members were found in all classes of society. The majority of the Sanhedrin were Sadducees. All the priests, among others, were Sadducees, and it was a rare thing in the first century to find a priest who was a Pharisee.

'The functions of the Sanhedrin were very numerous. It passed the laws, and was therefore a legislative body. It executed justice, and possessed the most extensive judicial powers. Before its tribunal false prophets were arraigned. It dealt with questions of doctrine, and when occasion arose could exercise the functions of a council. It was, moreover, charged with certain details of great importance at

this period. It watched over the priestly families, and controlled the marriages made in them. It kept in its archives the genealogical tables of the principal priests' families. It authorised wars, fixed the limits of towns, and alone had the power of modifying their precincts and those of the Temple. It settled the calendar and the new moons; this duty devolved on the president and three members. In brief, it was at once parliament and council.'

Stapfer points out that the right of capital punishment was not really taken away from the Sanhedrin; the Sanhedrin itself renounced it. 'The Romans did not precisely take it away; but, for very weakness, the Sanhedrin dared no longer condemn and execute the brigands, Sicarii, and fanatic zealots, the more as their attempts had often a religious and patriotic intent. The people might have accused it of striking down patriots whose sole crime was that they sought to deliver their country.' 'The Sanhedrin did not dare take upon itself alone the responsibility of our Lord's execution, for they knew that Jesus had been at one time very popular. They therefore begged Pilate to support them. The saying, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death," was not so much the expression of a truth as a flattery of the governor.' They did, subsequently, put Stephen to death. Two passages in the Talmud prove that the Sanhedrin retained the power of life and death subsequent to the time of Christ.

The Herodians.

MARK iii. 6: 'And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.'

Question.—*Can we discover any reason for the special enmity shown by this party to Christ?*

Answer.—Two explanations of the position and relations of the Herodians have been given. Following a conjecture of Origen's, some say that, as supporters of the family of Herod, who held their dominions by the grant of the Roman Emperor, they would be in favour of paying tribute to the supreme power. Others think they were an intensely patriotic party, who were supporters of the Herodian family as the last hope of retaining for the Jews a fragment of national government as distinguished from absolute dependence upon Rome, as a province of the empire. This view is advanced by Grotius, and supported by Meyer and Ewald. According to this view, the Pharisees and Herodians, however differing in other respects, were united in antagonism to the absolute dominion of Rome.

Little or nothing is known of this party save through the references in the Gospels. They could not have been rigid observers of the Mosaic ordinances, but inclined to approve of that approximation of Judaism to heathen civilisation, of which the Herodian family were the chief representatives. 'Their leaven, or influence, though rather political than religious, would in its tendency coincide with that of the Sadducees, the freethinkers of Judaism.'

Edersheim says: 'We know comparatively little of the deeper political movements in Judæa, only so much as it has suited Josephus to record. But we cannot be greatly mistaken in regarding the Herodians as a party which honestly accepted the house of Herod as occupants of the Jewish throne. Differing from the extreme section of the Pharisees, who hated Herod, and from the 'Nationalists,' it might have been a middle, or moderate Jewish party, semi-Roman, and semi-Nationalist. We know that it was the ambition of Herod Antipas again to unite under his sway the whole of Palestine; but we know not what intrigues may have been carried on for that purpose, alike with the Pharisees and the Romans.'

Dr. E. Stapfer says the Herodians are only mentioned three times in the Gospels (Matt. xxii. 16; Mark iii. 6; xii. 13). 'Josephus does not mention them. They were probably the same as the Boëthusim, the descendants of Boëthus, grandfather of Mariamne Maccabeus, third wife of Herod, and were, therefore, members of his family. They were Sadducees by their origin, since Boëthus was a Sadducee. But it is probable that the majority of the Sadducees repudiated their anti-patriotic servility. These Herodians seem to have combined with some of the Pharisees to ensnare Jesus.'

The Two Apostles named 'James.'

ACTS xii. 2: 'And he killed James, the brother of John, with the sword.'
ACTS xv. 13: 'And after they had held their peace, James answered.'

Question.—*Can these two men be kept distinct, and how are they related to the author of the Epistle?*

Answer.—The name 'James' is a later form of the familiar Hebrew name, 'Jacob,' and we need not be surprised to find it frequently occurring among any body of Hebrew men. There was constant repetition of the family name, or Christian name, as we should call it, and men were distinguished from one another by having their names associated with their *fathers'* names. They might be James, the son of Zebedee, or James, the son of Alphæus. The father's name became, in fact, a *sir*-name.

In the New Testament there are seven references to persons named James, which may possibly refer to distinct individuals. (1) James, the son of Zebedee. (2) James, the son of Alphæus, or Cleopas. (3) James, the Lord's brother. (4) James, the son of Mary. (5) James the 'Less,' or the 'Little.' (6) James, the brother of Jude. (7) James, the first bishop of Jerusalem.

These may be seven persons, but a little examination will suffice to show that they may represent only *two* persons. What is quite clear is, that James, the son of Zebedee, is distinct from James, the son of Alphæus, seeing that both these men were members of the Apostolic company. From the list of men called James we can at once and clearly eliminate the son of Zebedee, because his individuality stands out prominently, and because he was martyred by Herod long before the Epistle which goes by the name of James could possibly have been written (A.D. 44).

The identification of James the son of Alphæus, and his relation to the Epistle, are the great difficulties. In the list of names above given, James, the son of Mary, is the same as James the son of Alphæus, if Mary was the wife of Alphæus. If *this* Mary was a sister of the Virgin Mary, then James would be the 'Lord's brother,' or near kinsman, in which sense the word 'brother' seems to be used. The same man might be the actual brother of Jude. He might be known by a sort of nickname, 'the Less,' because of his under size. And he might be recognised by his official position as 'bishop of Jerusalem.'

'By comparing St. Paul's description concerning numbers 4 and 7 (above) in Gal. i. 19; and ii. 9-12, it is thought he must be referring to one and the same man; let that be granted, therefore, to begin with. We may identify numbers 3 and 4 by the knowledge that James, the son of Mary, had a brother called Joses (Matt. xxvii. 56), and so also had James "the Lord's brother" (Matt. xiii. 55); and further we may consider numbers 3 and 6 identical, because each was brother to Jude (Mark vi. 3; Jude, verse 1); James the Little, number 5, is clearly the same as the son of Mary, number 4. (Comp. Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40; Luke xxiv. 10.) These might, it is true, be coincidences merely, and, when we remember the frequency of Hebrew names, seem insufficient for more than hypothesis. Thus far, then, numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are thought to be one and the same person—the Apostle James, and he the Lord's brother.' There does not seem an insuperable difficulty in identifying him with James, the son of Alphæus, seeing that he cannot be James, the son of Zebedee.

A sketch of the career of these two men will best distinguish them. James, the son of Zebedee, was, with his younger brother John, engaged in the fishing trade, and they probably belonged to Bethsaida, on the Lake of Galilee. Both brothers were disciples of John the Baptist, and were, by him, pointed to Jesus. James was called, with his brother, to a personal attendance on Christ during our Lord's Galilean ministry. (Matt. iv. 21, 22; Mark i. 19, 20; Luke v. 1-11.) Subsequently he was named one of the Apostles, and took rank among the leaders, being placed in the first group. The name Christ found for James and his brother, 'Sons of Thunder,' suggests an impetuous and zealous disposition, and this we may think of as more characteristic of the elder than of the younger brother. James, with his brother and Peter, was favoured by being permitted to attend our Lord on His raising the Ruler's daughter, at the Transfiguration, and in Gethsemane. We can only suppose that, after our Lord's ascension, he shewed unusual, and almost excessive zeal, which gave him prominence among the Christian leaders, and made him the mark for Herod's sword. This James was martyred about the time of the Passover, A.D. 44.

The other James, the son of Alphæus, was not a fisherman. There is no reference to his *call* in the New Testament, but his name is given in each list of the Apostles, and he was favoured by the Saviour with a separate interview soon after the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7). He was afterwards distinguished as one of the Apostles of the circumcision; and he appears, soon after the death of Stephen, A.D. 34, to have been appointed president, or bishop, of the church at Jerusalem—to have resided thenceforth in that city—and to have presided at the council which was convened there A.D. 49. He maintained in Jerusalem and its neighbourbood such a reputation for sanctity as to acquire, even among his unbelieving countrymen, the honourable appellation of 'the Just.' But the high opinion that was entertained of his character did not suffice to save him from martyrdom. According to an account which we receive from the middle of the second century, he was precipitated from an eminence or battlement of the Temple, standing upon which he had avowed, in the presence of an excited multitude, his faith in Christ; and this not having terminated his life, he was afterwards stoned, and at last killed, while, kneeling down, he prayed God to forgive his murderers. This event occurred A.D. 62.

If all the later references to James may be referred to James, the son of Alphæus, we can have little doubt that he was the author of the Epistle. It is in perfect harmony with the impression that is left

on us by the historical notices we have of him. The opening words of the Epistle do not help us: and it should not be forgotten that the Epistle itself only became recognised in the third century. If it was not written by this James, the son of Alphæus, the author cannot be identified, and apostolic authority cannot be associated with it. The Epistle was first circulated among the Eastern churches; in the course of the fourth century its authority was more and more widely acknowledged; and in the fifth century its reception by the churches of both the East and the West became universal.

The Lord's Brethren.

MARK vi. 3: 'Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?'

Question.—*Did the Jews express family relationships with sufficient precision to warrant us in thinking our Lord had younger brothers and sisters?*

Answer.—These so-called 'brethren' may have been either children of Joseph's before he married Mary; children of Mary's, born after our Lord; or children of near relatives of Mary, or of Joseph, who would in reality be 'cousins.' This third explanation is the one that is now recognised as the most probable; and it is thought that special reference is intended to *Cleopas* (or Alphæus), whose wife Mary is called the sister of the Virgin (see John xix. 25), and whose four sons were named James, Joses, Simon (or Symeon), and Judas. Early tradition makes this Cleopas to be a brother of Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus; and if this is true the four sons were cousins of Jesus both on the father and on the mother's side.

It is pointed out that 'the term "brethren" is frequently used in Scripture of other near relatives: of Abram and Lot (Gen. xiv. 14), of Jacob and Laban (Gen. xxix. 12-15), of the cousins of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. x. 4), of uncles and their sons (Lev. xxv. 48, 49), and probably also of the uncles of Jeconias (see on Matt. i. 11, Spk. Com.). So also Isaac calls Rebekah his sister (Gen. xxvi. 7), probably because she was his cousin; and the brethren of Ahaziah (2 Kings x. 13) are called the "sons of his brethren" (2 Chron. xxii. 8), and probably were in reality his cousins, the sons of the brethren of his father Jehoram, mentioned 2 Chron. xxi. 2, 4.'

Dean Plumptre reviews the various theories and arguments, and says: 'On the whole, then, I incline to rest in the belief that the so-called "brethren" were cousins who, through some unrecorded

circumstances, had been so far adopted into the household at Nazareth as to be known by the term of nearer relationship.'

Rev. E. G. Punchard, M.A., in 'Ellicott's Commentary,' gives the different theories that have found favour. The terms 'brother' and 'brethren' meet us so often in the New Testament, as applied to Jesus Christ, that we can hardly pass them by. Do they infer the strict and actual relationship, or one merely collateral?

(1) The Uterine or Helvidian Theory. Held by the advocates of the natural sense, that these men were the younger sons of Joseph and Mary. They urge the plain meaning of the Greek word *adelphos*, *i.e.*, brother, and deny its use figuratively. They point, moreover, to Matt. i. 25, and suppose from it the birth of other children in the holy family. Those who shrink from such a view are charged with sentiment, as impugners of marriage, and even with ideas more or less Manichæan concerning the impurity of matter. The German commentator Bleek, and Dean Alford and Dr. Davidson among ourselves, contend thus for the actual brotherhood, maintaining the theory originally propounded by Helvidius, a writer of the fourth century, answered by the great Augustine.

(2) The Agnatic or Epiphanian Theory. A second class of divines are in accordance with the theory of Epiphanius, who was Bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, towards the end of the fourth century, and no mean antagonist of the Helvidians. At the head of their modern representatives, *facile princeps* for scholarship and fairness, is Canon Lightfoot. The 'brethren of the Lord' are said to be sons of Joseph by a former wife, *i.e.*, before his espousal of the Virgin Mary, and are rightly termed *adelphoi* accordingly. Far from being of the number of the twelve, they were believers only after Christ's resurrection. Thus, then, are explained such texts as Matt. xii. 46; Mark iii. 31; Luke viii. 19; John vii. 5. By this supposition, James, the 'Lord's brother,' must be a distinct person from 'James, the son of Alphæus.'

(3) The Collateral or Hieronymian Theory. There remains one proposition more, known, from the name of its foremost champion, Jerome, as the Hieronymian theory; and this, on the whole, presents fewest difficulties to the religious mind. The sons of Alphæus (or Cleopas; the name is the same in different dialects) were the *cousins* of our Lord, their mother and his being sisters; and such a relationship would entirely justify the use of the word 'brethren.'

Two considerations demand notice. If Mary, the mother of our Lord, had other children of her own, or even stepsons, it is difficult to understand our Lord's committing her to the care of John, who was no near relative, if a relative at all.

And if a difficulty is created by the general statement that 'our Lord's brethren did not believe on Him,' we must bear in mind that general statements admit of individual exceptions, and, in this case, James may be the exception.

The Two Genealogies.

MATTHEW i. 1: 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.'

LUKE iii. 22: 'And Jesus Himself, when He began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph.'

Difficulty.—*These genealogies differ in so many important particulars that a common origin for them does not seem possible.*

Explanation.—It is admitted by all competent writers that the genealogies given by Matthew and Luke both refer to Joseph, and not directly to Mary. What needs explanation is (1) how the genealogy of Joseph can prove the Davidic relationship of the son of Mary, who was not also the son of Joseph; and (2) how the names given in the two genealogies come to differ in such remarkable ways.

To the first question two answers have been given: (1) Genealogies were only kept in the male line; but as Jesus was the adopted son of Joseph, he was regarded legally as his heir, and so took his place in the genealogical list; (2) Mary may have been the daughter of Jacob (Matt. i. 16), and therefore cousin to Joseph; and, if so, the genealogy which concerned him must equally have concerned her.

It should, however, be known that Dean Plumptre clings to the idea that St. Luke gives the genealogy of Mary, through Heli and Nathan, the son of David. He says: 'A third, and, as it seems to the present writer, a more probable view is, that we have in St. Luke the genealogy, not of Joseph, but of Mary, the words "being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph" being a parenthesis, the first link being Jesus (the heir, and in that sense, son of Heli). On this hypothesis, the Virgin, as well as Joseph, was of the house and lineage of David; and our Lord was literally, as well as by adoption, "of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. i. 3); on the mother's side through the line of Nathan, on the reputed father's through that of Solomon. This view has at least the merit of giving a sufficient reason for the appearance of two different genealogies.'

It may be helpful to remind our readers that St. Luke preserves a number of records which could only have been given by Mary, and which imply that St. Luke was in direct communication with her.

In that case, we can quite understand that the private family genealogy was placed at his command. Matthew seems to have had access to the official lists that were kept by the priests; and if the families descending from David, through Nathan and through Solomon, at some time intermarried, the divergencies in the names at some points of the list is easily explained.

'It may be noted that genealogies, such as those given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, were common in almost every Jewish family. The Books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, compiled after the return from Babylon, show that they existed then. Josephus transcribes his own pedigree, from the time of the Asmonæan, or Maccabean, priest-rulers, from public registers, and states that, not in Judæa only, but in Alexandria and Babylon and other cities, wherever the Jews were settled, such registers were kept of the births and marriages of all belonging to the priesthood; that copies were sent to Jerusalem; that the registers went back for 2,000 years. The members of the house of David were hardly likely to be less careful in preserving records of their descent than those of the house of Aaron. Hillel the scribe, for instance, was known to be of the lineage of David, and must have had evidence of some kind to prove it. So, at a later time, the princes of the Captivity, who ruled over the Jews of Babylonia, claimed their allegiance as sons of David.' (*Plumptre.*)

The hypothesis that seems to have gained most favour is that which assumes St. Matthew to have given the table of royal succession, or heirship, to the throne of David, and St. Luke to have given the table of actual descent. 'If this hypothesis be carried through the tables, we must suppose that the royal line through Solomon became extinct in Jeconias, when the right of succession passed to the collateral line of Nathan in Salathiel; and again, that the elder branch of Zorobabel's posterity became extinct in Eleazar or in Jacob, when the succession passed to the younger branch in Matthan, or in Joseph the son of Heli. This view is maintained in part by Grotius and Possinus, and recently by Dr. Mill, and is carried out more fully by Lord Arthur Hervey. This scheme seems in itself by far the most natural that has been proposed, and is supported by at least two remarkable coincidences with the Old Testament—the childlessness of Jeconias predicted by Jeremiah (xxii. 30), and the mention of the "family of the house of Nathan" by Zechariah (xii. 12) in a manner which seems to indicate the then principal branch of the house of David.' (*Speaker's Commentary.*)

From a pamphlet which passed through our hands some years ago

we took the following notes, which are worthy of a careful consideration:

'The Jews, like other nations, gave more than one name to each individual. The life of a Jew was essentially twofold; he was a member of a civil State, and he was at the same time a member of a theocracy; his life was both political and religious. This distinction seems to have been preserved in the giving of names. Traces of the double name are found throughout the course of Scripture history, and may be found, under certain modifications, differing in different countries, existing to the present day. A well-informed writer says, in reference to the naming of a Jewish child: "The parents must give it a name, that it may be mentioned at its circumcision. It must be a Hebrew name, and, generally, one adopted in the family, or that of a celebrated man. *This is a sacred name, and is always made use of in connection with religion.* He may have *another name, a common one*, by giving a Gentile turn to his Hebrew name, or by adopting a Gentile name altogether. For example, his Hebrew name may be *Moshe*, and his common name Moses or Philip. Whenever he is named in the synagogue, or elsewhere connected with any religious duty, he is called by his Hebrew name, but in all other affairs he is called by his common name."

'It is highly probable that the sacred name imposed at birth would be entered in a different list to the common name by which a man was known in his civil relationships. The former would be registered in infancy at the first presentation before the Lord in the Temple, and would be preserved amongst the sacred documents of the house of the Lord. The latter, entered later in life (2 Chron. xxxvi. 4), or after death, would be preserved amongst the records of the State, or, it may be, would be entered into a private family pedigree. Bishop Hervey, in his work on the "Genealogy of our Lord," adduces historical evidence to show that both public and private registers were kept among the Jews.

'The conclusion to which we are brought is, that we have before us (in Matt. i. and Luke iii.) two such registers, one drawn from public, and the other from private sources, or one from a civil genealogy, the other from writings laid up in the Temple.

'In support of this view, we may note that in the genealogy of St. Luke—the Evangelist whose opening chapters show a close familiarity with the interior of the Temple, and what took place there—the names appear to have a sacred character. Even an English reader may remark at a glance the different aspect of the two lists. That in Luke contains, with striking frequency, the familiar names of

distinguished patriarchs, prophets, and priests, and thus confirms the impression that his genealogy, rather than that of Matthew, is of a purely religious character.

'This hypothesis receives a remarkable confirmation by a comparison of the dates of the two lists with the dates of the first building, the destruction, and the second building of the Temple. What, then, is the relation between the two genealogies before Solomon's time, when there was no Temple? And during the lives of Salathiel and Zorobabel, who flourished at the time of the Babylonish captivity, when again, for seventy years, there was no Temple? It is precisely at these periods that only one list exists. The divergence in Luke's genealogy from that of Matthew is exactly coincident with the periods during which the Temple was standing. What explanation of this striking fact can be more natural than that, at the point where the two genealogies unite, there was but one list to refer to, and that the absence of entries in the sacred register required it to be supplemented by a reference to the State chronicles?'

The two lists may be set side by side:

From David in both Lists.		From Salathiel, in both Lists.	
After Matthew.	*After Luke.*	*After Matthew.*	*After Luke.*
1. Solomon.	Nathan.	1. Zorobabel.	Zorobabel.
2. Roboam.	Mattatha.	2. Abiud.	Rhesa.
3. Abia.	Menan.	3. Eliakim.	Joanna.
4. Asa.	Melea.	4. Azor.	Juda.
5. Josaphat.	Eliakim.	5. Sadoc.	Joseph.
6. Joram.	Jonan.	6. Achim.	Semei.
7. —	Joseph.	7. Eliud.	Mattathias.
8. —	Juda.	8. Eleazar.	Maath.
9. —	Simeon.	9. —	Nagge.
10. Ozias.	Levi.	10. —	Esli.
11. Joatham.	Matthat.	11. —	Naum.
12. Achaz.	Jorim.	12. —	Amos.
13. Ezekias.	Eliezer.	13. —	Mattathias.
14. Manasses.	Jose.	14. —	Joseph.
15. Amon.	Er.	15. —	Janna.
16. Josias.	Elmodam.	16. —	Melchi.
17. —	Cosam.	17. —	Levi.
18. Jechonias.	Addi.	18. Matthan.	Matthat.
19. —	Melchi.	19. Jacob.	Heli.
20. —	Neri.	20. Joseph.	Joseph or Mary.

The Date of our Lord's Birth.

MATTHEW ii. 1: 'Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king.'

Difficulty.—*The known date of the death of Herod makes the date of our Lord's birth as* A.D. 1 *nearly impossible.*

Explanation.—It is now well-nigh universally recognised that the usual date of our Lord's birth as A.D. 1 is three, if not four, years

too late. Whether it should be B.C. 3, or B.C. 4, seems still uncertain. *Dr. E. R. Conder* argues for B.C. 4, and his arguments are likely to convince our readers, and ensure the acceptance of this date.

'In order to determine the date of the Nativity with such accuracy as may be found possible, we have first to ascertain the date of Herod's death, and then to consider by what interval of time our Saviour's birth probably preceded it. Neither of these points is free from difficulty. Absolute certainty (let us at once candidly admit) is not attainable. But when the facts are clearly stated, they lead to a conclusion in which we may rest with a near approach to certainty, which is greatly confirmed when we find how the date thus determined harmonises with all the after-facts of the Gospel history.

'Herod the Great reigned, as Josephus informs us, thirty-four years from the time when he took Jerusalem by storm, and put Antigonus to death. This was in the month Sivan, in the summer of A.U.C. 717 (B.C. 37), three years after Herod had been made king by the Roman Senate. According to our mode of reckoning, therefore, Herod's thirty-fourth year would be from Sivan of the year 750 (B.C. 4) to Sivan of 751 (B.C. 3). But the Jewish custom was to reckon regnal years from the beginning of the Jewish sacred year, at whatever time the actual accession might take place. Consequently, Herod's thirty-fourth year, by Jewish reckoning, was from 1 Nisan 750 to the eve of 1 Nisan 751 (B.C. 4-3). Between these two dates his death must have occurred. And even if he died in the first week of Nisan, he would be held to have "reigned thirty-four years"—that is, entered his thirty-fourth year as king, though the actual anniversary of his accession was not till between two or three months later.

'Now, if the account given by Josephus be carefully studied, it will be found to furnish decisive proof that the death of Herod occurred shortly before the Passover. The facts may be briefly stated thus. Herod died at Jericho, having previously gone to the hot baths of Callirhoë, beyond Jordan, in the vain hope of gaining some alleviation of his intolerable sufferings. Archelaus, his son and successor, after providing a magnificent funeral, and observing the necessary week of mourning, came to Jerusalem, sacrificed in the Temple, and addressed the people in regal state. At first he was well received, but in the evening a public lamentation burst forth throughout the city, not for King Herod, but for certain Rabbins, whom he had cruelly put to death. These Rabbins, when the king was thought to be dying, had instigated their disciples to hew down a golden eagle, erected by him over the great gate of the Temple.

Herod had taken savage vengeance, causing the Rabbins, and their most active followers, to be burnt alive. The Passover, Josephus tells us, was now approaching. The multitudes who, on that account, were arriving at Jerusalem, swelled the disturbance to a formidable sedition, which Archelaus suppressed with severity worthy of his father, three thousand persons being massacred by his troops. After establishing order in this fashion, he hastened to Rome, to seek the imperial sanction to his father's testament, appointing him King of Judæa. At Cæsarea he met the procurator of Syria, on his way to Jerusalem, to take charge of Herod's wealth in the name of the Roman Government. No exact dates are given by Josephus, but Archelaus was at Rome before Pentecost; manifestly in the summer of the same year.

'The question then arises: Was this Passover, which thus followed the death of Herod, that of B.C. 4, or B.C. 3? Here we have a remarkable note of time. On the night after the Rabbins were burned, an eclipse of the moon took place. Astronomers find that the only eclipse to which this statement can refer occurred on March 13, B.C. 4 (A.U.C. 750). The succeeding full moon, April 11, was that of the Passover (Nisan 14-15); and Nisan 1 fell on March 29. Now, if we deduct the seven days of mourning, including the funeral, together with at least three or four days for the visit of Archelaus to Jerusalem, and the influx of the multitude before the Passover, we are thrown back to April 1 or March 31 (Nisan 4 or 3) as the latest day on which we can suppose the death of Herod to have happened.'

Arguing the probable length of the events between Herod's death and our Lord's birth, giving four or five weeks between the visit of the Magi and the death, forty days for the 'presentation,' and an interval between the 'presentation' and the visit of the Magi, we are led to fix the first part of January, A.U.C. 750 (B.C. 4), as the precise period of our Lord's birth.

There is no proof that December 25 is the actual day, but it cannot be many days off the true date; and, indeed, the Old Christmas-Day, January 6, may be the absolutely correct day.

The Last Arrival at Jerusalem.

MARK xi. 1: 'And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, He sendeth forth two of His disciples.'

Difficulty.—*A comparison of the Gospel narratives leaves us quite uncertain as to what our Lord did immediately on His arrival at Jerusalem.*

Explanation.—It will be helpful to set the four narratives together, and, to ensure as much exactness as possible, they may be given from the 'Revised Version.'

Matthew xxi. 1, 2: 'And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and came unto Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village that is over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them, and bring them unto me.'

Matthew *appears* to make the triumphal entry take place on the evening of the day that Jesus left Jericho; but his words will allow of a time of tarrying at Bethany, or Bethphage.

Mark xi. 1: 'And when they drew nigh unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sendeth two of His disciples.'

Mark differs from Matthew in the tense 'draw,' and in adding the name Bethany; but he leaves the same impression, that the triumphal entry took place immediately on our Lord's arrival from Jericho.

Luke xix. 28, 29: 'And when He had thus spoken, He went on before, going up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass, when He drew nigh unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples,' etc.

Luke distinctly confirms the view of the previous Evangelists.

John xii. 1: 'Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus raised from the dead.' Then an account is given of a family feast held at Bethany, which could not have been given on the Friday night, because the Sabbath began at sundown on Friday; but may have been given on Saturday night, because the Sabbath ended at sundown of Saturday, and feasts were often held after the Sabbath closed.

John xii. 12: 'On the morrow a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm-trees, and went forth to meet Him,' etc. Verse 14: 'And Jesus, having found a young ass, sat thereon,' etc.

John gives fuller details, and seems to correct the impression made on us by the Synoptists, that Jesus visited Jerusalem on the night of His arrival from Jericho. If the references of the four writers are taken literally, it would seem necessary to assume *two* triumphal entries, one on the arrival from Jericho, on the Friday afternoon, and a second on the following Sunday morning.

We may now see how this difficulty has been treated by competent writers. *Dean Mansel* states the explanations that are possible, but scarcely indicates his own judgment. 'The time is fixed by the data furnished by St. John (xii. 1). Our Lord came to Bethany six days before the Passover, *i.e.*, on the 8th Nisan, the reckoning being exclusive of the Passover-day itself, the 14th, but inclusive of the day of arrival. If we regard Friday, the day of the Lord's crucifixion, as the 14th, the 8th was the Sabbath, and the entry into Jerusalem, which took place the next day (John xii. 12), was on the 9th Nisan, the day now known as Palm Sunday. If we adopt the view that our Lord was crucified on the 15th, and consequently that the Passover fell on Thursday, the arrival at Bethany must be placed on the Friday, and we must suppose that our Lord remained at Bethany over the Sabbath, and entered Jerusalem on Sunday the 10th Nisan. Both theories agree in assigning the entry into Jerusalem to Palm Sunday, though differing as to the day of the month; but in the latter case we must suppose a day to intervene between the entry into Bethany (John xii. 1) and the supper (verse 2), of which there is no hint in St. John's narrative.'

Canon Westcott remarks: 'The pause at Bethany is not mentioned by the Synoptists; but there is nothing surprising in the omission.' On John xii. 12 he has the following note: 'In this incident again St. John's narrative is parallel to that of the Synoptists, but more exact in details. The Synoptists say nothing of the rest at Bethany; and it appears at first sight as if they placed the triumphal entry on the same day as the journey from Jericho. And yet in each case there is the sign of a break: Matt. xxi. 1; Luke xix. 29. And the return to Bethany noticed by St. Mark (xi. 11) suggests at least that village for the starting point.'

Professor Watkins observes that the whole question of the arrangement of days during this last great week depends upon the conclusion which we adopt with regard to the day on which our Lord was crucified. 'St. John only gives the definite note of time, connecting the entry with the previous sojourn at Bethany. The Synoptic narrative is more general, describing the approach from Jericho, and naming Bethphage (Matthew and Luke) and Bethany (Mark and

Luke) as stages in the journey, but not connecting the Supper at Bethany with the entry.'

Vallings takes the view which seems, in every way, the most reasonable. 'While Jewish pilgrims were speculating about His coming to the feast, Jesus spent the last Friday (evening) before His Passion in the now dearer home of Bethany. On the following day He shared the Sabbath feast with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and apparently other guests, in the house of Simon the leper.'

With his descriptive power *Farrar* writes of the journey on the Friday: The disciples 'fell reverently back, and followed Him with many a look of awe as He slowly climbed the long, sultry, barren gorge which led up to Jerusalem from Jericho. He did not mean to make the city of Jerusalem His actual resting-place, but preferred as usual to stay in the loved home at Bethany. Thither He arrived on the evening of Friday, Nisan 8 (March 31, A.D. 30), six days before the Passover, and before the sunset had commenced the Sabbath hours.'

Edersheim, *Stalker*, *Pressensé*, *Geikie*, *etc.*, agree in following the lead of John's narratives, and treat the triumphal entry as taking place on the Sunday morning, after a resting-time at Bethany from the previous Friday evening. The 'six days' mentioned by St. John may be filled up thus. Friday, arrival at Bethany. Saturday, quiet Sabbath, with feast after Sabbath was ended. Sunday, triumphal entry. Monday, second visit to Jerusalem. Tuesday, third visit. Wednesday, quiet day at Bethany. Thursday, the Passover supper. The mode of reckoning the day from sunset to sunset makes our calculation very difficult. The evening of the previous day may be reckoned a day, or it may not.

The Passovers in Christ's Ministry, or The Unknown Feast.

JOHN ii. 13: 'And the passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.'

Question.—*Do the references to this feast in the Gospels help to a decision concerning the length of our Lord's ministry?*

Answer.—Very much depends on the decision to which we come concerning the feast that is mentioned, without being defined, in John v. 1: 'After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.' This 'feast' has been identified by some writers with each of the great Jewish festivals, and even with the minor ones.

Irenæus, Eusebius, Lightfoot, Neander, Greswell, etc., regard it as the Passover. Cyril, Chrysostom, Calvin, Bengel, etc., prefer Pentecost. And Ewald advocates Tabernacles. Caspari prefers the Day of Atonement, and Wieseler, Meyer, Godet, etc., plead for the claims of the Feast of Purim. On a subject involving so much diversity of opinion, it will be wise only to give the material for the formation of a satisfactory judgment.

Professor H. W. Watkins, M.A., puts the case succinctly and suggestively: 'The time-limits are ch. iv. 35, which was in *Tebeth* (January), and ch. vi. 4, which brings us to the next Passover in *Nisan* (April), that is, an interval of four months, the year being an intercalary one, with the month Veadar (and Adar) added, or, as we should say, with two months of March. The only feast which falls in this interval is the Feast of Purim, and it is with this that the best modern opinion identifies the feast of John v. 1. It was kept on the 14th of Adar (March), in commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews from the plots of Haman, and took its name from the *lots* cast by him (Esth. iii. 7; ix. 24, *et seq.*). It was one of the most popular feasts, and was characterised by festive rejoicings, presents, and gifts to the poor. At the same time it was not one of the great feasts, and while the writer names the Passover (chs. ii. 13; vi. 4; xiii. 1), the Feast of Tabernacles (ch. vii. 2), and even that of the Dedication (ch. x. 22), this has no further importance in the narrative than to account for the fact of Jesus being again in Jerusalem.'

Dr. Plummer says that this Feast of Purim was 'a boisterous feast, and some have thought it unlikely that Christ would have anything to do with it. But we are not told that He went to Jerusalem *in order to keep the feast;* Purim might be kept anywhere. More probably He went because the multitudes at the feast would afford great opportunities for teaching. Moreover, it does not follow that because some made this feast a scene of unseemly jollity, therefore Christ would discountenance the feast itself.'

Dr. E. R. Conder brings out the relation of this feast to a decision as to the length of our Lord's ministry. 'What feast this was is a much-debated and important question, the answer to which has been regarded as furnishing the key to the chronology of the Gospel narrative. To some extent it does so, for, if this feast was a Passover, then we have *four* Passovers distinctly noted in St. John's Gospel (ii. 13; v. 1; vi. 4; xi. 55), necessarily implying a duration of three years for our Lord's ministry. The converse, however, is not true. If it was *not* a Passover, it does not follow that that ministry lasted less than three years. If it was not the Passover, it does not in fact

greatly matter to the Gospel chronology what feast it was. For, in addition to the separate evidence on which we assign the cleansing of the Temple to A.D. 27, and the Crucifixion to A.D. 30, we have independent proof from the Synoptic Gospels of the *occurrence of a Passover* between that which preceded the Galilæan ministry and that which was approaching (John vi. 4), when our Lord fed the five thousand in the wilderness. This proof consists in the narrative of the walk through the cornfields on the Sabbath, when the disciples offended the Pharisees by plucking the ripe ears of corn and rubbing them out in their hands. This could not have happened before a Passover, not only because the corn would not be ripe, but because the disciples would not have dared to gather it until after the sacred sheaf of firstfruits had been offered in the Temple. Moreover, the difficult phrase in Luke vi. 1 (literally, "the second-first Sabbath"), whatever be its precise meaning, points, it can hardly be doubted, to a Passover. But we are forbidden by Matt. xii. 1 to identify the Passover thus indicated with that at the beginning of our Lord's ministry (John ii. 13). And unless we surrender the task of framing any connected view of the Gospel history, we are equally forbidden by the three Synoptic narratives to identify it with that Passover (John vi. 4) which followed the death of John the Baptist, the return of the twelve, and the feeding of the five thousand.'

Edersheim calls this the 'Unknown Feast.' But he thinks it is clear that it was either the feast of 'Wood Offering,' on the 15th of Abh (August), when, amidst demonstrations of joy, willing givers from all parts of the country brought the wood required for the service of the altar; or else the 'Feast of Trumpets' on the 1st Tisri (about the middle of September), which marked the beginning of the new (civil) year.'

Canon Westcott says: 'The fixed points between which the feast lies are the Passover (ii. 23) and the feeding of the five thousand, the latter event taking place, according to the universal testimony of MSS. and versions, when the Passover was near at hand' (vi. 4). The following details in St. John bear more or less directly upon the date: (1) After leaving Jerusalem at the conclusion of the Passover (iii. 22), the Lord 'tarried' in Judæa. This stay was sufficiently long to lead to results which attracted the attention of the Baptist's disciples, and of the Pharisees (iv. 1). (2) On the other hand, the interval between the Passover and the Lord's return to Galilee was such that the memory of the events of that feast was fresh in the minds of those who had been present at it (iv. 45), and from the mention of 'the feast,' it is unlikely that any other great feast had

occurred since. (3) The ministry of the Baptist, who was at liberty after the Passover (iii. 26 ff.), is spoken of as already past at the unnamed feast (v. 35). (4) To this it may be added that the language in which the Lord's action in regard to the Sabbath is spoken of implies that His teaching on this was now familiar to the leaders of the people. (5) The phrase used in iv. 35 has special significance if the conversation took place either shortly after seed-time, or shortly before harvest. (6) The circumstances of the conversation in ch. iv. suit better with summer than with early spring. (7) At the time when the healing took place the sick lay in the open air under the shelter of the porches. (8) From vii. 21 ff. it appears that the Lord had not visited Jerusalem between this unnamed feast and the Feast of Tabernacles, and that the incident of ver. 1 ff. was fresh in the minds of the people at the later visit. (9) It is improbable that the feast was one of those which St. John elsewhere specifies by name. A consideration of these data seems to leave the choice between Pentecost, the Feast of Trumpets (the Day of Atonement), and Purim.

Purim (March) would fall in well with the succession of events; but the character of the discourse has no connection with the thoughts of the festival, and the festival itself was not such as to give a natural occasion for such teaching.

Pentecost would suit well with the character of the discourse, but the interval between the Passover of ch. ii. and the Pentecost of the same year would scarcely leave sufficient time for the events implied in chs. iii., iv., while to regard it as the Pentecost of the year after seems to make the interval too great. 'The tradition of the early Greek Church identified it with Pentecost. Most modern commentators suppose it to be the Feast of Purim.'

Farrar says: 'The Synoptists are silent respecting any visit of Christ to the Passover between His twelfth year and His death, and it is St. John alone, who, true to the purpose and characteristics of his Gospel, mentions the earliest Passover of Christ's ministry. The feast of John v. 1 would make four Passovers, if it were certain that a Passover was intended.' In an 'additional note' *Farrar* gives reasons why, if the feast was *Purim*, St. John withheld the name. 'Looking, therefore, at minor feasts (after showing that it could not be one of the greater feasts), there is only one for which we can see a *reason* why the name should have been omitted, viz., the Feast of Purim. The mere fact of its being a minor feast would not alone be a sufficient reason for excluding the name, since St. John mentions by name the comparatively unimportant and humanly-appointed

Feast of the Dedication. But the name of this feast was represented by a familiar Greek word (Encaenia), and explained itself; whereas the Feast of Purim was intensely Jewish, and the introduction of the name without an explanation would have been unintelligible. Purim means "lots," and if St. John had merely translated the name into Greek, it might have led to very mistaken impressions. Moreover, the fact that it was the most unimportant, non-religious, and questionably-observed of the Jewish feasts, would be an additional reason for leaving the name unnoticed.'

The Census of Quirinius.

LUKE ii. 1, 2: 'Now, it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria.'

Difficulty.—*The Roman records cannot readily be harmonised with this statement.*

Explanation.—Later writers are not able to improve upon the note given by *Bishop Ellicott* in his 'Hulsean Lecture,' p. 58. We give this note in full. Referring to Luke ii. 2, he says: 'Without entering at length into this vexed question, we may remark, for the benefit of the general reader, that the simple and grammatical meaning of the words, as they appear in all the best MSS. (B alone omits ἡ before ἀπογραφή), must be this: "This taxing took place as a first one while Cyrenius was governor of Syria"; and that the difficulty is to reconcile this with the assertion of Tertullian, that the taxing took place under Sentius Saturninus, and with the apparent historical fact that Quirinius did not become president of Syria till nine or ten years afterwards. There are apparently only *two* sound modes of explaining the apparent contradiction (I dismiss the mode of regarding πρώτη as equivalent to προτέρα as forced and artificial), either by supposing (*a*) that ἡγεμονεύοντος (governor) is to be taken in a general and not a special sense, and to imply the duties of a commissioner-extraordinary—a view perhaps best and most ably advocated by the Abbé Sanclemente, but open to the objection arising from the special and localising term τῆς Συρίας (of Syria); or by supposing (*b*) that, under historical circumstances imperfectly known to us, Quirinius was either *de facto* or *de jure* president of Syria, exactly as St. Luke seems to specify. In favour of this latter supposition we have the thrice-repeated assertion of Justin Martyr that Quirinius *was* president at the time in question, and the interesting fact recently brought to light by *Zumpt* that, owing to Cilicia, when separated from

Cyprus, being united to Syria, Quirinius, as governor of the first-mentioned province, was really also governor of the last-mentioned—whether in any kind of association with Saturninus, or otherwise, can hardly be ascertained—and that his subsequent more special connection with Syria led his earlier and apparently brief connection to be thus accurately noticed. This last view, to say the least, deserves great consideration, and has been adopted by Merivale.'

On the face of it, we cannot but think it incredible that the Evangelist should have erred on a matter of public history, with all the contemporary sources of information open to him.

Wieseler, writing before the publication of Zumpt's investigations, combines two explanations of St. Luke's words, which he translates: 'This registration was the first (that was made) before Cyrenius was governor of Syria.'

Dean Merivale concludes that 'the enumeration, begun or appointed under Varus, and before the death of Herod, was completed after that event by Quirinius.'

For the full discussion of this subject, see 'Speaker's Commentary,' N. T., Vol. I., pp. 326-329; an 'additional note' by *Canon Cook.*

Slaughter of the Bethlehem Children.

MATTHEW ii. 16: 'Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had carefully learned of the wise men.

Question.—*Is there any possibility of finding corroboration of this incident from secular history?*

Answer.—No writer has succeeded in finding the remotest historical allusion; and it is certainly remarkable that Josephus makes no mention of the incident. *Carr* says: 'Profane history passes over this atrocity in silence. But Josephus may well have found his pages unequal to contain a complete record of all the cruel deeds of a tyrant like Herod. Macaulay relates that the massacre of Glencoe is not even alluded to in the pages of Evelyn, a most diligent recorder of passing political events. Besides, the crime was executed with secrecy, the number of children slain was probably very inconsiderable, for Bethlehem was but a small town; and though it was probably crowded at the time (Luke ii. 7), the number of very young children would not have been considerably augmented by those strangers.'

If the visit of the Magi is placed after the Presentation in the

Temple, and the presentation took place forty days after birth, we may be sure that the special visitors to Bethlehem for the 'enrolling' had long before returned to their homes. Mary's circumstances detained her, but the population affected by Herod's decree could have been only the usual one.

In a note, *Geikie* says: 'Josephus, though he does not expressly name the incident at Bethlehem, has two allusions to a massacre which Herod ordered shortly before his death, which very probably refer to it. He says: "Herod did not spare those who seemed most dear to him"—"he slew all those of his own family who sided with the Pharisees, and refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Emperor, because they *looked forward to a change in the royal line.*"'

Dean Plumptre acknowledges that the slaughter is not mentioned by Josephus or any other writer. But he adds: 'Nor need we wonder that the act was not recorded elsewhere. The population of Bethlehem could hardly have been more than two thousand, and the number of children under two years of age in that number would be between twenty and thirty. The cruelty of such an act would naturally impress itself on the local memory, from which, directly or indirectly, the Gospel record was derived, and yet escape the notice of an historian writing eighty or ninety years afterwards of the wars and court history of the period. The secrecy which marked the earlier part of Herod's scheme (verse 7) would extend naturally, as far as Jerusalem was concerned, to its execution.'

Ellicott and *Farrar* think credit may be given to a sentence from Macrobius, who lived about A.D. 400, but may have used early materials. He says: 'On Augustus being informed that "among the boys under two years of age whom Herod ordered to be slain in Syria, his own son also had been slain," exclaimed, "It is better to be Herod's pig than his son."' Most writers regard this allusion as quite untrustworthy.

Events between the Baptism and First Passover.

MATTHEW iv. 12, 13: 'Now when He heard that John was delivered up, He withdrew into Galilee; and, leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum.'

Difficulty.—*A chronological arrangement of the incidents occurring during the six months following on our Lord's baptism seems impossible.*

Explanation.—No absolute certainty can attach to any scheme for this six months that human ingenuity can devise. Probability is

the utmost that can be attained to; but there is a very general agreement in the view that the events narrated in John i. 19 to iv. 54 occupy this period. Modern Gospel Harmonies will be found arranged on this supposition. The order of events may, with good show of reasonableness, be mapped out as follows:

Our Lord's Baptism.
Forty-days' Temptation.
Return to John Baptist, and call of Andrew and Simon.
Visit to Galilee. Call of Philip and Nathanael.
Visit to Cana.
Short visit to Capernaum.
First Passover at Jerusalem.
Interview with Nicodemus.
Journey through Samaria.
Beginning of the longer ministry in Galilee.

These certainly take the early months of the year A.D. 27, and the rest of the year, up to Passover A.D. 28, was occupied with evangelistic labours in Galilee.

It is, however, a matter of dispute whether our Lord, on His first visit to Jerusalem and Judæa, remained only a few weeks, or some months. Probably it was only a few weeks; and there is a grave difficulty in the way of associating the conversation between our Lord and Nicodemus with the early period of Christ's ministry. At that time His teaching and miracles could not have become common talk, and Nicodemus could have had no ground on which to say: 'We know that Thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with Him.'

It must be freely admitted that it is a hopeless task to put the contents of the four Gospels into historical order. It has been wisely said: 'If we would trace a clear outline of our Saviour's life and ministry, we must be content with an outline, and must resist the temptation to labour after a fulness and exactitude for which the Gospels do not supply the materials. We must free ourselves from the notion that the object of the Gospels bound the writers to strict chronological order, so that in relating events in a different sequence they are guilty of misplacing them, or if they pass them by in silence are mutilating history. The object of the Gospels is neither historical nor biographical, but religious. It is a pedantic and inappreciative, not to say ignorant, criticism which censures or slights the Gospels as "fragmentary."'—*Dr. E. R. Conder.*

The Date of our Lord's Baptism.

MATTHEW iii. 13: 'Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.'

Question.—*Will a discovery of the date of this incident help us to fix the time of the beginning of our Lord's ministry?*

Answer.—*Dr. E. R. Conder* discusses this question, in its relation to the date given for the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist. It should be noted that the Gospel Harmonies give A.D. 26 as the year of John's ministry, and of our Lord's baptism by him.

'The Evangelist Luke states with unusual fulness the date of the preparatory mission of John. "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar . . . . the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness" (Luke iii. 1, 2). Singularly enough, this very exactness is a source of difficulty. Augustus Cæsar died, and was succeeded by Tiberius, in August, A.D. 14. Reckoning from this date, the fifteenth year of Tiberius was from August, A.D. 28, to August, A.D. 29. This would give us the spring of A.D. 29 for the Passover following our Lord's baptism, at which He cleansed the Temple; and (as will presently be shown) the early part of that year for His baptism. But this does not fit with the date which on other grounds we are led to assign to the beginning of our Lord's ministry, viz., A.D. 27. These grounds are briefly as follows:

'(1) According to Luke iii. 23, Jesus was about thirty years of age at His baptism. (There is a difficulty, concerning which scholars are not agreed, regarding the meaning of the word *beginning*, and the exact reading of the text; but this does not affect the general sense.) If we have been correct in fixing the Nativity about the beginning (a little before or after) of B.C. 4, then in the spring of A.D. 29 our Lord would be more than *thirty-two* years of age.

'(2) At the Passover at which Jesus began His public ministry, the rebuilding of the Temple had been going on during forty-six years (John ii. 20). Now the building of the Temple was begun by Herod the Great in the eighteenth year of his reign. (See Josephus, Ant. xv. ii. 1.) Herod's eighteenth year was from 1st Nisan of A.U.C. 734 to the same time, A.U.C. 735. Therefore, adding forty-five complete years at the Passover (*i.e.* Nisan 15th to 21st) in A.U.C. 780 (A.D. 27), forty-six regnal years had elapsed, and the forty-seventh had just begun, from the year in which the rebuilding commenced.

'(3) The date A.D. 27 harmonizes with the view, strongly established on other grounds, that our Lord's ministry occupied three years, and that the crucifixion took place A.D. 30.

'Although it is necessary to state thus fully this difficulty, since it affects the entire scheme of Gospel Chronology, the solution is simple and satisfactory. The reign of Tiberius as *sole* Emperor began at the death of Augustus; but he had been *joint* Emperor with Augustus—a sort of Vice-Emperor—for two years previously. The word used by St. Luke, translated "reign," by no means implies sole empire, but applies with perfect accuracy to this share in the government, which had special reference to the provinces. Insomuch that, had St. Luke spoken of A.D. 27 as "the *thirteenth* year of the government of Tiberius," his critics might have taxed him with ignorance of this association of Tiberius with Augustus in the Imperial sovereignty. With this explanation, both the Evangelist's chronology and his phraseology are seen to be perfectly accurate. We therefore understand "the fifteenth year" of Tiberius to have begun in August, A.D. 26. And we may with great probability suppose that "the word of the Lord came to John," and he began his public ministry, about the close of the summer, or the beginning of autumn, shortly before the time when, at the signal of the early rains, the ploughman and the sower go forth to their work.'

If Dr. Conder's explanation be accepted, the baptism of Jesus took place early in the year A.D. 27.

Vallings says: 'It was "in winter, according to the unanimous tradition of the early Church," and possibly on January 6 or 10 (B.C. 4), according to the Basilidean tradition, that the Messiah stood unrecognised on the bank.' But this is quite an impossible date. It is the date of our Lord's birth, not of His baptism.

Bishop Ellicott says: 'It was now probably towards the close of the Year of the City 780 when the Holy Jesus, moved we may humbly presume by that Spirit which afterwards directed His feet to the wilderness, leaves the home of His childhood, to return to it no more as His earthly abode.' His explanation of St. Luke's reference to Tiberius coincides with that of Conder. *Ellicott* has a further note as follows: 'The conclusion at which Wieseler arrives, after a careful consideration of all the historical data that tend to fix the time of our Lord's baptism, is this: Jesus must have been baptized by John not earlier than February, 780 A.U.C. (the extreme "terminus a quo" supplied by St. Luke), nor later than the winter of the same year (the extreme "terminus ad quem" supplied by St. John). Wieseler himself fixes upon the spring or summer of 780 A.U.C. as the exact

date; but to this period there are two objections: *First*, that if, as seems reasonable, we agree (with Wieseler) to fix the deputation to the Baptist about the close of February, 781 A.U.C., we shall have a period of eight months, viz., from the middle of 780 to the end of the second month of 781 wholly unaccounted for. *Secondly*, that it is almost the unanimous tradition of the early church that the baptism of our Lord took place in *winter*, or in the early part of the year. The tradition of the Basilideans, mentioned by Clement of Alexandria, that the baptism of our Lord took place on the 11th or 15th of Tybi (January 6 or 10) deserves consideration, both from the antiquity of the sect, and from the fact that the baptism of our Lord was in their system an epoch of the highest importance.'

Edersheim supports the date thus assigned by Ellicott, and also the idea that the baptism took place in the winter-time.

Our Lord's Visits to Nazareth.

LUKE iv. 16: 'And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up.'
MATTHEW xiii. 53, 54: 'And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence. And coming into His own country' (the Greek freely rendered is 'His old home') 'He taught them in their synagogue.'
MARK vi. 1: 'And He went out from thence, and came into His own country; and His disciples follow Him.'

Difficulty.—*St. Luke may only give a detailed account of what Matthew and Mark briefly allude to, and so these passages may refer to the same visit.*

Explanation.—The fact that certain visits are recorded does not involve that no other visits besides these were paid. His rejection is not likely to have occurred twice over; and it has been again and again shown that the Bible writers were not anxious about chronological order. Each of the Synoptists record a visit to Nazareth which was of special interest, and we may reasonably incline to the idea that only one such visit was paid. But the Bible-writers favour the idea of two visits. Of these Wieseler, Tischendorf, Krafft, and Meyer, may be referred to. There is a mention of Nazareth in Matthew iv. 13, but there was no such excitement, as Luke narrates, in His leaving Nazareth on that occasion.

Dean Plumptre gathers up all that need be said on this subject. 'The visit to Nazareth, recorded in Matthew in almost identical terms with Mark, has so many points of resemblance with the narrative of Luke iv. 16-31, that many critics have supposed it to be a less complete account of the same fact. On this assumption the narrative must be misplaced in its relation to other facts in one or other

of the Gospels. A dislocation of some kind must indeed be admitted in any case, as St. Mark places it after the resurrection of Jairus's daughter, and makes that event follow the cure of the Gadarene demoniac, and places that on the next day after the first use of parables. We are compelled to admit the almost entire absence of any trustworthy notes of chronological sequence, beyond the grouping, in some cases, of a few conspicuous facts. In comparing, however, St. Matthew and St. Mark with St. Luke, there seems no sufficient ground for hastily assuming identity. The third Gospel places the visit which it narrates at the very beginning of our Lord's work, and as giving the reason of His removal to Capernaum. Here (in Matthew) there is no outburst of violent enmity, such as we find there (in Luke), but simple amazement. It seems, therefore, more probable that we have here a short account (short and imperfect, it may be, because our Lord went without His disciples) of another effort to bring the men of Nazareth to acknowledge Him, if not as the Christ, at least as a Prophet. The circumstances of the case in St. Matthew's record suggest another motive as, at least, possible. He had recently, as in Matt. xii. 48, when His mother and His brethren had come in their eager anxiety to interrupt His work, spoken in words that seemed to repel them to a distance from Him. What if this visit were meant to show that, though as a Prophet He could not brook that interruption, home affections were not dead in Him, that His heart still yearned over His brethren and His townsmen, and that He sought to raise them to a higher life? On comparing the account here with that in St. Luke, it would seem almost certain that there was now a less direct assertion of His claims as the Christ than there had been before—a proclamation of the laws of the kingdom rather than of His own position in it. And so the impression is one of wonder at His wisdom, not of anger or scorn at what He claims to be.'

Geikie, writing of the scene described in St. Luke, says: 'But though He left Nazareth *never to return*, He remained in the neighbourhood for a time, preaching in the villages of the great plain of Esdraelon, far and near.' He appears, therefore, to identify the visits as differing records of one occasion.

Edersheim gives the matter a very careful consideration, and presents his conclusion in the following note. 'Many, even orthodox commentators, hold that this history in Luke is the same as that related in Matthew and in Mark. But, for the reasons about to be stated, I have come, although somewhat hesitatingly, to the conclusion that the narrative of St. Luke, and those of St. Matthew and

St. Mark, refer to different events. 1. The narrative in St. Luke (which we shall call *a*) refers to the commencement of Christ's ministry, while those of St. Matthew and St. Mark (which we shall call *b*) are placed at a later period. Nor does it seem likely that our Lord would have entirely abandoned Nazareth after one rejection. 2. In narrative *a* Christ is without disciples; in narrative *b* He is accompanied by them. 3. In narrative *a* no miracles are recorded —in fact, His words about Elijah and Elisha preclude any idea of them; while in narrative *b* there are a few, though not many. 4. In narrative *a* He is thrust out of the city immediately after His sermon, while narrative *b* implies that He continued for some time in Nazareth, only wondering at their unbelief. If it be objected that Jesus could scarcely have returned to Nazareth after the attempt on His life, we must bear in mind that this purpose had not been avowed, and that His growing fame during the intervening period may have rendered such a return not only possible, but even advisable. The coincidences as regards our Lord's statement about the Prophet, and their objection as to His being the carpenter's son, are only natural in the circumstances.'

Farrar favours the view that only one visit to Nazareth is narrated. 'And so He left them, never apparently to return again, never, if we are right in the view here taken, to preach again in their little synagogue.'

Olshausen says: '*Schleiermacher* has conclusively proved that the narratives refer to the same occurrence. For if the narrative of St. Matthew were transferred to the later years of Christ's life, it is not easy to suppose that the inhabitants of Nazareth could ask "Whence hath this Man this wisdom?" And still less can it be thought that the events recorded by St. Luke are posterior to those related by St. Matthew. In point of internal character both histories are entirely alike, and the single circumstance that countenances the idea of their being distinct, is the chronological succession of events. This very fact, however, is another proof that there is, especially in St. Matthew and St. Mark, the absence of any prominent attempt to trace the course of events according to the period of time in which they happened.'

SECTION II.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO MATTERS OF SCIENCE.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

'SCIENCE is knowledge; it deals with what is, or may be, known; compels a clear comprehension of truths or facts; has little to do with ingenious theories.'

Professor W. Griffiths skilfully indicates the general relation of Scripture to advancing modern science: 'Ever since the great revival of learning, and the entry of science upon that prosperous career of discovery which she still pursues, alarm has been entertained by the disciples of revelation lest these two instructors of mankind should come into collision fatal to the pretensions of the latter. And the dread of this mischance has betrayed some into a nervous timidity, under whose influence they shrink from free inquiry themselves, and are slow to accept its proffered fruit from others. The enemies of the Faith have, at the same time, been quick to discern, and prone to exaggerate, real or apparent discrepancies between the disclosures of Nature and the statements of the Book, and are ever ready to proclaim the authority of Scripture undermined. But neither the fears of friends nor the hopes of foes have as yet been realized. The annals of geography, astronomy, and geology supply notable instances of escape from shocks which threatened disaster to the Word of God, and show the folly of those frantic efforts, once made by superstition, to save the credit of the Bible by trying to arrest the march of science. Happily, no body of clergy could now be found to pronounce Columbus a heretic for holding it possible to get to the east by sailing west. The Church has ceased to maintain, on the presumed authority of Scripture, that we live upon a vast plain, not the surface of a globe. And, in our day, Galileo would not have been driven to the extremity of avoiding torture by recanting his theory of the earth's motion The Bible was not responsible for the crude notions about the earth and the solar system which prevailed in ignorant times, and soon the proscribed views were fully established, without prejudice to the Christian Faith. But the friends of the Church are proverbially backward in trusting the inquisitive spirit of the age. Weak appre-

hension, exploded in one direction, crops up somewhere else, and always lurks in the rear of bold research, as if prepared to clog its steps and prevent a progress too fast and far for the exigencies of theological belief. The rapid strides of geology have done much to keep the quaking phantom astir. Those who first hinted that sea-shells found at the tops of mountains could not be the remains of the Deluge were looked upon with an unfriendly eye both in Popish and Protestant circles. Again and again has the veracity of the Bible seemed to be called in question by the youthful science, but its announcements prove to be expository of, not contradictory to, the Word of God. Instead of being dishonoured, revelation is better understood. Not a few of the excrescences with which popular belief disfigured its pages have been swept away. Intelligent men have ceased to think that suffering and death were unknown on earth until after the fall of man; that fossil plants and animals come from the Creator's hands as we find them; that the world was made in six natural days; and that the flood extended over every part of the habitable globe. . . . The science which now helps the Bible would, 1,000 years ago, have been a grievous obstacle in its path.'

Differing views are held concerning the relations of science and the Bible. Some would take the position that the Bible, being an inspired book, should test all scientific facts and conclusions, and that we should distinctly refuse to recognise any scientific statement which seems opposed to the plain meaning of God's Word. But, as the exercise of men's faculties on material things that are adjusted to those faculties, science should be perfectly free and unfettered. We need ask from the scientific observer no more than competent truthfulness and thoroughness. We will decide what we can do with his facts when we have them before us in an unquestionable form. We would not, if we could, make the Bible put conditions or limitations on the scientific man's observations and researches. If he is honest, he may be free.

Some, on the other hand, think that science should test the Bible, since it has to deal with *facts*. But it is found that the man who cultures and uses the senses is always exposed to the temptation of bias and prejudice against the Bible, which appeals to man's moral and emotional nature, which the man of sense and fact readily despises. The science-man is over-quick at recognising things in the Word which cannot at once be fitted to his knowledge, and is impatient with the cautious friend of the Bible who suggests that possibly even science-facts may need correction, seeing the science-books of the past generation are practically useless for the science-

students of this time. We decline the interference and the testing of science until, round her entire circle, she has reached irrefragable *conclusions*, and until she has learned sharply and satisfactorily to distinguish between her *facts* and her theories about her facts. If science proposes to test our Bible, we simply decline her competency for any such undertaking.

'We should, as Christians, be absolutely fearless of all accurate and adequate statements of facts related to God's world of the *seen*. We should be ready to listen, receptively, to any man who can tell us the wonders of our earth and heaven. But we should be unwilling to hear any scientific man explain how his discoveries *disagree with our Bible*. We simply tell him to keep to his own business, which is to find facts and construct theories. We can settle for ourselves how the *seen* in Nature and the *unseen* in the Bible—that which is apprehended by the sense, and that which is apprehended by the soul—are in the eternal harmony of the One Divine and Holy Will; or, if we cannot quite see now, we are content to wait awhile for the harmonizing. We refuse to argue any scientific question on Bible grounds.'

An ever-increasing number of thoughtful persons are asking whether we have been right in our method of associating science and the Bible. What have they to do with each other? Where comes in the point of their connection? Is it not quite possible that both the friends of science and the friends of the Bible have assumed—have perhaps even forced—relations which have become the occasions of needless difficulty? 'The object of the Bible is not to teach science, but moral and spiritual truth. Scientific facts and truths may be discovered by the intellect and industry of man, and hence no revelation of them is needed. But our origin and destiny, our relations to God, the way of peace and purity, the link between the here and the hereafter—the highest wisdom of man has only guessed at these things, and here comes the need that God shall speak.'

The appeal of the Bible is not, primarily, to man as an *intellectual* being, but as a *moral* being. A Bible for the scientific—if one had been necessary—would have taken scientific form. A Bible for man as a moral being has precise adaptation to his moral condition and necessities. As an intellectual book, or set of books, the Bible reflects the science-knowledge of the age which each of its books represents. As a moral book, the Bible meets the enduring conditions of moral being in every age and clime.

From the literary point of view it is unreasonable to expect, in any book, absolute accuracy in any other matters than those which belong

strictly to the main subject of the book. 'In history any matter of science touched upon would be only casual, and whatever scientific errors or inadvertencies might occur would not impair its value as a narrative of facts. So a treatise on mathematics would not be the less trustworthy as a guide in working out difficult problems, simply because there might be words mis-spelled, or inaccurate statements about geography.' Every book is judged by its main purpose; all else is incidental. No book was ever written that a specialist, in some other department of knowledge than that dealt with in the book, could not find fault with. But we never would allow this to subtract from the value of the book to us within its own proper lines. In our great national classic, Shakespeare's poems, there are some extraordinary errors in botany and natural history, but no one ever dreamed of undervaluing Shakespeare because of these errors. If the Bible is found to be trustworthy and efficient *on its own moral and religious lines*, it is a matter of comparative indifference that it should be found incorrect on matters incidentally introduced, of which it does not pretend to treat.

A similar conclusion is reached by treating the subject historically. The Bible is a product of many and varying ages. Scientific knowledge had its birth-times, and its growing times, in those ages. At first it depended on imperfect observation; gradually observation gained some kind of scientific training; then mere observation was aided by instruments, and the modern scientific knowledge is almost wholly the product of the telescope and the microscope and the spectroscope, used according to the Baconian method. Books written before the invention of these instruments, and before the adoption of Bacon's method, would have been unsuitable to their age, unnatural, out of harmony with current opinion and sentiment, if they had referred in any way to such things. If they were abreast of the best knowledge of their time, we are fully satisfied with them. All we can reasonably ask of any book is, that it shall be true to eternal principles of righteousness; and, in all variable questions, all matters in which there can be growth and advance in knowledge, that it shall be in line with the current opinion, or only just enough in advance of it to lead on the new generation. A book out of harmony with its age would be ineffective in its age; men could do no good with it. And it should never be forgotten that the Bible had its first and immediate mission to those persons who first received it, book by book; and the first thing we should require to recognise is, that each book was strictly adapted to the apprehension, and to the capacity, of those who first received it.

This may readily be illustrated by the poetical and figurative speech of our Bible. There is much of it for which we have to *make* meanings, because we know nothing of those local and temporary circumstances which gave point to the figures when they were written. And we can plainly see that Bible readers of the olden time would have been able to make nothing of their Bible if its figures had been taken from the exact science of these Baconian days.

It is important that we should observe within what very narrow limitations scientific matters are introduced in Scripture. Apart from the apparently precise descriptions of the Creation and the Flood, we have no authoritative deliverance about any question as to which man is intellectually competent to search for himself. Side allusions there may be, casual and illustrative references there may be, but no Bible writer claims Divine authority for statements he may make that are aside of his Divine commission. Beyond the legendary chapters of Genesis, which demand a separate and distinct treatment, there is no scientific statement in the whole Word of God that is gravely disputable, or beyond reasonable, easy, and common-sense explanation. When we have ceased, in familiar speech, to talk of the 'sun-rising and the sun-setting,' we may begin to complain of the Bible writers expressing themselves in the line of their natural observation rather than in the line of scientific precision. Sometimes we have tried to conceive how the Bible could have been better done, so as to accord with this nineteenth-century science. But we are landed at once in hopeless difficulties. Why should the Bible accord with nineteenth-century science rather than with twelfth-century science, or fourth-century science, or twenty-fourth-century science? Why should it be expected to fit exactly the ideas of evolutionists rather than the ideas of theurgists, or alchemists, or materialists? If the Bible had come to us with a clear nineteenth-century science stamp upon it, its enemies would have been delighted; they would have gladly pounced on such things, and loudly declared that they proved the Book to be a deception, for they showed its *late* origin. Such things could not have been known before their time.

It cannot be too firmly declared that the Bible bears no necessary relation to science. It leaves it alone, and asks to be left alone by it. The Bible is this, and only this—a gracious revelation of that which man supremely needs to know, as a responsible moral being, but either cannot find by personal and independent research, or is led, by his sinfulness, to confuse and misrepresent. Science deals with invariable things, of which man is only able, at any given time,

to gain a variable and imperfect apprehension. The Bible deals with invariable things, in another sphere, of which man had invariable and adequate apprehension from the first. Moral principles were revealed at once, and the Bible deals with their recovery from the confusion into which man has put them.

Has nineteenth-century science a fair claim to the absolute confidence it demands? Will the twentieth century find no corrections of even the most positive conclusions of the nineteenth? The ancient Egyptians of the embalming days might have claimed absolute certainty for their facts. So might Aristotle. So might the Hindoo philosophers. In spite of the very strong assertions made in behalf of modern science, and with the fullest sympathy in all earnest labour for the enlargement of human knowledge, the cautious man will hold even the most positive conclusions open to correction. He will say,—The healthy eye is the only eye we can assume to have the perfect vision, and we cannot be sure that every scientific observer's eye is healthy. Men find out their facts by the aid of instruments, and no absolutely perfect instrument ever yet came from human hands. No instrument was ever yet made which could not be improved. And if we have now conclusions reached by instruments which multiply a thousand times, how can we be sure that there will be no corrections of those observations and conclusions when the instruments multiply ten thousand times? Scientific men must be men of faith and imagination, as well as of observation. They must trust, and work on the basis of, each other's conclusions. They must, inventively, try to find out what the things they see are *like;* and so the elements of uncertainty are always present. Those they trust may not be faithful or competent. And they have no ground for positive assertion until they have not only shown what things are like, but also that they are like those things, and *nothing else.*

If we think precisely, we shall be disposed to say that *certainty* belongs alone to morals; and the results of human observation can only be in measure true, true to date, true to capacity, true to the instruments of inquiry. It is only the 'Word of God that abideth for ever.'

It may be helpful to give some passages from modern Christian writers which may be regarded as supporting the general views to which expression has been given.

Professor Drummond says of the record of creation: 'What we have to note is that a scientific theory of the universe formed no part

of the original writer's intention. Dating from the childhood of the world, written for children, and for that child-spirit in man which remains unchanged by time, it takes colour and shape accordingly. Its object is purely religious, the point being, not how certain things were made, but that God made them. It is not dedicated to science, but to the soul. It is a sublime theology, given in view of ignorance, or idolatory, or polytheism, telling the worshipful youth of the world that the heavens, and the earth, and every creeping and flying thing, were made by God.'

Professor Agar Beet says: 'We have no reason to expect that this record would contain anticipations of the discoveries of modern science; and if not, its writers could hardly avoid using here and there forms of speech contradicting these later discoveries.'

Professor Jowett points out that 'what is progressive is necessarily imperfect in its earlier stages, and even erring to those who come after, whether it be the maxims of a half-civilised world which are compared with those of a civilised one, or the Law with the Gospel.' 'Any true doctrine of inspiration must conform to all well-ascertained facts of history or of science. The same fact cannot be true and untrue, any more than the same words can have two opposite meanings. The same fact cannot be true in religion when seen by the light of faith, and untrue in science when looked at through the medium of evidence or experiment. It is ridiculous to suppose that the sun goes round the earth in the same sense in which the earth goes round the sun; or that the world appears to have existed, but has not existed, during the vast epochs of which geology speaks to us. But if so, there is no need of elaborate reconcilements of revelation and science; they reconcile themselves the moment any scientific truth is distinctly ascertained. As the idea of nature enlarges, the idea of revelation also enlarges; it was a temporary misunderstanding which severed them.'

Dr. Monro Gibson, in a popular address, said: 'When things in Nature are referred to in the Bible, it is in language which the people of the time could understand. There was no attempt to speak over the little heads of the people of the time to the big folks that live in the nineteenth century, and represent its glorious culture. The Bible speaks about Nature in a natural way—in a way that would be natural to the people of the time; and that is what all sensible people do, and that is what all sensible people approve—except when they are very badly off for something to say against the Bible. There is no pedantry in the Bible; no affectation of scientific accuracy; no attempt to anticipate modern discoveries.'

Professor W. Griffiths sums up a discussion of the relations between science and the Bible in these words: 'At present the precise relations of the Bible to science cannot be definitely fixed; for, on each side, the exploration of their joint ground is still going on; and the investigation that has already yielded unexpected harmonies, which strengthen the proofs of revelation, will probably greet us again with surprises of a similar nature and power. More points of agreement will doubtless appear, when the learned have thoroughly sifted all particulars common to the two Divine Records; which hope holds out the prospect of a new chapter of Christian Evidence to be compiled in the future.'

GENERAL NOTE ON HEBREW SCIENCE.

The Hebrews were in no sense a scientific people. They had no special interest either in the arts or the sciences. Their genius lay in their power to discern the Divine relation to things. Things, by themselves, were not important in their eyes; they did not care to study them. The mystery they loved to search out was the working of God in and through them. In a good sense they were in the wonder-stages of national childhood, and found God in Nature, God in providence, God in history, God in relationships, even as they apprehended God in His tabernacle and temple. They were not inquisitive; there was no thirst for Nature-knowledge. The Jew-boy's text-book was the Bible, and his first lessons were learned from Leviticus. The highest reaches of Jewish learning kept well within moral lines. The heathen might be astronomers and astrologers and variously wise in the things of a material world; but the Jew—even the most enlightened Rabbi—was but a casuist in the application of moral rules. He did not mind adding to the law of God; he thought of it as unfolding the applications of the law of God, but he regarded it as unworthy and wrong to venture beyond the strict limitations of the Revealed Word.

The science of the day was enough even for the intelligent and educated Jew. He accepted it, he used it; he never thought of criticizing it, or of improving it. And when he wrote books on his proper moral lines, he put in the commonplace scientific ideas of his day if he happened to need them for illustrative purposes. We have, therefore, in the books of the Bible, just the marked and characteristic features of Jewish literature.

No doubt the period of Solomon was marked by that attention to natural science which is the common feature of swiftly-advancing civilization. But it was quite a temporary and passing feature. There is no indication whatever that it was maintained. It was the personal influence of a man of genius, and it took no permanent root in Jewish soil. There is no Jewish system of astronomy, or mathematics, or natural history, or chemistry, or medicine. There is not even any Jewish system of philosophy. In a scientific sense, there is no attempt at constructing a theology. What we understand by science is wholly foreign to the natural genius of the Hebrew.

Dean Stanley says all that can be said of the Solomonic science, and it is but very little that he can say: 'Solomon was, at least in one extensive branch, the founder, the representative, not merely of Hebrew wisdom, but of Hebrew science. As Alexander's conquests had supplied the materials for the first natural history of Greece, so Solomon's commerce did the like for the first natural history of Israel. "He spake of trees," from the highest to the lowest, "from the spreading cedar-tree of Lebanon to the slender caper-plant that springs out of the crevice of the wall. He spake also of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes." We must look at him as the first great naturalist of the world, in the midst of the strange animals—the apes, the peacocks—which he had collected from India; in the gardens, among the copious springs of Etham, or in the bed of the deep ravine beneath the wall of his newly-erected temple, where, doubtless, was to be seen the transplanted cedar, superseding the humble sycamore of Palestine—the "paradise of rare plants, gathered from far and near—pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire with spikenard, spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all their chief spices." Of his science the sacred writings tell enough to show us that, in pursuing this great study, we are his true followers; that the geologist, the astronomer, but especially the botanist and the naturalist, may claim him as their first professor.'

But *Stanley* significantly adds: 'If the object of revelation had been to teach us the wonders of the natural creation, to anticipate Linnæus and Cuvier, here was the time, here was the occasion, here were the works on Hebrew science ready to be enrolled at once in the canon of Scripture. But not so. They have passed away. We have the advantage of Solomon's example, but we have not the advantage, or, it may be, the disadvantage, of his speculations and his discoveries.' And in truth there was in Solomon's science more casual

observation than precise research, and more magic than knowledge. The school-child of to-day knows more and better than wise Solomon of old, and at least knows this, that it would be folly to make even wise Solomon a teacher in natural studies.

Horne remarks that 'the Hebrews made but little progress in science and literature after the time of Solomon.' 'Astronomy does not appear to have been much cultivated by the Hebrews; the laws of Moses, indeed, by no means favoured this science, as the neighbouring heathen nations worshipped the host of heaven; hence the sacred writers rarely mention any of the constellations by name.' 'The study of astrology, which was intimately connected with that of astronomy, and was very highly estimated among the neighbouring nations, was interdicted to the Hebrews.' (Deut. xviii. 10; Lev. xx. 27).

Dr. E. Stapfer considers with care the leading scientific notions of the Jews in the time of our Lord, and compels us to be thankful that the Bible in no way sets its seal upon the crude notions then entertained. He makes us quite glad that the Bible is, in no sense whatever, a scientific book. 'The Jews of the time of Christ gave the name of science to the study of the law, and the more or less philosophical speculations connected with it. The Christians, who devoted themselves from the first century to the metaphysical contemplation of Divine things, gave to this study also the name of science (*gnosis*). We ask, what were the scientific acquirements of an educated man in Palestine at the time of Christ? Did he know arithmetic? Did he know anything of natural history? What were his ideas of astronomy? of geography? Of arithmetic we can say nothing; it is barely alluded to in the Old Testament. Natural history, or at least zoology, seems to have been cultivated to some extent, for the descriptions of animals and of their habits often occur in the sacred writings. But there are only very primitive attempts at classification. About the cosmic system the Jews had broader notions, though scarcely more precise. They had a great idea of the vastness of the universe. "It would take 500 years," we read in the tract "Beracoth," "to traverse the distance between the earth and the sky immediately overhead. The same interval separates one heaven from another, and again there is the same distance between the two extremities of the heaven traversed in its breadth." As to the stars, they gave names to certain constellations; Orion, the Great Bear, and others, are spoken of in the Book of Job. It must be noted also that the word "Rākía" in Genesis, which we translate firmament, properly signifies solid surface, and the Jews imagined the

blue of the sky to be solid. When it rained, they thought the water passed through holes pierced in this surface. These openings are the "windows of heaven," or the "fountains of the deep." The earth was to them, as to the whole ancient world, the centre of the universe, and all the stars revolved around that immovable plane. The Jew looked upon the earth as a circular plane. God is seated above this plane, the circumference of which had been originally traced by Him on the abyss. The four cardinal points are called the ends of the heavens, the four sides or corners of the earth, or the four winds. Jerusalem is the centre of the round flat disc which forms the earth; at the edge of the disc is the sea, the great sea upon which no one had yet ventured far. 'Their science had no surer basis than the direct testimony of the senses and childish observation.'

One thing is perfectly clear. The use of Old Testament Scriptures, through long ages, did not correct commonly received errors in relation to scientific matters, and we are therefore fully entitled to say that those Scriptures bore no mission in relation to such matters. It is the inspired book of morals and religion, and its scientific allusions are accidental and illustrative.

GENERAL NOTE ON SCIENTIFIC FACT AND SCIENTIFIC THEORY.

The absolutely necessary faculty of the scientific man is the power of precise and persistent observation, which is, primarily, a sense-faculty. But along with this should go two other powers, that which comes out of competency of general knowledge; and the ability to generalize, and construct theories. But it is usually found that the culture of the strictly observant faculties tends to weaken and limit the theorizing faculty; so we learn to look to one set of men for facts, and to another set of men for theories. Or to put the same thing in another form, the scientist and the philosopher are seldom found united in the same person.

Another consideration demands our attention. Theories are perpetually being constructed on incomplete foundations of facts. And, indeed, from this point of view, all theories must be regarded as tentative only, because, if even we can fairly say that an array of facts is *adequate* for our purpose, we can never say that it is *complete.* And the additions which *may* be made to our facts may wholly subvert the theory. Theories are constantly being relegated to the limbo of curiosities, in consequence of new facts being discovered, as

may be efficiently illustrated in relation to the science of medicine. The observation of microbes is creating entirely new theories of disease, and its necessary treatment.

It will be found that the Scriptures are never out of harmony with any fact of nature that science can competently observe, and faithfully describe. And the challenge has been made,—but has never been met,—state simply some unquestionable, some universally recognised fact, which is at variance with Bible statements, when common-sense, and intellectual fairness, are allowed to present those statements. We are not bound by any law, human or Divine, to attempt to square our Scriptures with tentative and uncertain human theories. Much has indeed been made of the modern theory of Evolution. We are not bound to fit our Bible to it, because it has not yet a complete set of facts on which it can be based; and it does not fairly and fully account for all the facts it has. No theory can be more than a working theory. None can be beyond the possibility of correction while there are any facts of nature still unobserved.

It has been remarked that 'if there be certainty in science, it can only attach to the *facts*, not to *men's theories about the facts*, for these must carry with them the uncertainty that ever attaches to man-made theories, whatever their subject may be. Darwin may give us the *facts* he has carefully observed, and we receive them with confidence; but Darwin's *theories* of evolution, based upon these facts, are open to discussion and doubt. Yet we often find that scientific men are more anxious about the theories than about the facts; and the very same facts are made the bases of altogether differing theories.'

Professor W. Griffiths deals skilfully with this distinction. 'We should here, as in all subjects of inquiry, distinguish between knowledge and mere speculation. Many of the pretentious theories, by which revelation is assailed, have scarcely a shadow of proof to bear them out. Sheer conjectures are thrust in the face of the religious public, with an assurance in inverse proportion to the evidence that can be advanced in their favour. If Christians pay prompt heed to every alarm bawled out in the name of science, their chronic state will be one of panic. Better, by far, wait to learn whether the report be not the windy effusion of some puffed-up imagination. Why echo what will soon die if not repeated? And the hollowness of flimsy surmises which do not at once collapse must ere long be exposed by men of science themselves, the weak inferences of one student of nature being set aside by the sound inductions of another. The logical faculty in many scientists is sadly defective. They are little more than collectors of facts. They know not how to marshal

and vitalize their observations, that facts may become that sort of organic structure, a living argument. Yet persons, so wanting in the philosophic quality, are very fond of hypotheses, and mistake guesses for oracles, and rude materials, out of which knowledge may some day be formed, for knowledge itself. The defender of the Faith will do well to leave these erratic *savants* in the hands of their brethren; who, by fighting their own battles, often unwittingly protect the orthodox creed.'

SUB-SECTION.

DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO ASTRONOMY, ASTROLOGY, AND MAGIC.

Ancient Astronomy.

JOB ix. 7-9: 'Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.'

Difficulty.—*Naming the constellations is indicative of an advanced condition of astronomy, and suggests a late date for the Book of Job.*

Explanation.—It must be admitted that the Hebrews had no astronomical or astrological system through their early history, if they ever had. It is most unlikely that they would have special names for the constellations during their tribal age; and only the contact with foreign lands and people, in the time of Solomon, provided the possibility of such scientific knowledge. If Job's career is fixed for a period before Abraham, it would appear an anachronism to associate with him the advanced ideas of the later Solomonic age.

The names given to the constellations in Job are still retained, but they come to us through the Greek translation of them; and it is not absolutely certain that the Hebrew terms are precisely rendered. Comparing the verse above with Job xxxviii. 31, 32, we find four terms—*cimâh*, *cesîl*, *'âsh*, *mazzaroth*. Of these the Hebrew form, *mazzaroth*, has been retained, though the Latin translates it *Luciferum*, and the French '*les signes du Zodiaque*.'

The other three terms present difficulty. There is great probability that the constellation known to the Hebrews as *cesîl* is the same as that which the Greeks called Orion, and the Arabs the Giant. The giant of Oriental astronomy was Nimrod, the mighty hunter,

who was fabled to have been bound in the sky for his impiety. The word *cesîl* means *a fool*, or an impious, godless man; and later invention made the term descriptive of Nimrod, who was regarded as a rebel against God, and was called by the Arabs 'the mocker.'

Cimâh is the Hebrew word rendered 'the Pleiades' (called in Amos v. 8, 'the seven stars'). The Rabbis speak of this as a collection of stars called in Arabic *Al Thuraiyâ*. Aben Ragel says, 'Al Thuraiyâ is the mansion of the moon, in the sign Taurus, and it is called the celestial hen with her chickens.' The identification with what we know as the Pleiades is regarded as fully justified.

'Ash is represented by *Arcturus*, the constellation called 'the Bear.' The Hebrew name is supposed to have been derived from the Chaldæans, but the exact meaning of it is uncertain.

The Solomonic origin of the Book of Job is argued from many other and more important considerations than this; but if that later date be admitted on other grounds, it suggests an easy and reasonable explanation of such an advanced astronomical reference as is found in these verses. The *Speaker's Commentary* gives a qualified approval to the suggestion of a late authorship. 'The supposition that we owe the book in its actual form to a writer of the Solomonian period has much in its favour; assuming, that is, that he used copious materials, existing in a dialect so nearly allied to the Hebrew as to require little more than occasional glosses, and some revision of grammatical forms and construction. This hypothesis meets, in fact, many difficulties.'

Light before the Sun.

GENESIS i. 3, 14: 'And God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night.'

Difficulty.—*We trace all light to the sun, and cannot conceive of light existing before, or independently of, the sun.*

Explanation.—This is a notion which has no better basis than natural observation and commonly-received opinion. Science corrects it, and reveals other lights independent of our sun. The 'fixed stars,' as they are called, stand related to other suns than ours, and cannot be said to depend on it for their light; though it might fairly be suggested that no light is apprehensible by our senses which does not come through, and is not affected by, the atmosphere in which our sun rules, so that what we can see is always toned by our sun.

But we may be pressing the language of the early legendary record

too hard if we make the order of the days absolutely describe the processes of creation. Poetry knows no restraint of logic, and will set things in separate scenes which, in fact, are continuous and overlapping processes. Imagination can conceive light existing before it is focussed in the sun, and set in relations with one particular system. And in the account of creation there is no assertion of the existence of light before the sun; properly treated the record declares two things: (1) It was God who made the light. (2) It was God who set the light in its place of rule for the earthly day and night. God's relation to all the notions of light we can have is the Mosaic assertion; and only through the discoveries of modern science could anyone have dreamed of making Moses assert that light existed before the sun.

The early legends of nations are poetical in form, and consequently can be variously read and translated according to the knowledge of each generation. And we are constantly falling into the error of thinking that things were actually designed in the legend, because we can make the language fit with what *we have discovered.* It is both wiser and safer to take the firm position, that the legends of Creation were not preserved in order to teach us the processes, or the order of the incidents, of the Creation, but to declare, in the most absolute and exclusive manner, the relation of the one God to everything that exists. The order of the days in the legend is poetical, not logical. 'The use of the term "day" to denote a prolonged period adds to the dramatic liveliness with which the Creator's task is described.'

Hugh Miller makes a suggestion which certainly deserves a careful consideration ('Testimony of Rocks,' p. 134): 'Let me, however, pause for a moment to remark the peculiar character of the language in which we are first introduced, in the Mosaic narrative, to the heavenly bodies—sun, moon, and stars. The moon, though absolutely one of the smaller lights of our system, is described as secondary and subordinate to only its greatest light, the sun.' [Miller might have added that the account gives no hint of the fact that the light of the moon is absolutely dependent on that of the sun—a fact which the mere observer could never have found out, or even suspected.] 'It is the apparent, then, not the actual, which we find in the passage —what *seemed* to be, not what *was;* and as it was merely what appeared to be greatest that was described as greatest, on what grounds are we to hold that it may not also have been what *appeared* at the time to be made that has been described as made? The sun, moon, and stars may have been created long before, though it was not until the fourth day of creation that they became visible from the earth's surface.'

C. W. Goodwin, criticising this suggestion, says: 'The theory founded upon this hint is that the Hebrew writer did not state facts (as we understand the term, verifiable, scientific facts), but merely certain appearances, and those not of things which really happened, but of certain occurrences which were presented to him in a vision, and that this vision greatly deceived him as to what he seemed to see; and thus, in effect, the real discrepancy of the narrative with facts is admitted. He had, in all, seven visions, to each of which he attributed the duration of a day, although, indeed, each picture presented to him the earth during seven long, and distinctly marked, periods.'

Bishop Wordsworth observes: 'It is *not* said that Light was now *made*, verse 3, as it is said that God *made* two great Lights, or rather *light-holders*, in verse 14. We are not to suppose that Light did not exist before this act of God. We need not be surprised that fossil animals, which have been disinterred from the earth, should have had eyes, although they existed before these words were uttered, and before the creation (?) of the sun; for Moses is here describing a glorious *revealing* of Light, triumphing over the Darkness which had usurped its place. The earth existed as the wreck of an anterior creation, but strangely convulsed and fractured, submerged in water and shrouded in darkness. But when God saw fit to commence the new creation, and prepare the desolate earth for the abode of Man, the barrier, which shut out the Light, was removed by the Word of God, and Light broke in upon the waters. In the original Hebrew, Light is *Or;* but the Sun is called *Maôr*, a receptacle and vehicle of light.'

Duns says: 'Geology opens up to us world on world successively stocked by abounding forms of animal life, and of vegetation, for which sunlight was as necessary as it is for those of the Adamic epoch. There is thus no way of avoiding the inference that the orbs of heaven existed in all their beauty, and brightness, and strength, then as now. And, consequently, that the words descriptive of the fourth day point to adaptation, and not to creation properly so called.'

The common-sense and reasonable explanation given by *Kitto* may be taken as summarising the points to which our attention should be directed. 'The greatest apparent difficulty in the history of the creation arises from the production of light on the first day; whereas, in the sequel of the narrative, the creation of the sun and moon seems to be ascribed to the fourth day. Geology, which was at first regarded as increasing the difficulties of a solution, may now claim the credit

of having pointed out the true sense in which these intimations are to be received. If we admit that the earth existed, and was replenished with successions of animal and vegetable life, before the whole was reduced to that chaotic confusion in which we find it before the work of reorganization commenced, we must allow also that the light of the sun shone upon it in those more ancient times. It appears by the fossil remains of those creatures which then walked the earth, but whose races were extinguished before man appeared, that they were furnished with eyes as perfect and wonderful in their structure as those of our present animals, and these eyes would, without light, have been useless; and the vegetable productions which are always found in connection with these animals could not without light have flourished. Besides, the changes of day and night, which are described as existing before the fourth day, could not have existed without the sun, seeing that they depend on the earth's relation to that luminary. Geology concurs with Scripture in declaring the existence of the watery chaos previously to the era in which man and his contemporary animals received their being. The earth then existed as the wreck of an anterior creation, with all its previous and interim geological arrangements and fossil remains; but strangely convulsed and fractured, submerged in water, and enshrouded in darkness. Thus it lay, probably for an immense period: life was extinct; but matter continued subject to the same laws with which it had been originally endowed. The same attraction, the same repulsion, the same combination of forces, which, by the will of God, have ever been inherent in it, still existed. The sun, then, acting by its usual laws upon so vast a body of waters, gradually, in the continuous lapse of ages, drew up a prodigious mass of dense and dark vapours, which, held suspended in the atmosphere, threw a pall of blackest night around the globe. All things beneath it became invisible, and no ray of light could pierce the thick canopy of darkness. Layer upon layer, in almost infinite succession of closely-packed and darkling clouds, filled the atmosphere, and absorbed every particle of light long before it could reach the surface of the earth; and in the fullest extent was the language of Scripture justified, that 'darkness was upon the face of the deep.'

But when God saw fit, in the fulness of time, to commence the new creation, and prepare the desolate earth for the abode of man, this dense barrier, which shut out the light, began at His high word to disperse, precipitate, or break up, and to let in light upon the waters. It was not likely to be, nor was it necessary to be, a sudden change from the depth of utter darkness to the blaze of sunny day, but the letting in

of light without sunshine, the source of this light—the body of the sun—not becoming visible until the fourth day, when its full glory was disclosed, and when once more its beams shone through the purged atmosphere upon mountains and valleys, and upon seas and rivers, as of old.'

It may, therefore, be fairly said that modern scientific discoveries and conclusions can be reasonably adjusted to fit the poetical form of the early legend of Creation, though that record was in no way intended to be descriptive of scientific processes.

Chaldæan Astrologers.

DANIEL ii. 2: 'Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldæans, for to shew the king his dreams.'

Question.—*Within what limitations may we suppose these learned men to have worked? and were their researches in any proper sense scientific?*

Answer.—The Revised Version gives 'enchanters' instead of 'astrologers,' which leaves the classes mentioned as mere jugglers. But it would be to misjudge the ancient nations if we failed to admit that, upon a basis of observation, they constructed what may fairly be called an elaborate and scientific astrological system.

F. D. Maurice gives an interesting account of the 'wise men,' both of Egypt and of Chaldæa: 'The wise men, magicians, or soothsayers, of whom we read in the Book of Exodus, were no doubt students of Nature. They had observed something of its powers and mysteries, some of the influences which it exercises over man, some of the means which he possesses of directing its influences to advantage or to mischief. There can be no doubt that they believed such knowledge to have been communicated by some Divine power. The Egyptian knowledge of the phenomena of the universe, and of its powers, was not balanced and sustained by any knowledge of the powers and destinies of man. Those who became acquainted with the things about them could not but feel that they, the observers, were in some way superior to that which they observed. It is clear that they had that conviction, that they were even oppressed by it. But the objects which they saw, the facts which were revealed to them, soon became all in all. They nearly lost themselves in the things; their higher culture only helped to make the people the helpless servants of them. What he could tell of his discoveries made his countrymen idolaters; what he reserved, made him feel his differ-

ence from them, and led him to affect new airs of superiority, to devise new arts for the purpose of keeping up the difference and the sense of it. Thus the sagacious man, from being a true observer, passed into a diviner; thus he became the enslaver of those whom he should have emancipated, each new invention being, as it were, the creation of a new god. Such magicians are the great corrupters of kings, teaching them to rule by craft and not by righteousness, giving them animals for subjects, not human beings.'

'In Chaldæa we meet again the wise men such as we heard of in Egypt, but here they are especially spoken of as astrologers. The study of the heavenly bodies prevailed no doubt among the priests of Thebes and Memphis; the first systematic observations respecting the course of the year may be rightly ascribed to them. On this knowledge their claims to superior intellect respecting human events will in part have rested. Because they knew more of Nature than others, they will have been able to divine what would probably happen to the fields or the crops. It is another step indicating a different order of thought and feeling to connect the stars directly with human life, and to believe that the course of the one is influenced or regulated by that of the other.

'Wide plains, still and beautiful nights, are favourable to the development of such a faith; perhaps only in such circumstances has it ever taken deep root. For in such circumstances we meet with a hunting rather than an agricultural people, with men whose speculations turn more upon the success of their efforts to procure food for themselves, than upon the chances that the earth will produce it for them. Physical knowledge in this condition of society is not to be looked for. Tyranny, the rule of a man claiming dominion over the beasts of the field, and over the creatures of his own race by the same right, will have here an earlier commencement. . . . The stars among this race of conquerors will have become dynasts or rulers over man's life. Subjects feeling themselves at a hopeless difference from their sovereigns, regarding them as beings of another kind, will have had no difficulty in looking upon these cold and distant and brilliant orbs as the Kings of kings and Lords of lords. The wise men, who hoped for something better from the world than that which they saw, will have asked these witnesses of calmness and order when a brighter day should come, when the world should be ruled with less of fantasy and caprice. The passion for knowing the future will have become indissolubly connected with the contemplation of the stars. A scheme of relations between them and the dwellers upon earth will have been wrought out. Guilty monarchs will have been

perplexed with signs in the heavens; they will eagerly have fled to the science of the astrologers for relief. In general they will have converted them into the ministers of their purposes, the props of their authority.'

Cicero tells us that 'the Chaldæans, inhabiting vast plains, whence they had a full view of the heavens on every side, were the first to observe the course of the stars, and the first who taught mankind the effects which were thought to be owing to them. Of their observations they made a science whereby they pretended to be able to foretell to everyone what was to befall him, and what fate was ordained him from his birth.'

The ancient astrologers reckoned the sun, moon, and planets as the interpreters of the will of the gods. From their rising, setting, colour, and general aspect, predictions were made as to the coming appearances of Nature in the way of tempests, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc. The planets were viewed as affecting the destinies of men, so that from their nature and position information might be obtained as to the events which should befall a man throughout his whole life.

Lucian explains that 'the heavens were divided into several compartments, over each of which a particular planet presided; that some planets were good and some evil, while others had no special character of their own, but depended for their nature on those planets with which they were in conjunction. Such being the arrangements of the heavenly bodies, whatsoever planet is lord of the house at the time of any man's nativity produces in him a complexion, shape, actions, and dispositions of mind exactly answerable to its own.'

Diodorus Siculus describes astrologers thus: 'They assert that the greatest attention is given to the five stars, called planets, which they name *interpreters*, so called because, while the other stars have a fixed path, they alone, by forming their own course, show what things will come to pass, thus interpreting the will of the gods; for to those who study them carefully they foretell events, partly by their rising, partly by their setting, and also by their colour. Sometimes they show heavy winds, at others rains, at others excess of heat. The appearance of comets, eclipses of the sun, earthquakes, and, in general, anything extraordinary, has, in their opinion, an injurious or a beneficial effect, not only on nations and countries, but on kings, and even on common individuals; and they consider that those stars contribute very much of good or of ill in relation to the births of men, and in consequence of the nature of these things, and of the

study of the stars, they think they know accurately the events that befall mortals.'

The position which may reasonably be taken appears to be this: Astrology is a strange mixture of facts and fancies. Man is unquestionably influenced by atmospheric conditions, but the relations were arranged by imagination, without the restraint of any scientific method. The astrological system may be classed among scientific systems that are based on unscientific foundations. There could be no true science of the stars until man's observation was aided by efficient instruments. The mere observation of the stars is incentive to meditation, worship, and imaginative inventiveness. We know how, in our dreamy moods, the evening clouds seem to assume for us weird and fantastic shapes, and the names given to the stars (Great Bear, etc.) tell us that ancient imaginations created fantastic forms out of the groups of stars.

Astronomy has taken the place of astrology. Both may fairly claim to be scientific creations. They differ in precisely this: Astronomy is a scientific construction resting on data and observations scientifically obtained and verified.

For the various orders into which the class of astrologers may be divided see the previous volume, 'Handbook of Biblical Difficulties,' p. 224.

A Witch.

EXODUS xxii. 18: 'Thou shalt not suffer a witch (sorceress, R.V.) to live.'

Difficulty.—*The severity with which a witch was to be treated seems to indicate that such persons did possess some occult and malevolent powers.*

Explanation.—This subject has been treated in the former volume, 'Handbook of Biblical Difficulties,' p. 278, in connection with King Saul's visit to the woman at Endor. It may be helpful to add two opinions on the substratum of verity in the pretensions of these so-called 'witches,' both given with care and precision.

Ayre says: 'It is a question how far divination was an imposition. That much imposture was mixed with it no one will deny. But it may not unreasonably be believed that some dark superior influence was at work. We may not attempt to define it. But if, as we know, the prince of the power of the air had sway over the children of disobedience (Eph. ii. 2), and evidenced his dominion in many remarkable cases, it may be that sometimes the soothsayers, the magicians, the sorcerers, were helped in their evil courses by him whose slaves

they were. Be this, however, as it may, whether the whole were imposture, or whether there was some reality in it, the law of God was holy, just, and good, which condemned and punished it.'

R. S. Poole says: 'In examining the mentions of magic in the Bible, we must keep in view the curious inquiry whether there be any reality in the art. We would, at the outset, protest against the idea, once very prevalent, that the conviction that the seen and unseen worlds were often more manifestly in contact in the Biblical ages than now necessitates a belief in the reality of the magic spoken of in the Scriptures. We do indeed see a connection of a supernatural agency with magic in such a case as that of the damsel possessed with a spirit of divination mentioned in the Acts; yet there the agency appears to have been involuntary in the damsel, and shrewdly made profitable by her employers. This does not establish the possibility of man being able at his will to use supernatural powers to gain his own ends, which is what magic has always pretended to accomplish. Thus much we premise, lest we should be thought to hold latitudinarian opinions, because we treat the reality of magic as an open question. . . . . The account of Saul's consulting the witch of Endor is the foremost place in Scripture of those which refer to magic. The supernatural terror with which it is full cannot, however, be proved to be due to this art, for it has always been held by sober critics that the appearing of Samuel (in the original it is Samuel *himself*) was permitted for the purpose of declaring the doom of Saul, and not that it was caused by the incantations of the sorceress. . . . . Our examination of the various notices of magic in the Bible gives us this general result: They do not, as far as we can understand, once state positively that any but illusive results were produced by magical rites. They therefore afford no evidence that man can gain supernatural powers to use at his will. This consequence goes some way towards showing that we may conclude that there is no such thing as *real* magic; for although it is dangerous to reason on negative evidence, yet in a case of this kind it is especially strong. The general belief of mankind in magic, or things akin to it, is of no worth, since the holding such current superstition in some of its branches, if we push it to its legitimate consequences, would lead to the rejection of faith in God's government of the world, and the adoption of a creed far below that of Plato.'

But we logical Westerns are always in grave danger of failing to understand the illogical and imaginative Easterns. And magic may have appeared to them otherwise than it appears to us, who persist in subjecting everything to what we call scientific verification.

Mr. Poole carefully traces the history of magic in the early races, and prepares us to see how education and civilization surely dispel all belief in it. He says: 'With the lowest race magic is the chief part of religion. The Nigritians, or blacks of this race, show this in their extreme use of amulets and their worship of objects which have no other value in their eyes, but as having a supposed magical character through the influence of supernatural agents. With the Turanians, or corresponding whites of the same great family—we use the word white for a group of nations mainly yellow, in contradistinction to black—incantations and witchcraft occupy the same place, shamanism characterizing their tribes in both hemispheres. . . . . With the Shemites magic takes a lower place. Nowhere is it even part of religion; yet it is looked upon as a powerful engine, and generally unlawful or lawful according to the aid invoked. The importance of astrology with the Shemites has tended to raise the character of their magic, which deals rather with the discovery of supposed existing influences than with the production of new influences. The Iranians assign to magic a still less important position. It can scarcely be traced in the relics of old nature-worship, which they, with greater skill than the Egyptians, interwove with their more intellectual beliefs, as the Greeks gave the objects of reverence in Arcadia and Crete a place in poetical myths, and the Scandinavians animated the hard remains of primitive superstition. Men of highly sensitive temperaments have always inclined to the belief in magic, and there has, therefore, been a section of Iranian philosophers in all ages who have paid attention to its practice; but, expelled from religion, it has held but a low and precarious place in philosophy.' The Hebrews had no magic of their own.

In treating of the possible power behind wizards and witches, it is more important to consider the receptivity, sensitiveness, and superstition of those whom they delude, than the nature of their own power. The readiness to be deceived almost suffices to explain the skill of the deceiver. If there were no dupes there would be no cheats. We do not hesitate to affirm that all the effects produced by wizards and witches may be accounted for by the operation of natural causes; and that, however the existence of spirits, malevolent spirits, may be argued from other points of view, no support for their existence can be fairly obtained from the claims of the witches, whose power—whatever it is—is their own.

The Appointment of the Rainbow.

GENESIS ix. 13: 'I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth.'

Question.—*How does the scientific explanation of the rainbow help to the understanding of this reference to it as a sign?*

Answer.—'Rainbows are of two kinds, solar and lunar. The latter are of comparatively rare occurrence; the former are those referred to in the Bible. The rainbow is seen when the sun is shining on rain falling in the part of the atmosphere on which the spectator's eye is fixed. When the rays strike the falling drops they are refracted as they enter them, and reflected back on the rain-cloud. On leaving the drops a second refraction of rays takes place, and the result is the rainbow. When the rain falls in considerable quantities, and the circumstances now named concur, a second bow is often seen concentric with the first, the prismatic colours in both being arranged in bands as in the solar spectrum—the order, however, being reversed in the second bow. Instead of the upper edge being, as in the exterior bow, violet, it is red, and the lower edge is violet instead of red. The cloud is generally dark on which the bow appears, though this is not always the case. Rainbows have been seen when only a few light fleecy clouds were scattered over the sky, and more than once they have been observed when no clouds were perceptible.' That the rainbow is a result of universally working natural law is illustrated by the fact that they are created in miniature by the sunlight falling on the spray from a waterfall. The scientific man will refuse to admit that, at any time, or under any circumstances, the result would fail to appear if the given conditions were found. This must be fully and freely admitted; rainbows were always formed when sunshine in the atmosphere was reflected from falling drops of water.

It is not reasonable to assume that the rainbow must have been a special creation after the Flood. Common-sense assumes what the language of the Bible narrative distinctly supports, that the existing rainbow had, from the time of the restoration of the earth, a new suggestion associated with it. Its appearance in the sky was to suggest to man God's promise, and God's faithfulness to His promise. It was specially significant because, as a natural phenomenon, it came when sunshine broke out after passing storm. Only by unnatural forcing of the Bible language can Bible authority be claimed for the idea of a readjustment of natural conditions to produce the rainbow as a new thing.

This is now generally admitted, but as the error still lingers among us, it may be well to give some authoritative judgments on the subject.

The helplessness of all attempts to scientifically explain the origination of the rainbow in Noah's time, indicates to what straits the advocates of that theory are driven. We give one specimen: 'Though it had rained before the deluge, yet the superintending Providence which caused the rainbow to appear as a pledge of the assurance that He gave (that the world should never more be destroyed by water), might have prevented the concurrence of such circumstances in the time of rain as were essentially necessary for the formation of a bow. It might have rained when the sun was set, or when he was more than fifty-four degrees high, when no bow could be seen, and the rain might continue between the spectator and the sun until the clouds were expended, or in any other direction but that of an opposition to the sun.'

But the existence of rain long before man is evidenced by the impressions of rain-drops found in several geological formations. And no evidence whatever can be adduced to show that atmospheric conditions were different in antediluvian times from what they have been since. 'The general opinion of theologians and expositors is, that the rainbow did not then appear visible for the first time, but that it was then *set*, or *appointed*, or *given*, as the token of the covenant.'

Dr. Cumming says: 'The literal rendering is, "I do *appoint* My bow in the cloud;" and the very expression shows that the rainbow must have existed prior to the Flood—though it was subsequent to the Flood that it became a symbol, or sign, to denote that the world should never again be overflowed. If there were raindrops and sunbeams before the Flood, there must have been rainbows, because the rainbow is produced by the refraction of the rays of light from the drops of water which fall in a shower. But the Bible does not assert that God created the rainbow immediately after the Flood, but that He then applied it to this special use, just as He applied the twelve stones set up after the children of Israel had crossed the Jordan, as He still applies bread and wine in the Lord's supper, and water in baptism—namely, old things for new uses, sacred symbols to give consolation and peace to true believers.'

Bishop Horne suggestively paraphrases the above passage. 'When, in the common course of things, I bring a cloud over the earth, under certain circumstances, I do set My bow in it. That bow shall be from henceforth a token of the covenant I now make with you to

drown the earth no more by a flood. Look upon it, and remember this covenant.'

Prebendary Eddrup, in 'Smith's Dictionary,' says: 'The right interpretation of Gen. ix. 13 seems to be that God took the rainbow, which had hitherto been but a beautiful object shining in the heavens when the sun's rays fell on falling rain, and consecrated it as the sign of His love, and the witness of His promise.'

Dean Payne Smith says: 'We may dismiss all such curious speculations as that no rain fell before the Flood, or that some condition was wanting necessary for producing this glorious symbol. What Noah needed was a guarantee and a memorial which, as often as rain occurred, would bring back to his thoughts the Divine promise; and such a memorial was best taken from the natural accompaniments of rain. We may further notice, with Maimonides, that the words are not, as in our version, "I do set," but, "*My bow have I set in the cloud*"—that is, the bow which God set in the cloud on that day of creation in which He imposed upon air and water those laws which produce this phenomenon, is now to become the sign of a solemn compact made with man by God, whereby He gives man the assurance that neither himself nor his works shall ever again be swept away by a flood.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'It appears at first sight as if the words of the sacred record implied that this was the first rainbow ever seen on earth. But it would be doing no violence to the sacred text to believe that the rainbow had been already a familiar sight, but that it was newly constituted the sign or token of a covenant, just as afterwards the familiar rite of baptism, and the customary use of bread and wine, were by our blessed Lord ordained to be the tokens and pledges of the New Covenant in Christ between His heavenly Father and every Christian soul.'

Geikie has a very interesting note: 'The first covenant between God and man was confirmed by a sign worthy of a transaction so unique. The rainbow had glittered on the clouds for immeasurable ages before man's creation, but it was now to be adopted as a Divine pledge of goodwill to our race. Other covenants would be made with Abraham and with Moses, but they were sealed only by a personal or passing pledge; this had a perennial sign in heaven vouchsafed it. The simplicity of the language used is only equalled by its beauty. 'When I bring a cloud over the earth,' and cause it to rain, 'the bow shall be on the cloud, and I will look on it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature,' and stay the rain, 'that it become no more a flood like

that which has just ended.' The sacredness of the rainbow has passed from this consecration into the religions and poetry of all nations. Homer tells us that Jupiter set it in the clouds for a sign. In the so-called Field of the Magi, in Persia, there may still be seen a picture cut in the rock, showing a winged boy sitting on a rainbow, and an old man before it in the attitude of prayer. The Greeks fabled Iris, who brought messages from God to man, as the rainbow. The old Scandinavians, and perhaps the Germans, fancied it a bridge built by God to link heaven and earth. But in Genesis the symbol is grandly monotheistic and spiritual. The rainbow is the pledge of friendship between God and man, the token of Divine grace and pity, the assurance of preserving care. Appearing only when the sun has finally broken through the clouds, it is, moreover, a special sign that the watery destruction which the clouds held in their bosom is already turned aside.'

Balaam the Magician.

NUMBERS xxii. 5 (Rev. Ver.): 'And he sent messengers unto Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is by the River, to the land of the children of his people, to call him.'

Difficulty.—*It is unreasonable to imagine that Balak would send to a Jehovah-prophet to curse Jehovah's people.*

Explanation.—It is too hastily assumed that Balaam was a prophet of the one true God. It may even be disputed whether the common notion that Balaam came from the far East is a correct one. The Revised Version tells us that Balak sent to 'the land of the children of his people,' which implies a district where either descendants of the Moabites, or a kindred race, were settled. It would be a very strange thing for Balak to get a prophet of *another* religion to do his work. He would naturally seek for the best-known and most successful prophet of his own religion. And Balaam was well known, and had been so successful, that he could charge his own price, and was not likely to act without large rewards.

It should be noticed that heathen religions recognised one supreme God, and many subordinate gods, who were the manifestation and the agency of the supreme. And it was quite within their conception that a prophet of one of the subordinate gods should at times be directly guided by the supreme God. It is possible that we have something of this kind in the case of Balaam. The supreme God interferes, and checks Balaam in doing what he proposed to do as the prophet of Balak's god and his own. The supreme God even

overmasters the prophetical gift, and compels Balaam to utter blessings instead of curses. This view will help to explain the confusion of Balaam's mind, and the fact that he evidently says and does throughout what was against his inclination. He was but the prophet of the true God for the nonce, and under compulsion.

It is important to observe that idolatry which puts *gods* in the place of *God* is far less frequently found than idolatry which makes gods represent, and act as agents for, God. The ignorant masses limit their vision to gods, but behind every idolatrous system there is, more or less clearly discernible, the figure of the supreme and spiritual God. And that it is so is shown by the *form* of the commandment given to the Jews. They are not thought of as in danger of putting away God, but of putting something between them and Him. 'Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make any likeness,' etc.

Let us see what can be known concerning the district from which Balaam came, and the god he may be supposed to have served.

Dean Stanley was perhaps unconsciously led to make more of Balaam than the brief records we have of him fairly warrant. He finds in him a true prophet of God, working beyond the limits of the Jewish people. He calls him 'the Gentile prophet Balaam,' and says: 'His home is beyond the Euphrates, amongst the mountains where the vast streams of Mesopotamia have their rise. But his fame is known across the Assyrian desert, through the Arabian tribes, down to the very shores of the Dead Sea. . . . In his career is seen that recognition of Divine inspiration outside the chosen people, which the narrowness of modern times has been so eager to deny, but which the Scriptures are always ready to acknowledge, and, by acknowledging, admit within the pale of the teachers of the universal Church the higher spirits of every age and of every nation.'

But the only hint given us of Balaam's location is in the words of Num. xxii. 5, with which this paragraph is headed, and it is plain from it that *Pethor* must be looked for in some district near Moab, and not in the distant East, which would involve months of travel for Balak's messengers and for Balaam. In Num. xxiii. 7 Balaam says: 'Balak, the King of Moab, hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east.' But *Aram* is a term covering a vast area, and many authorities read in Num. xxii. 5, for 'children of his people,' 'children of Ammon.'

Pethor has been sought in vain on the line of the Euphrates. It is placed somewhere only because it has first been settled that it

must be there somewhere. Probably it would soon be identified if it were sought only a few days' journey from Moab in the Syrian district. *Ayre* suggests that it should be looked for in the neighbourhood of *Bashan*, and refers to *Journal Sac. Lit.*, Jan., 1852, pp. 384-386.

If we may look for the home of Balaam near, comparatively, to Moab, and find his work among the Moabites and kindred neighbouring nations, we may fairly assume that his religion was the religion of the races among whom he worked. We know that those nations recognised Jehovah as the God of Israel, and a mighty God, and it would be no surprise to them that the God of Israel should influence the magician, and so defend His own people.

Balaam is best regarded as a famous magician, like other magicians of the age. Just as the woman of Endor was overmastered by the power of God, and Samuel was brought up apart from her incantations, so Balaam was surprised and mastered by Divine communications such as he had never known before, and never knew again. He never had been in any sense a prophet of God, and he never became one. He belonged to the class of magicians who are fairly represented by the 'rain-makers' of savage tribes. The story of Balaam is given as an illustration of the Divine defence of the chosen people from one of the terrors of the age.

Harper, in his recent book 'The Bible and Modern Discoveries,' gathers up some very interesting information relating to the heathen character of Balaam's magical rites: 'The first station of Balaam was the hill of Baal, the sun-god; the second that of Nebo, or Mercury; the third, of Peor, the Priapus of Moab, who resembled the Egyptian *Khem*. At each site seven altars were raised, one to each of the seven planetary gods—the Cabiri of Phœnicia, whose aid was invoked *against* the God of Israel.

'The third station evidently gave a more extensive view, and it could not have been far from the other two stations. Such a ridge we find immediately south of that of Bamoth-Baal, in the narrow spur that runs out to Minyeh. The very name at once suggests a connection with Peor, for it means *luck* or *desire*, and is intimately connected with that of Meni, or Venus, the proper wife of Peor; while a legend of a magic well, springing from the spear of 'Aly, attaches to the spot.

'It was, therefore, a most interesting discovery to find, on the very edge of the cliff of Minyeh, a *line* of seven monuments of large stones, concerning which the Arabs have no traditions, only that they are very ancient. In each case a circle has existed, with a

central cubical stone, such as the ancient Arabs used to consecrate to their chief female divinity, and each had originally a little court or enclosure on the east, where the worshipper stood with his face to the west, the proper quarter of Hathor (or Venus) in Egypt, the home of the evening aurora seen behind the mountains of Judah.

'Cairns of huge size, stone circles, huge upright standing stones, are found in many places; but in this region they abound, and their position points to the fact that here, where Balaam was brought by Balak, was the very centre of the heathen worship. Some circles are 100 yards in diameter. Of the upright stones, called *menhirs*, the most important group was found by the "Palestine explorers" at El Mareighât, then a square enclosure, an inner circle, a central group on the top of the knoll, and alignments on the west. The Arabs call them "the smeared stones," and there is little doubt that they were originally the objects of pagan worship—once anointed with oil, or smeared with blood. There is no evidence to connect any of them with places of sepulture. The main object of their erection seemed always to be the construction of a flat table, arranged with a slight tilt in the direction of its length. They are nearly always near streams of water—always in places where good views are to be got. Cup-hollows are in the tables, or top-stone. Sometimes channels are cut from the cup-hollow, all irresistibly giving evidence that some sort of libation was poured on the stone.

'It may seem a bold suggestion, but there appears nothing extravagant in the idea, that the altars erected by Balaam, or some of them, are these very altars found by the exploring party.'

Soothsayers.

ISAIAH ii. 6: 'And are soothsayers like the Philistines.'

Question.—*How are soothsayers distinguished from diviners generally?*

Answer.—It may be questioned whether the term 'soothsayer' is to be regarded as referring to any exclusive magical methods. The word *Gazerim*, if it is connected with the word *Kazir* of the Assyrian inscriptions, should mean men who collected the laws on astrological phenomena and portents, and pronounced upon them. Some translate *Gazerim* as 'deciders,' and think the term refers to those who cast nativities, and by various modes of computing foretell the fortunes of men.

Delitzsch renders the word 'soothsayers' 'cloud-makers,' which suggests the common name of sorcerers in savage tribes, 'rain-makers.' *Cheyne* renders, 'diviners of the clouds,' and reminds us that the clouds, both of the day and night, were studied by the Chaldæan diviners.

From 1 Sam. vi. 2, we learn that the Philistines had a recognised order of diviners, and a famous oracle at Ekron.

Dean Plumptre has a suggestive note on this verse: '"Soothsayers," literally, *cloud-diviners.* The word points to the claim of being "storm-raisers," which has been in all ages one of the boasts of sorcerers. The conquests of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6) had brought Judah into contact with the Philistines, and the oracles at Ekron and elsewhere (2 Kings i. 2) attracted the people of Judah. There was, as it were, a mania for divination, and the diviners of Philistia found imitators among the people of Jehovah.'

Woolwrych gives the derivation of soothsayer as in first English *soth-bora* (truth-bearer). He says, *soth-cwithe* is an oracle; *soth-saga*, history. Sooth is common in Chaucer for truth, and opposed to false. As used in Scripture it denotes a class of men who decided nativities, observed clouds, and divined by means of cups or rods. The word suggests at least the pretension of *telling the truth* (sooth) to a man; the truth, that is, about his future.

Jehovah's People casting 'Lots.'

JOSHUA xviii. 6: 'And ye shall describe the land into seven portions, and bring the description hither to me: and I will cast lots for you here before the Lord our God.'

Difficulty.—*It is not easy to see a sufficient reason for apportioning by lot, when the inspiration of God might have led Joshua to make satisfactory divisions.*

Explanation.—The plan was evidently adopted in order to secure the aid of the people in the apportionment, and to convince them that everything was perfectly fair and straightforward. The disposal was, even by the system of lot, left absolutely in the hand of God; but if every man felt that he had his chance, all heart-burnings and jealousies were prevented.

If the apportionments had been made *through* Joshua, the people who were discontented with their portions would be sure to say that they were made *by* Joshua, and that he had shown favouritism.

It is true that deciding by lot is common under heathen and pagan systems; but in these cases everything is left to *chance.* In the case

of the Israelites the will of the living Lord was simply made known through this particular agency, instead of by the words of Joshua. The lot was, for Israel, an acted expression of the will of Jehovah.

Then it should be noticed that the people did not cast lots for themselves—Joshua cast lots for them; and he did it in a solemn manner before the symbols of the Divine presence. When we notice similarities between heathen customs and Jewish, we should be very keen to observe the differences, because these may effectively remove the evils of the custom.

The custom of deciding doubtful questions by lot is one of great extent and high antiquity, recommending itself as a sort of appeal to the Almighty, secure from all influence of passion or bias, and is a sort of divination employed even by the gods themselves. It may fairly be used still when a question cannot be decided absolutely on its merits, but feeling is sure to bias the judgment.

The *Speaker's Commentary* makes suggestions as to the ways in which the lot was taken by Joshua. On such a matter there can be no more than conjecture. 'Perhaps two urns were employed, one containing a description of the several districts to be allotted, the other the names of the tribes; and the portion of each tribe would then be determined by a simultaneous drawing from the two urns. Or a drawing might be made by some appointed person, or by a delegate of each tribe from one urn containing the descriptions of the ten inheritances.' In whatever way it was taken, the lot would be appealed to as finally deciding the matter, and foreclosing jealousies and disputes.

The Pillar of Cloud and Fire.

EXODUS xiii. 21: 'And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; that they might go by day and by night.'

Question.—*Is it possible to suggest, with any confidence, the form and appearance of this 'pillar'?*

Answer.—A column of smoke rising from a desert fire may properly be spoken of as a pillar. Such a pillar of smoke during the *day* would look dark like a cloud, but at night it would be bright, lighted up by the glow of the fire in it. We are to imagine, then, such a pillar of smoke rising perpendicularly from some point in the camp, probably Moses' tent. It manifestly differed from any bank of cloud in the sky, as clouds lie parallel with the earth, and this pillar stood between earth and sky. The wonder of it lay in its being smoke from no fire, and at night a bright appearance, though there

was no blaze to send its glow into it. When the tabernacle was erected, and the Shekinah glory rested on the mercy-seat, the pillar of cloud and fire gained its full associations, which, previously, could only have been suggested and anticipated.

Eastern caravans and armies are still, in many cases, guided by signals of fire and smoke, which take their place at the front of the march. Some illustrations have been collected. Alexander the Great had a huge cresset set up on a tall pole over his tent as a signal for departure, seen far off by all, by its light in darkness and its smoke by day. *Seetzen* quotes from an old Arab MS. the fact that the caliphs used fire to send news swiftly—the brightness serving this end by night and the smoke by day. The vast pilgrim caravans to Mecca guide themselves in a similar way. An Egyptian general, in an ancient inscription, is compared to a flame streaming in advance of an army, and this is repeated in an old papyrus.

It has been said of the Hebrews: 'Their march was guided by Jehovah Himself, who, from the commencement of their journey to their entrance into Canaan, displayed His banner, the *Shekinah*, in their van.'

Dr. J. Macgregor says: 'In that region a military chief, by way of banner, may have a column of smoke, rising from a fire which is carried on a brazier for the purpose. In the pure atmosphere it can be seen from a great distance, so that by means of it he may lead a population spreading wide over the whole region. The same fire, maintained through the night, will still have in it the authoritative guidance, because the flame shows through the darkness, as smoke shows through the clear sky. An expression of Quintus Curtius, in his "Life of Alexander the Great," has been noted on account of its resemblance to the description in the above passage—"Observabatur ignis noctu fumus interdiu"—"They kept their eye upon the fire by night, and upon the smoke by day."'

The *Speaker's Commentary* adds a point or two of interest: 'The Lord Himself did for the Israelites by preternatural means that which armies were obliged to do for themselves by natural agents. Passages are quoted from classical writers which show that the Persians and Greeks used fire and smoke as signals in their marches. Vegetius and Frontinus mention it as a general custom, especially among the Arabians. The success of some important expeditions, as of Thrasybulus and Timoleon, was attributed by popular superstition to a Divine light guiding the leaders. To these well-known instances may be added two of peculiar interest, as bearing witness to a custom known to all the contemporaries of Moses. In an in-

scription of the Ancient Empire an Egyptian general is compared to "a flame streaming in advance of an army." Thus, too, in a well-known papyrus, the commander of an expedition is called "a flame in the darkness at the head of his soldiers." By this sign, then, of the pillar of cloud, the Lord showed Himself as their leader and general.'

Canon Rawlinson says: 'From Succoth certainly, probably from Rameses, God moved in front of the host in the form of a pillar, which had the appearance of smoke by day and of fire by night. The Israelites marched, it is implied, some part of each day and some part of each night, which would be in accordance with modern practice, and is an arrangement introduced to get the march accomplished before the sun attains its full power. The pillar was at once a signal and a guide.'

Fighting Stars.

JUDGES v. 20: 'They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.'

Difficulty.—*Accepting this as a poetical figure, there must, nevertheless, have been some astrological notions on which it was based.*

Explanation.—It will be well to inquire first what historical facts are thus poetically represented. It is not possible to improve on *Dean Stanley's* vigorous and suggestive description of the defeat of Sisera. The final encampment of the Canaanitish army 'was beside the numerous rivulets which, descending from the hills of Megiddo into the Kishon, as it flows in a broader stream through the cornfields below, may well have been known as "the waters of Megiddo." It was at this critical moment that (as we learn directly from Josephus, and indirectly from the song of Deborah) a tremendous storm of sleet and hail gathered from the East and burst over the plain, driving full in the faces of the advancing Canaanites. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." As in like case in the battle of Cressy, the slingers and the archers were disabled by the rain, the swordsmen were crippled by the biting cold. The Israelites, on the other hand, having the storm on their rear, were less troubled by it, and derived confidence from the consciousness of this Providential aid. The confusion became great. The "rain descended," the four rivulets of Megiddo were swelled into powerful streams, the torrent of the Kishon rose into a flood, the plain became a morass. The chariots and the horses, which should have gained the day for the Canaanites, turned against them. They became entangled in the swamp; the torrent of Kishon—the torrent famous through former

ages—swept them away in its furious eddies; and in that wild confusion "the strength" of the Canaanites "was trodden down," and "the horsehoofs stamped and struggled by the means of the plungings and plungings of the mighty chiefs" in the quaking morass and the rising streams. Far and wide the vast army fled, far through the eastern branch of the plain by Endor. There, between Tabor and the Little Hermon, a carnage took place, long remembered, in which the corpses lay fattening the ground' (Psa. lxxxiii. 10).

As a poetical figure of this storm, the above passage receives illustration from a sentence of Æschylus, who represents 'water and fire in ruin reconciled,' as fighting against the Grecian fleet. It is helpful to form an estimate of the poetical characteristics of Deborah's Song, of which this striking sentence forms a part. 'Her strains are bold, varied, and sublime; she is everywhere full of abrupt and impassioned appeals and personifications; she bursts away from earth to heaven, and again returns to human things. She touches now upon the present, now dwells upon the past, and closes at length with the grand promise and result of all prophecy, and of all the dealings of God's providence, that the wicked shall be overthrown, while the righteous shall ever triumph in Jehovah's name.' To such an exalted poetical genius such a figure as that of stars fighting would not appear extravagant.

But the figure rests on curious notions of the relations of the stars to clouds and storms. Our notions of the immense distances of the stars had not then been reached. Stars and clouds, being both in the visible heavens, were thought to be connected, and it was easy to imagine the movements of the stars being the cause of the storms.

But there must have been a very general idea that the stars were directly concerned with the events of earth. The stars had come to be thought of as in some mysterious way the rulers of men's lives. This common astrological notion may be thought of as giving shape to the expressions of the poet, but we need not go so far as from a poetical expression to infer the religious belief of the poetess.

If an astrological basis for the figure can be recognised, importance will be felt to attach to a note given by *Stanley*, who says: 'I have taken verse 20 as it is usually rendered, as if "against." But the ambiguity of the original "with," combined with the repetition of the word "fought" from the previous verses, suggests the possibility that what is meant is the contrast between the fighting of the stars for Sisera, and the flood of the Kishon against him.' Following this hint, we get quite a new explanation. Deborah may be satirizing the dependence of Sisera on his omens and oracles. Generals and kings

consulted the astrologers and the star-gazers before entering on their expeditions; and, no doubt, they had encouraged Sisera. Nevertheless, God fought for Israel, and conquered the army for which, according to the notions of the times, even the stars were fighting.

Bertheau, *Bachmann*, and others, take the figure as simply expressive of Divine assistance. 'Filled with the thoughts of God's wonderful aid, and venturing under the impulses of a bold enthusiasm to give definite representation of His distinctly recognised yet mysterious work on earth and in the midst of men, it is to her as if the heavens, the eternal dwelling-place of the holy God, had bowed themselves down to earth, or—to use the language of the text—as if the stars, forsaking their usual orbits, had fought against Sisera. See the language of Psalm xviii.'

Lange says what we cannot fully follow: 'Consistently with Israelitish conceptions, the help of the stars can only be understood of their shining.'

Ewald is somewhat vague: 'Then ensued a concussion whose violence and decisive force could not be better depicted than by the figure in the song. For it might indeed well appear as if only supernal, heavenly powers could thus put to flight one who possessed the prestige of victory, and led such vast forces to battle.'

An ingenious explanation has been given by an English clergyman. The season was probably that of the autumn storms, which occur early in November. At this time meteoric showers are commonest, and are remarkably fine in effect seen in the evening light at a season when the air is specially clear and bright. The scene presented by the falling fiery stars, as the defeated host fled away by night, is one very striking to the fancy, and it would form a fine subject for an artist's pencil. (From *C. R. Conder.*)

Making Arrows Bright.

EZEKIEL xxi. 21: 'For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images, he looked in the liver.' Rev. Ver.: 'He shook the arrows to and fro.'

Question.—*Can the methods of ancient divination be known?*

Answer.—No real importance attaches to this subject; it can have only an archæological interest. A student of human nature may be anxious to know the various constitutions that are easily deluded, and the variety of forms that delusion may take; but no Scriptural importance attaches to such inquiries.

The above passage has been variously translated or paraphrased.

Geikie's translation is suggestive: 'For the King of Babylon stands at the parting of the roads, at the head of the two ways, to use divination as to which he should take. He shakes in a quiver the two arrows, marked Ammon and Jerusalem, to see which will be drawn out first by one blindfolded; he consults his idols; he looks at the liver of the sacrifices. In his right hand—the fortunate one—is already the arrow marked "Jerusalem," which has been drawn by him from the quiver.' *Geikie* says of this shaking the arrows: 'It was a common form of divination among the heathen Arabs.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* tells us that 'Pocock describes it at length. Before undertaking a journey, marrying a wife, and entering upon any important business, it was usual to place in some vessel three arrows, on one of which was written, "My God orders me;" on the other, "My God forbids me;" on the third was no inscription. These three arrows were shaken together until one came out; if it was the first, the thing was to be done; if the second, it was to be avoided; if the third, the arrows were again shaken together, until one of the arrows bearing a decided answer should come forth. The method of obtaining an omen by shaking lots together in a helmet was familiar to the ancient Greeks.'

Divination by shooting arrows was very common. Many were shot, and the march of an army was prosecuted in the direction in which the greatest number fell. Or the arrows were marked with the names of devoted cities, and that was first attacked the name of which was first drawn. Divination by rods was practised in this manner: The staff was placed upright, and then allowed to fall, and the decision of the course of an army, etc., was according as the staff fell.

The different systems are detailed in Cicero's treatise, 'De Divinatione.' Generally they were divided into the following branches: *aeromancy*, or divination by the air; *astrology*, by the heavens; *augury*, by birds, etc.; *arithnomancy*, by numbers; *capnomancy*, by the smoke of sacrifices; *cheiromancy*, by the lines on the palms of the hands; *geomancy*, by observing cracks or clefts in the earth; *haruspicy*, by inspecting the bowels of animals; *horoscopy*, marking the position of the heavens when a person is born; *hydromancy*, by water; and *pyromancy*, by fire.

Consulters of Familiar Spirits.

DEUTERONOMY xviii. 11: 'Or a consulter with a familiar spirit.' R.V.

Difficulty.—*Such a description, made without qualification, suggests the belief of the age that there were 'familiar spirits.'*

Explanation.—That undoubtedly was the common belief of ancient times. Such persons as we now call 'mediums' would, in former ages, be regarded as being possessed and used by some spirit. Indeed, the spiritualist notions of modern times are but a reproduction, with marked characteristics for this age, of the old-world notions.

'Magic, as a science, was supposed to depend on the influence of evil spirits, or the spirits of the dead. In early times all who engaged in the study of natural phenomena were accounted magicians, the term being thus used in a good sense, nearly equivalent to the word philosophers. Magic has been divided into *natural*, which consists in the application of natural causes to produce wonderful phenomena; *planetary*, which assigns either to the planets, or to spirits residing in them, an influence over the affairs of men; and *diabolical*, which invokes the aid of demons to accomplish supernatural effects.

Our translation 'familiar spirit' embodies the superstition of the Middle Ages, that demons attended on favoured persons. Sometimes the name was applied to the person considered as instructed and inspired by the demon.

Possibly persons are meant who, by means of ventriloquism, pretended to converse with their 'familiars,' and to receive audible responses from them. 'Even the wise Socrates laid claim to the aid of some such spirit.'

Dr. Ginsburg says: 'This phrase represents the single word *oboth* in the original, and the translators of our Authorised Version, by adopting it, implied that those who practised this craft were supposed to be attended by an invisible spirit who was subject to their call to supply them with supernatural information. According to the authorities during the second Temple, it denotes one who has a spirit speaking from under his armholes, or chest, with a hollow voice, as if it came out of a bottle, which is the meaning of *ob* in Job xxxii. 19. They identified it with the spirit of Python, by which the ancient Chaldee Version renders it.'

When we remember the hold which popular superstitions have even in these modern scientific days, and the trick of *personifying everything* which is a marked characteristic of imaginative and unscientific

times, we cannot wonder that the claim of the magicians to work by the agencies of 'familiar spirits' was so generally recognised. We need not admit that there was any truth in their claims; as scientific explanations can be given of all their characteristic features and devices. We may regard them as having been in part deceivers, and in part self-deceived.

Outmost Parts of Heaven.

DEUTERONOMY xxx. 4: 'If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven.'

Question.—*On what notion of the shape of the earth is this figure based?*

Answer.—The Revised Version renders this sentence thus: 'If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven.' Nehemiah, recalling this sentence in his prayer, gives it thus: 'Though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven' (Neh. i. 9). And our Lord used a similar expression (Matt. xxiv. 31), 'From the one end of heaven to the other.'

The words are to be regarded as poetical, but poetical figures depend on received notions and sentiments; they would not be effective for their age if they did not embody the commonly-received ideas of their age. Until men's mere observations could be scientifically corrected, there can be no doubt that they looked upon the earth as a level plane, and the blue sky as a solid arch, the horizon being the place where this arch touched the earth. That is the first notion of a *child* still, and that must have been the notion of the child-ages. From this point of view, the 'outmost parts of heaven' would be the parts nearest to the horizon edge.

It has further to be noticed that, in later times, Palestine was conceived to be the centre of the earth, and centre of the sky-dome. The 'outmost parts' were, therefore, the outer rim of the circle of which Palestine was the centre, so it expressed the idea of 'uttermost distance.'

'The word *rākīa* in Genesis, which we translate "firmament," properly signifies solid surface, and the Jews imagine the blue of the sky to be solid.' 'The earth was, to the Jews, as to the whole ancient world, the centre of the universe, and all the stars revolved around that immovable centre.'

Dr. Stapfer gives a careful view of the ideas entertained in the time of Christ, but it does not seem possible to recover, with precision, the views of the Hebrews of the time of Moses. The later

views, however, suggest the earlier. He says: 'The Jew looks upon the earth as a circular plane. God is seated above this plane, the circumference of which had been originally traced by Him on the abyss. The four cardinal points are called the ends of the heavens. Jerusalem is in the centre of this round flat disc which forms the earth. The surface of this plane is divided into two parts—the land of Israel, and that which is not the land of Israel. . . . The land of Israel was in the centre of the disc, surrounded on all sides by the world. At the edge of the disc was the sea, the great sea upon which no one had yet ventured far. It encircled the round plane, and as it washed the shores of pagan countries, these were sometimes called "the region of the sea." Rabbi Solomon said: "All the outer region is called the region of the sea, with the exception of Babylon"; and Rabbi Nissim says: "It is imperative to call all that is outside the land of Israel the region of the sea." It is impossible to say what idea the Jew had of the size of the disc of the earth. It is evident that the geography of the Jews was like that of other ancient nations. It had no surer basis than the direct testimony of the senses and childish observation.'

Ueberweg reminds us that 'Philosophy as science could originate neither among the peoples of the north, who were eminent for strength and courage, but devoid of culture; nor among the Orientals, who, though susceptible of the elements of higher culture, were content simply to retain them in a spirit of passive resignation; but only among the Hellenes (Greek races), who harmoniously combined the characteristics of both. The Romans, devoted to practical, and particularly to political, problems, scarcely occupied themselves with philosophy except in the appropriation of Hellenic ideas, and scarcely attained to any productive originality of their own. The so-called philosophy of the Orientals lacks in the tendency to strict demonstration, and hence in scientific character. Whatever philosophical elements are discoverable among them are so blended with religious notions, that a separate exposition is scarcely possible.'

As an illustration of the way in which the book of an age reflects the current notions of the age in which it was written, reference may be made to the Book of Enoch. 'The writer is evidently under the influence of Greek mythology. Moreover, he mixes up imagination and reality, and so completely confounds his individual fancies with the geographical notions of his contemporaries, that it is impossible to separate them. He is fascinated with the number seven, and speaks of seven great rivers which water the earth. The earth itself

is composed of seven islands that have arisen out of the heart of the sea. He thinks the sun sets each evening in an ocean of fire in which are the dead.'

The movements of the sun and moon, and also of the stars, must have been a constant source of wonder in early times. How the sun could get from one side of the sky-dome to the other during each night must have sorely puzzled them. They could only imagine and invent extraordinary solutions of what was a hopeless problem until a proper conception of the solar system had been arrived at.

Communications through Dreams.

1 KINGS iii. 5: 'In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night.'

Difficulty.—*The mediums of Divine communication with men vary greatly, and there seems to be no rule guiding the selection of a medium in any particular case.*

Explanation.—Certainly the principles on which God has selected His methods of communication with men have never been discovered. There appears, however, to be some good ground for the suggestion that *dreams* were the agencies preferred in the case of individuals outside the Jewish covenant, or of individuals removed from the ordinary Jewish relationships. We should recognise established modes of communication, through Urim and through prophets, and also special modes of communication, which were by vision or dream, the line of demarcation between these two modes being very difficult to trace. Possibly we may understand *vision* as belonging to the day-time, and *dream* as belonging to the night-time. In either case the man sees and hears what has no corresponding material form and substance, so he receives it as a Divine, a spiritual, communication.

A study of this difficulty will be aided by an examination of the cases of dream-revelation recorded in the Sacred Word: Abimelech, Gen. xx. 3-7; Laban, Gen. xxxi. 24; Pharaoh's butler and baker, Gen. xl. 5-19; Pharaoh, Gen. xli. 1-7; Midianite, Judg. vii. 13-15; Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. ii. 1, 31; iv. 5, 8; Wise Men, Matt. ii. 11, 12; Pilate's wife, Matt. xxvii. 19. All these are cases outside the Hebrew covenant.

Cases which must be more or less clearly regarded as within the Jewish covenant are the following: Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 12; Gen. xxxi. 10; his son Joseph, Gen. xxxvii. 5-9; Solomon, 1 Kings

iii. 5-15; Daniel, ch. vii.; Joseph, the reputed father of our Lord, Matt. i. 20, 21; ii. 13, 19, 20.

If we regard dreams as being the ordinary operation of the mind severed from the control of the will, we can readily understand how God can take the place of the sleeping will, and guide the selections and adjustments of the things brought up by the mind so as to convey His will to men. That God has done this leaves it open to say that it may please Him to do this still. But we should ever keep in mind that this is the time of 'the ministration of the Spirit,' and as God is now pleased to guide our thoughts, He does not need to fashion our dreams.

'In an early and simple age of the world dreams were held in high account, as giving clear and trustworthy intimations of coming events, it being thought, as Homer says, that they were from Jupiter. Hence, in Scripture great events are made to turn on dreams, and their interpretation. Before superstition had begun to abuse the best things and debase the purest, dreams may have been no unsuitable medium of communication between God and man.'

It is probably true, as has been said, that 'dreams, as means of revelation, are almost always referred to the periods in which God's servants had but the earliest and most imperfect knowledge of Him.' The selection of this mode of communication in the case of Solomon suggests that he was *officially*, rather than *personally*, godly.

Heavenly Bodies as Figures of Earthly Calamities.

ISAIAH xiii. 10: 'For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.'

Question.—*Will astrological notions explain these figures?*

Answer.—They depend rather on popular superstitions and alarms than on astrological ideas. Eclipses of sun and moon, conjunctions of stars, and what are known as 'falling stars,' created the greatest excitement and fear, as indeed they do still in heathen lands. It became, therefore, an easy thing to use these heavenly signs as indicative of commotions and troubles among the nations.

Bishop Wordsworth says: 'Such descriptions as these betoken a state of national confusion and panic like that which would be caused by the darkening of the heavenly bodies, to the contemplation of which the Babylonians were addicted for purposes of divination.'

Henderson, writing on this verse, says: 'A fine specimen of the

figurative manner in which the Hebrew prophets depict the horrors of national calamity. The metaphors of light and darkness to express prosperity and adversity are quite common; but when the effect is to be heightened, the writer represents the sources of light as being themselves affected, and their splendour as either increased or completely obscured.'

The Chaldæans early marked out the heavens into groups or constellations. The word translated 'constellations' in this text is, literally, 'the Orions,' that is, Orion and similar constellations, or remarkable groups of fixed stars. In the Persian mythology Orion is Nimrod, the founder of Babel, who was translated from earth to the position which he now occupies in the starry heavens. A similar belief appears to have been popular among other ancient nations. The name by which the Arabs designate this constellation is 'the Giant' (Gen. x. 8, 9). They also give him Sirius as a dog for his companion, which furnishes another point of coincidence with the Scripture account of Nimrod's favourite pursuit.

Clericus distinctly connects this verse with Babylonian astrology and even astrolatry (star-idolatry); he translates thus: 'The stars of heaven which are even their confidence.' *Malvenda* also supposes a special allusion to the astrological belief and practice of the Babylonians. *Vitringa* and *J. D. Michaelis* understand the image here presented to be that of a terrific storm, veiling the heavens and concealing its luminaries. But this is too prosaic.

On the similar figures as used by our Lord (Matt. xxiv. 29), *Dean Plumptre* remarks: 'The words reproduce the imagery in which Isaiah had described the day of the Lord's judgment upon Babylon, and may naturally receive the same symbolic interpretation. Our Lord speaks here in language as essentially apocalyptic as that of the Revelation of St. John (Rev. viii. 12), and it lies in the very nature of such language that it precludes a literal interpretation. Even the common speech of men describes a time of tribulation as one in which the "skies are dark" and "the sun of a nation's glory sets in gloom"; and the language of Isaiah, of St. John, and of our Lord, is but the expansion of that familiar parable. Sun, moon, and stars *may* represent, as many have thought, kingly power, and the spiritual influence of which the Church of Christ is the embodiment, and the illuminating power of those who "shine as lights in the world" (Phil. ii. 15); but even this interpretation is, it may be, over-precise and technical, and the words are better left in their dim and terrible vagueness.'

There is a largeness, unrestrainedness, almost unnaturalness (at

least, from our points of view) in Eastern metaphor, which makes the figurative element in Scripture very difficult for us to deal with. *Dr. E. Stapfer* well illustrates the extravagant notions of Messianic times which prevailed in the ancient Jewish nation, and intense and exaggerated figures and metaphors precisely suited the prevailing moods. 'The people looked forward with dread to the coming of the Messianic era. They were afraid of seeing the wars of Gog and Magog which the scribes predicted as its precursor. All looked for fearful calamities. Rabbi Eliezer ben Abena said: "When ye shall see nations rising up one against the other, then look for Messiah to follow; and ye may know that this is true by this token—that the same thing was done in the days of Abraham, for then the nations rose up against one another, and there came a Redeemer for Abraham. In the week of years in which the Son of David shall come there will be in the first year abundance of rain upon one city and drought upon another. In the second year the arrows of famine will go abroad. In the third there will be a great famine, and men, women, and children will die, as well as the saints and the rich; and there will be a judgment of forgetfulness upon those that study the law. In the fourth year there will be abundance for some and barrenness for others. In the fifth year a great abundance; and they shall eat, drink, and rejoice, and the law shall be again held in honour among those who teach it. In the sixth year voices will be heard. In the seventh year wars will break out, and at the end of the seventh year the Son of David will appear." The Jewish poet excels in describing the windy storm and tempest; he scarcely glances at Nature under any other aspect. The contemporaries of Christ portrayed in eloquent language the coming in of the Messianic era, but always under one aspect, speaking of the elements being dissolved, the stars falling, the earth being burnt up.' As a specimen of the writing of these times the Book of Enoch may be mentioned. 'The style of this work is extravagant to a degree. All the images are exaggerated. Everything is on a grander scale than nature.'

Seeking the Seer.

1 SAMUEL ix. 6: 'Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is a man that is held in honour; and all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can tell us concerning our journey whereon we go.'

Difficulty.—*It is strange thus to find Samuel only known as an Oracle.*

Explanation.—This difficulty is increased when we realize that the home of Saul was at no great distance from the usual abode of

Samuel. Possibly we have here only an illustration of the familiar proverb, 'A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country.' Samuel may have been well known throughout the land, and yet very imperfectly known and estimated by his actual neighbours.

But explanation may be suggested along another line. The servant does not give a full account of Samuel to his young master, he only deals with the precise matter that is before him. The minds of the two men were concerned about the lost asses, and they were not, then, specially interested in Samuel the Judge or Samuel the Reformer; they wanted a seer, a man gifted with what we call 'second sight,' who should direct their way. To this one point the servant directs the attention of the master.

Two other points need consideration. Young Saul was evidently a big, clumsy, yet handsome, slow-minded young man, not in the least likely to trouble himself about the work and influence of Samuel. And, moreover, the events which had brought Samuel into public prominence had occurred years before, and had passed almost out of memory. The young generation only vaguely knew about the prophet-judge. There had been no miraculous, or even specially remarkable features about his teaching or his magistracy for many years. It had become one of the regular institutions of the country.

Kirkpatrick supports these views. 'It seems strange that Saul apparently knows nothing about Samuel. But the days of Samuel's greater activity were long past, and he had for some time been living in comparative retirement, while "up to this point Saul had been only the shy and retiring youth of the family, employed in the common work of the farm," and knowing little of the political or religious movements of the time.'

The gifts of the 'seer' may be, or may not be, what we understand by *miraculous*. There is abundant evidence that some men and women are entrusted in a natural way with the gift of 'second sight.' And this may have been, in the case of Samuel, the agency which God was pleased to use in a direct way as the medium by which He communicated His will. The language of the servant certainly suggests that he only regarded Samuel as a seer among seers, but a seer who had an established and honourable reputation. There are mysteries of mind; special senses given to some men, and peculiar powers, and sensitivenesses, characteristic of some men, which must be much better understood before we can rightly judge between the miraculous and the non-miraculous in any given case. The opinion

of the servant is only interesting as an indication of public sentiment. What he *thought of* Samuel does not decide for us what Samuel *was.*

Geikie has an interesting passage on the ideas of the age concerning Oracles and Prophets. 'The prophet is essentially an appearance peculiar to early ages, and to the simple state of society before the fulness of revelation has yet been made known. The ancient world at large was marked by its eager efforts to penetrate the secrets of the higher powers which control human destiny. Nothing important was undertaken either in public or private life without inquiring the will of the gods through seers, diviners, augurs, oracles, or prophets, who claimed ability to satisfy this craving. But there was a signal difference between the representative of the heathen gods and those of Jehovah. To the former the indications of the divine will were read in the phenomena and occurrences of outer nature and of the animal world; in the whispering of the oak leaves of Dodona, in the flight of birds, in the motions of the entrails of a sacrifice, in the sounds of birds or beasts, or in their unexpected appearances. But in the true religion this noble instinct was met only by communications made from the unseen God through the spirit of man, His image on earth.'

W. J. Deane, after referring to Saul's proposal, on the third day, that they should return home, says: 'The servant, however, considered that there was still one chance left of recovering the lost animals. They might consult a wise man, and ask his advice. Just before them rose the hill of Ramathaim-Zophim, and the attendant opportunely remembered that in that city dwelt a man of God highly honoured and respected, and one whose statements always proved true; he suggested that they should have recourse to him before giving up the quest as hopeless. He does not speak as if he had known Samuel by name, and Saul seems to be equally ignorant. One calls him the "man of God," and the other the "seer." The fact, if fact it were, would be most perplexing. Gibeah was not very far distant from Ramah; and that Samuel, the eminent prophet, and the chief ruler of Israel, should have been unknown by name to Saul and his domestic is quite incredible. That they had never met before is plain from what happened subsequently, when Saul speaks to him as to a stranger, and inquires the way to the seer's house (1 Sam. ix. 18); but how are we to account for this apparent ignorance? Probably the personal name was almost forgotten in the office, and it was by this title he was generally known, the people near Ramah calling him "the seer," the Benjamites referring to him

as the "man of God." Another alternative is, that the dialogue between Saul and his servant is imaginary, founded upon the facts which came afterwards into prominence, and not to be taken as literally occurring. . . . It is as a "wise man" that the attendant wishes to consult Samuel—as one who, by his more than human knowledge, might direct them in their perplexity. . . . It would appear that it was no new thing to resort to seers for consultation in private affairs, and that it was customary to offer a present on such occasions. Whether the practice led to chicanery, and whether there was at this time a class of pretended soothsayers, cannot be decided. Saul could hardly have placed Samuel in any such category, though he is willing to appeal to him on a business which any mere soothsayer might have decided.'

SUB-SECTION II.

DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO MEDICAL SCIENCE.

An Incurable Disease.

2 CHRONICLES xxi. 18: 'And after all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease.'

Question.—*Can this disease be identified and described? Was it absolutely incurable, or only incurable by the medical skill and science of that day?*

Answer.—The *British Medical Journal* had an article on Ancient Medical Art, from which a few extracts are taken, in order to prepare for a consideration of these questions. 'Medical art was, among the Hebrews, practised from early times by a special profession—the Ropheim—and is already mentioned in the ancient Book of the Covenant, which embodies the oldest fundamental laws (Exod. xxi. 19). They may possibly have derived much of their knowledge from the Egyptians, famous for their discovery of remedies from remote ages, and for their medical skill generally; and during their sojourn in Egypt they had Hebrew midwives (Exod. i. 15-20). Their art seems, for the most part, to have been limited to surgery and the cure of external injuries (comp. Isa. i. 6; Ezek. xxx. 21; 2 Kings viii. 29; ix. 15); but the physicians, many of whom belonged to the prophetic order (2 Kings iv. 33-36; v. 10; viii. 7; xx. 7; Isa. xxxviii. 21), enjoyed great respect and confidence, and were very generally

employed, especially after the time of the exile, when even the smaller towns had their medical practitioners (Jer. viii. 22; Sirach xxxviii. 1-15, a remarkable passage; Joseph., *Vita*, 72, etc.), though the priestly Book of Chronicles severely blames King Asa for "not having consulted God, but the physicians" (2 Chron. xvi. 12). In later times the priests and Levites, who officiated barefooted at the Temple, had a special physician ("medicus viscerum") to cure the colds to which they were liable; the Essenes particularly were celebrated for their knowledge of medicine and the natural sciences.'

It has been explained that 'the art with the Israelites was only in its infancy. Individual observations and scattered experiences formed its substance; there was neither the induction of instances, nor the power of mind requisite to form an art. Medical skill was restricted to the external handling of serious bodily injuries, and to the knowledge of certain simples, of whose nature and working only a rough and vague idea was held. Chance sometimes threw better means in the way, but want of knowledge could turn them to but little account. Gradually, however, there was gathered a small treasure of skill and of resources, which was applied according to established rules. . . . . Some of the precepts of the law rest on medical knowledge of a more or less accurate nature, in judging of which we must remember the age, climate, and race to which these precepts pertain.'

The writer in Smith's *Dictionary* regards the illness of Jehoram as a severe dysentery, which was epidemic; and from verse 15 ('Until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day') it is assumed that the peculiar symptom was 'prolapsus ani' (Dr. Mason Good mentions a case of the entire colon exposed). Perhaps, however, it was what is known as *diarrhœa tubularis*, formed by the coagulation of fibrine into a membrane discharged from the inner coat of the intestines, which takes the mould of the bowel, and is thus expelled.

Kitto says: 'Jehoram's disease is probably referable to chronic dysentery, which sometimes occasions an exudation of fibrine from the inner coats of the intestines. The fluid fibrine thus exuded coagulates into a continuous tubular membrane, of the same shape as the intestine itself, and as such is expelled. A precisely similar formation of false membranes, as they are termed, takes place in the windpipe in severe cases of croup.'

Such a disease would certainly be regarded as incurable in those days; and even now it would only be mastered if dealt with in its earlier stages. The language of Scripture may suggest a sudden form of disease, and one of an *acute* character; but Bible writers

prefer to recognise in it a disease of a *chronic* character. *Geikie* even goes so far as to say, 'Jehoram, moreover, seemed in his own person to be judged and punished for his course by a *long* and agonizing internal disease which had struck him down. When, therefore, he died, no pretence of regret was heard; the customary funeral honours of a king were denied him, and his body, refused admission to the royal tombs' (possibly on account of the offensive character of his last illness), 'was buried in a separate spot inside the walls.' Two years is mentioned in verse 19 as the length of the disease, but this is not sufficient basis on which to decide its chronic character.

If not absolutely curable—and this cannot be decided without more minute details of its symptoms—the patient could certainly, nowadays, have found great relief through medicine, or possibly through surgical skill.

The Infection of Leprosy.

LEVITICUS xiii. 46: 'All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.'

Question.—*Has modern scientific observation and study settled the question of the infection, or contagiousness, of leprosy?*

Answer.—This matter is still disputable, but the preponderating evidence favours the view that it is not contagious in the ordinary and popular sense. *Trench's* note is familiar to Bible students. 'I allude to the common misapprehension that leprosy was catching from one person to another, and that lepers were so carefully secluded from their fellow-men, lest they might communicate the poison of the disease to them, as in like manner that the torn garment, the covered lip, the cry "Unclean, unclean!" were warnings to others that they should keep aloof, lest, unawares touching the lepers, or drawing into too great a nearness, they should become partakers of their disease. . . . All those who have examined into the matter the closest are nearly of one consent, that the sickness was incommunicable by ordinary contact from one person to another. A leper might transmit it to his children, or the mother of a leper's children might take it from him; but it was by no ordinary contact transferable from one person to another. All the notices in the Old Testament, as well as in other Jewish books, confirm the assertion that we have here something quite different from a mere sanitary regulation. Thus, where the law of Moses was not observed, no such exclusion necessarily found place. Naaman the leper commanded the armies of Syria (2 Kings v. 1); Gehazi, with his leprosy

that never should be cleansed, talked familiarly with the King of apostate Israel (2 Kings viii. 5). And even where the law of Moses was in force, the stranger and the sojourner were expressly exempted from the ordinances in relation to leprosy, which could not have been had the disease been contagious, and the motives of the leper's exclusion been not religious but civil, since the danger of the spreading of the disease would have been equal in their case and in that of native Israelites. How, moreover, should the Levitical priests, had the disease been this creeping infection, have ever themselves escaped it, obliged as they were, by their very office, to submit the leper to such actual handling and closest examination? *Lightfoot* can only explain this by supposing in their case a perpetual miracle.'

In a note the *Speaker's Commentary* discusses this question, treating leprosy under the scientific term, 'Elephantiasis': 'But the question whether Elephantiasis is contagious or not is one of the most peculiar interest in connection with the Levitical law. The committee of the College of Physicians consider that the weight of evidence is decidedly on the negative side. The freedom with which lepers often live with others in the closest domestic relation indicates that common opinion practically takes the same view. Several surgeons are said to have wounded themselves in the dissection of leprous bodies, without suffering any characteristic injury. But many of those who have replied to the Leprosy Committee affirm their belief that the disease is contagious at a certain stage—when the ulcers are running. It is evident that, if the disease is contagious, a very rare and critical concurrence of circumstances is required to develop the contagion. But it should not be overlooked that the contagiousness of a disease cannot be disproved by the multitude of escapes, if there are a few well-attested and well-observed facts in its favour. It cannot, at any rate, be doubted that the few Englishmen who have suffered from Elephantiasis have always, or nearly always, associated with leprous people, or lived in leprous countries. The case of Dr. Robertson, who, while superintending the leper-house in the Seychelles Islands, became a leper, is a very important one.'

Mr. Wilson, in his 'Notes on the Granada Hospital,' says: 'An excellent observer in Mauritius, in a private letter, states that he has personally known only two Europeans affected with the disease. Each of these had married Creole women, apparently free from disease, but they have left leprous children.'

H. E. W. Grant, private secretary to the Governor of Trinidad,

writes as follows: 'As the question of the contagiousness of leprosy has attracted considerable attention of late, I give the following information: The Cocorite (leper) Asylum in Trinidad was established in 1845. The normal population for many years past may be roughly estimated at about 200. The management of the institution was entrusted to a staff of Dominican sisters in 1869, and it has remained in the hands of this body since that date. No sister attached to the institution has ever contracted the disease of leprosy. The resident superintendent, who resigned last year, but who still lives in the asylum, has never quitted its precincts for a day since 1869, and the dispenser, who also was first appointed to the asylum twenty-one years ago, has only been absent from it for eight days during that period. Other sisters have been attached to the asylum as follows: two for fifteen years, two for thirteen, one for twelve, one for ten, one for nine, one for eight, and two for six years.'

Dr. Ginsburg declares firmly that there was no fear of contagion on the part of the authorities who had personally to deal with this distemper.

It is apparently clear that leprosy was popularly regarded as contagious; the regulations made concerning it in every age and every land certainly suggest this. The law for the Synagogue was this: 'If a leper comes into the synagogue he has to sit in a place apart, raised ten spans from the floor, and four cubits broad. He comes in first, and goes out last.'

In his latest book, *Geikie* says: 'Lepers are found over the whole country. Precautions are, indeed, taken to guard the healthy, but as leprosy is not contagious, these are in reality of no value. In Bible times, anyone thought to be attacked was shut up, and removed outside the city on the disease showing itself, he, his clothes, his very house, and everything he touched, being pronounced unclean. Nowadays, he may, perhaps, be allowed to live immediately inside the gates of Jerusalem, but he has still a separate dwelling assigned him, and everyone keeps aloof from him as polluted and dangerous. Nor will anyone touch a leper, or eat with him, or use anything he has handled. Arabs thrust a leper away from their encampments.'

Harper gives a curious fact illustrative of the anxiety of the people to keep leprosy from spreading: 'An English resident medical man told how that more than once some man would come to him who had been driven out with curses from his village, the inhabitants of which declared that he showed signs of leprosy. A medical examination of the closest nature failed to show any spot or blemish, and,

obtaining a certificate to that effect, the man would go back to his village, only to be driven out again by its residents, and ere long that man did show the leprous sign, and became a complete leper. What enabled those ignorant people to detect the very first signs of the disease none can tell.' But it is evident that they feared contagion, and their fear could only have been based on experience.

Egyptian Boils.

EXODUS ix. 11: 'And the Egyptians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians.'

Question.—*Are we to understand some new form of disease, or an exaggeration of an ordinary national trouble?*

Answer.—Three words are used for apparently the same affliction. Boils, blains, botch. The word 'blains' is found in Exod. ix. 9, 10, where it is associated with 'boils.' 'It shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth with blains upon man and upon beast throughout the land of Egypt.' The word 'botch' is found in Deut. xxviii. 27, and is there mentioned as a characteristic Egyptian disease. 'The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt (various reading, "boil"), and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.'

Boils and tumours are common in hot countries, and one of the causes may be the irritation produced by the particles of sand in the atmosphere. It has been declared by modern science, that a few handfuls of ashes can be divided into particles so inconceivably minute as to fill the air over a whole country. And Professor Tyndall's experiments incontestably show that invisibly small particles may be poisonous germs of infectious plagues.

Roberts, who writes of Hindoo customs, tells us that 'when the magicians pronounce an imprecation on an individual, a village, or a country, they take ashes of cow's dung (or from a common fire) and *throw them in the air*, saying to the objects of their displeasure, such a sickness, or such a curse, shall surely come upon you.'

Some identify the 'botch' with the black form of leprosy, and speak of it as an eruption to which the Egyptians were subject at the rising of the Nile. There was first an inflamed ulcer or boil, and then the pustules, or blains, broke out upon it. 'Cutaneous eruptions of extreme severity are common in the valley of the Nile, some bearing a near resemblance to the symptoms described in this

passage. In an old calendar mention is made of several contagious diseases in the month of December. The analogy of natural law is still preserved, the miracle consisting in the severity of the plague, and its direct connection with the act of Moses.' (*Speaker's Commentary.*)

Canon Rawlinson describes the disease as 'an inflammation producing pustules;' and he adds: 'Diseases of this character are not uncommon in Egypt, but they are not often very severe; nor do they attack indifferently man and beast. The miraculous character of the plague was shown (1) by its being announced beforehand; (2) by its severity (Exod. ix. 11); (3) by its universality; and (4) by its extension to animals.' '*Rashi* says of this "boil": "It was very bad, being moist on the inside, and dry outside." A learned Dalmatian Jew, with whom I have read this passage, tells me that he has seen many cases of this kind among the Hungarian and Polish Jews, and that it prevails among them, being traceable partly to their uncleanliness.'

Geikie associates the act of Moses with a well-known Egyptian custom. 'Handfuls of ashes from the "furnaces," it may be the smelting furnaces for iron—the special emblems in Scripture of the bitter slavery of the Hebrews—were sprinkled towards heaven in the sight of Pharaoh; an act familiar to those who may have seen it done, though the import could not for the moment be realized. In various Egyptian towns, sacred to Set or Typhon, the god of Evil—Heliopolis and Busiris, in the Delta, among them—red-haired and light-complexioned men, and as such, foreigners, perhaps often Hebrews, were yearly offered in sacrifice to this hideous idol. After being burnt alive on a high altar, their ashes were scattered in the air by the priests, in the belief that they would avert evil from all parts whither they were blown. But now, the ashes thrown into the air by Moses, instead of carrying blessing with them, fell everywhere in a rain of blains and boils on the people, and even on the cattle which the murrain had spared.' Possibly in vague reference to this, Tacitus says: 'Many authors agree that a plague which made the body hideous having broken out in Egypt, the King Bocchoris, on the counsel of the oracle of Amnion, from which he had asked what he should do, was ordered to purge the kingdom of those thus afflicted, and to send them away to other countries, as hateful to the gods.'

The 'botch' seems to mean the foul ulcer mentioned by Aretæus, and called by him *aphtha*, or *eschare*. He ascribes its frequency in Egypt to the mixed vegetable diet there followed, and to the use of

the turbid water of the Nile, but adds that it is common in Cœlo-Syria. Advanced cases are said to have a cancerous aspect, and some even class it as a form of cancer, a disease dependent on faults of nutrition.

A Disease of the Feet.

2 CHRONICLES xvi. 12: 'And in the thirty and ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet; his disease was exceeding great; yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians.'

Question.—*Can this disease be identified with any of those that afflict men in our time?*

Answer.—For 'exceeding great,' some would read 'which moved upward,' and this suggests something of a dropsical character. The parallel passage, 1 Kings xv. 23, does not add much to our information: 'Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.'

All that can be said is, that it may have been either *œdema*, swelling, or *podagra*, gout. The former is common in aged persons, in whom, owing to the difficulty of the return upwards of the sluggish blood, the watery part stays in the feet. The latter, though rare in the East at present, is mentioned by the Talmudists, and there is no reason why it may not have been known in Asa's time.

Most of the Bible writers identify Asa's disease with the 'gout.' *Geikie* says: 'At the close of a long and prosperous reign of forty-one years, King Asa died, after suffering for two years with a disease in the feet, apparently the gout, though details are not given.' The word commencing the sentence in 1 Kings xv. 23, 'nevertheless,' suggests some direct connection between his doings, or his neglectings, and his disease. 'Nevertheless' sets us upon thinking that he need not have suffered in this way if he had been more careful; and it is quite usual to connect the gout with self-indulgence in meat and drink.

Job's Disease.

JOB ii. 7, 8: 'So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.'

Difficulty.—*If Job's disease be identified as a form of leprosy, it becomes strange that no intimation is given of any miraculous healing.*

Explanation.—There is no absolute necessity for any such identification. The descriptions of the symptoms of the disease are not sufficiently distinct to guide any decision; and we must bear in

mind that men might be, and have been, afflicted with boils covering their bodies, which were of a simple, and curable, and in no sense of a malignant type. Indeed, the word 'boils' suggests a curable kind of complaint. Gatherings and boils are not infrequently signs of the impoverishment of the blood and general depression, following upon prolonged seasons of anxiety and distress such as Job had known. The fact of his having, later on, a family of beautiful children not only affirms the completeness of his cure, but declares the temporary and local character of his complaint. We prefer to regard his disease as a simple case of boils, producing, as they do when forming, intense irritation, and when rising to a head great pain and exhaustion.

But other opinions may be given, and in the study of them *all* the reader may form a satisfactory judgment.

Kitto makes a point of the boil in this case being 'a *sore* boil,' and says: 'The opinion entertained by the best scholars and physicians is, that it was the *elephantiasis*, or *black* leprosy, so called to distinguish it from the *white* leprosy, which was that most frequently indicated in the laws of Moses bearing on the subject; and was also the kind with which Miriam and Gehazi were smitten, for they are described as having become 'white as snow.' The opinion that Job's disease was the black leprosy is also of most ancient date. It is founded on the indications which the book contains, and which are observed to answer to this disease. These indications are afforded in the fact of his skin being so covered from head to foot that he took a potsherd to scrape himself; in its being covered with putrefactions and crusts of earth, and being at one time stiff and hard, while at another it cracked and discharged fluid; in the offensive breath, which drove away the kindness of his attendants; in the restless nights, which were either sleepless, or scared with frightful dreams; in general emaciation of the body; and in so intense a loathing of the burden of life that strangling and death were preferable to it. The black leprosy, which has been described as "a universal ulcer," is by some supposed to have received its current medical name of "elephantiasis" from the Greeks, on account of its rendering the skin like that of an elephant, scabrous and dark-coloured, and furrowed all over with tubercles. But others rather trace the name to the resemblance which may be found in the patient's foot to that of the elephant, after the toes have been lost, the hollow of the foot filled up, and the ankle enlarged.'

Delitzsch says: 'The description of this disease calls to mind Deut. xxviii. 35 with 27, and is, according to the symptoms men-

tioned further on in the book, *elephantiasis*, *Lepra nodosa*, the most fearful form of *lepra*, which sometimes seizes persons even of the higher ranks. Artapan says that an Egyptian king was the first man who died of this disease. Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, was afflicted with it in a very dangerous form. The disease begins with the rising of tubercular boils, and at length resembles a cancer spreading itself over the whole body, by which the body is so affected that some of the limbs fall completely away. Scraping with a potsherd will not only relieve the intolerable itching of the skin, but also remove the matter.'

Those who take the view that the Book of Job is a poem written in the Solomonic age, and based upon an ancient legend of the 'Patriarch of Uz,' are not required to seek for any precise identification of the disease. For the purposes of the poet, some disease involving irritation, disgrace, and depression of spirits, is selected, and the descriptions given of it are designedly poetical and suggestive, rather than critical, historical, or scientific. It may be possible to find notice of symptoms similar to those of elephantiasis; but they are symptoms found in connection with other diseases; and the most marked feature of elephantiasis—the falling away of limbs—is certainly wanting in this case of Job. To form an exact judgment it would be necessary for us to know accurately, not only the symptoms that were present, but also the symptoms that were absent.

The question of the historical or imaginative character of the Book of Job is discussed elsewhere. Here it need only be remarked that, if the work is strictly historical, there ought to be some plain indications of the agencies by which Job's cure from such a dreadful disease was effected. As a poem, the writer was under no obligation to provide such details, and the winding up of the book is certainly a remarkable illustration of what is called 'poetical justice.' It is certainly extraordinary, and beyond easy explanation, if it must be treated as historical.

Leprosy in Clothing and Houses.

LEVITICUS xiii. 47: 'The garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, whether it be a woollen garment or a linen garment.'

LEVITICUS xiv. 34: 'And I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession.'

Difficulty.—*Can a disease be properly spoken of as affecting both houses, garments, and people?*

Explanation.—Infection will linger in house and in garment, and this we know well in relation to ordinary forms of infectious

disease; and no more than this may possibly be meant in relation to leprosy. Certain conditions of the houses and the garments may have been regarded as productive of the disease. So we speak of scarlet-fever being in houses, or being conveyed by garments. And *Thomson* helps to this suggestion when he says that the upper rooms of the houses in Palestine, if not constantly ventilated, become quickly covered with mould, and are unfit to live in.

But the Mosaic regulations seem to involve something more serious than that, and even appear to support the conclusions of Sommer, Kurtz, and other recent authors, who attribute a *vegetable* origin to the leprosy. *Hugh Macmillan* takes this view, and gives some specially interesting information. 'The characteristics mentioned in the Levitical narrative are such as can belong only to plants. There are some species of fungi which could have produced all the effects described, and whose form and colour answer admirably to the appearances presented by the leprosy. We are, therefore, safe in believing that the phenomena described were caused by fungi.

The leprosy of the house consisted of reddish and greenish patches. The reddish patches on the wall were, in all likelihood, caused by the presence of a fungus well known under the common name of *dry-rot*, and called by botanists, *Merulius lachrymans*. Builders have often painful evidence of the virulent and destructive nature of this scourge. Most people are acquainted with the effects of this fungus, but its form and appearance are familiar to only a few. At first it makes its presence known by a few delicate white threads, which radiate from a common centre, and resemble a spider's web. Gradually these threads become thicker and closer, coalescing more and more, until at last they form a dense cottony cushion of yellowish-white colour and roundish shape. The size of this vegetable cushion varies from an inch to eight inches in diameter, according as it has room to develop itself and is supplied with the appropriate pabulum. Hundreds of such sponge-like cushions may be seen in places affected by the disease oozing out through interstices in the floor or wall. At a later stage of growth the fungus developes over its whole surface a number of fine orange or reddish-brown veins, forming irregular folds, most frequently so arranged as to have the appearance of pores, and distilling, when perfect, drops of water, whence its specific name of *lachrymans*, or weeping. When fully matured it produces an immense number of rusty seeds, so minute as to be invisible to the naked eye, which are diffused throughout the atmosphere, and are ever ready to alight and germinate in suitable circumstances.'

'The greenish streaks were caused by a much humbler kind of

fungus, the common green mould, or *Penicilium glaucum* of botanists. This fungus is extremely abundant everywhere, and seems to have been no less general in the ancient world, for we find traces of it pretty frequently in amber, mixed with fragments of lichens and mosses. To the naked eye it is a mere greenish, downy crust, spreading over a decaying surface, but under the microscope it presents a singularly lovely spectacle. The little patch of dusty cobweb is transformed into a fairy forest of the most exquisite shapes. Hundreds of delicate transparent stalks rise up from creeping, interlacing roots of snowy purity, crowned with bundles of slender hairs, each like a miniature painter's brush. Interspersed among these hairs, which, under a higher power of the microscope are seen to be somewhat intricately branched, occur greenish, dust-like particles, which are the *sporidia*, or seed-cases, containing in their interior the excessively minute and impalpable spores or germs by which the species is perpetuated.'

'The leprosy of *garments* may have been caused by the same fungi.'

Dr. Hayman, writing in 'Smith's Dictionary,' deals with this question. 'Some have thought garments worn by leprous patients are intended. The discharges of the diseased skin absorbed into the apparel would, if infection were possible, probably convey disease; and it is known to be highly dangerous in some cases to allow clothes which have so imbibed the discharges of an ulcer to be worn again. But no mention of infection occurs; no connection of the leprous garment with a leprous human wearer is hinted at: and this would not help us to account for a leprosy of stone walls and plaster. . . . It is now known that there are some skin diseases which originate in an acarus, and others which proceed from a fungus. In these we may probably find the solution of the paradox. The analogy between the insect which frets the human skin and that which frets the garment that covers it, between the fungus growth that lines the crevices of the epidermis and that which creeps in the interstices of masonry, is close enough for the purposes of a ceremonial law, to which it is essential that there should be an arbitrary element intermingled with provisions manifestly reasonable. . . . It is manifest also that a disease in the human subject caused by an acarus or by a fungus would be certainly contagious, since the propagative cause could be transferred from person to person. Some physicians, indeed, assert that *only* such skin diseases *are* contagious. Hence, perhaps, arose a further reason for marking, even in their analogues among lifeless substances, the strictness with which forms of disease so arising were to be shunned.'

The Mania of Nebuchadnezzar.

DANIEL iv. 33: 'The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown as eagle's feathers, and his nails like bird's claws.'

Difficulty.—*As grass will not nourish human bodies, this must be a poetical rather than historical description; or it must need some important qualifications.*

Explanation.—Nebuchadnezzar's disease certainly belongs to the more obscure, infrequent, and extraordinary cases of mania. We may assume that he personated the habits of the beast he supposed himself to be, but the term 'grass' must be taken as including cereal food, or we must understand that he was supplied with other and more nutritious forms of vegetable food than grass.

Hugh Macmillan points out that the grasses are the food of animals which supply man with milk and flesh, but that man cannot himself digest the grasses, and could not live on this food alone. Possibly the king's mania came on in paroxysms of intensity, and usually he may have been fed in some reasonable way.

Interesting accounts are given of persons suffering from this class of mania. *Dr. Nicholson*, the physician, says: 'The disease was a species of melancholy monomania, called by authors zoanthropia, or more commonly lycanthropia, because the transformation into a wolf was the most ordinary illusion. *Esquirol* considers it to have originated in the ancient custom of sacrificing animals. But whatever effect this practice might have had at the time, the cases recorded are independent of any such influence; and it really does not seem necessary to trace this particular hallucination to a remote historical cause, when we remember that the imaginary transformations into inanimate objects, such as glass, butter, etc., which are of every-day occurrence, are equally irreconcilable with the natural instincts of the mind. The same author relates that a nobleman of the court of Louis XIV. was in the habit of frequently putting his head out of a window, in order to satisfy the urgent desire he had to bark. *Calmet* informs us that the nuns of a German convent were transformed into cats, and went mewing over the whole house at a fixed hour of the day.'

Geikie tells us that 'instances of those afflicted in this way, eating grass, leaves, twigs, etc., like the great king, are familiar to medical men. Nor is it uncommon for the mind to lose its balance in some direction, in one raised so far above all other men as a mighty

despot, and so irresponsible. . . . That some terrible illness seized Nebuchadnezzar is strangely proved by the recent discovery of a bronze doorstep, presented by him to the great temple of El Saggil, at Borsippa, one of the suburbs or divisions of Babylon. It speaks of his having been afflicted, and of his restoration to health, and may well have been a votive offering to the gods on his recovery from the attack mentioned in Daniel.'

Dr. William Wright gathers up some information which greatly helps toward the elucidation of this difficulty in *Kitto's 'Cyclopædia.'* 'The difficulties attending the nature of the disease and recovery of Nebuchadnezzar, have not escaped the notice of commentators in ancient as well as modern times. The impression made by them on the acute mind of Origen, that father thus expresses: 'How is it possible to suppose a man metamorphosed into a beast? This sounds well enough in the poets, who speak of the companions of Ulysses and of Diomede as transformed into birds and wolves, fables which existed in the poet's imagination only. But how could a prince like Nebuchadnezzar, reared in delicacy and pleasure, be able to live naked for seven years, exposed to the inclemency of the weather, and having no nourishment but grass and wild fruits? How could he resist the violence of wild beasts? Who governed the empire of Chaldæa in his absence? . . . It must be borne in mind that Origen's passion for allegorizing frequently led him to overstate the difficulties of Scripture, and his own solution of those which he enumerates, viz., that the account of Nebuchadnezzar's metamorphosis was merely a representation of the fall of Lucifer, is not likely to meet with many supporters. Besides Origen's, there have been no less than five different opinions in reference to this subject. *Bodin* maintains that Nebuchadnezzar underwent an actual metamorphosis of soul and body, a similar instance of which is given by Cluvier on the testimony of an eye-witness. *Tertullian* confines the transformation to the body only, but without loss of reason, of which kind of metamorphosis St. Augustine reports some instances said to have taken place in Italy, to which he himself attaches little credit; but Gaspard Peucer asserts that the transformation of men into wolves was very common in Livonia. Some Jewish Rabbins have asserted that the soul of Nebuchadnezzar, by a real transmigration, changed places with that of an ox; while others have supposed not a real, but an apparent or docetic change, of which there is a case recorded in the life of St. Macarius, the parents of a young woman having been persuaded that their daughter had been transformed into a mare. The most generally received opinion, however,

is, that Nebuchadnezzar laboured 'under the species of hypochondriacal monomania, which leads the patient to fancy himself changed into an animal (or other substance), the habits of which he adopts.'

The Scripture statements are quite satisfied by our assuming that during seven years Nebuchadnezzar was subject to fits of insanity, and while they were on him, imagined himself an animal, and behaved as if he really were one. During his fits he would be kept securely within the palace grounds.

Elisha's Way of Restoring a Dead Child.

2 KINGS iv. 34: 'And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.'

Difficulty.—*This seems to be the restoration of the child by natural means. It is not easy to see where the miraculous element comes in, since all restorative means are dependent on God's power working through them.*

Explanation.—We are at grave disadvantage in the absence of scientific descriptions of Bible diseases. It is certainly open to anyone to suggest that this was a case of suspended animation, rather than of death, and that the child was restored by the will-power of the prophet. There have been cases in which doctors have, by their own breath, started the vital action of the organs in new-born children. There have been cases in which life has been breathed into those who were unconscious from drowning. And there is good and sufficient evidence to support the claims of those who affirm that persons can recover the dying—under certain circumstances—by willing their life into them.

It must also be borne in mind that both Old and New Testament miracles are associated with some kind of *agency*. Our Lord made clay and anointed the eyes He opened. Elisha put wood to make iron swim, etc. It may be that the agency was not essential to the miracle, and yet it seems more reverent to say, that if it was used it was essential, and there must be something for us to learn from the fact that the miracle was made dependent on the agency.

All restorative agents, be they medical or surgical, electrical, mesmeric, hypnotic, biological, or otherwise, we regard as absolutely dependent on the Divine blessing. A recovery from disease is never adequately explained by treating only the agency; the effective force behind the agency must be considered, and that is God working. We may then distinctly recognise in Elisha's acts restorative agencies,

and with equal distinctness hold that the efficient force which worked through the agency was the miraculous power of God.

The result of sunstroke may be unconsciousness and suspended animation; and from sunstroke this child evidently suffered. In such a case nowadays effort would certainly be directed to the restoration of suspended vitality, just as in cases of drowning. And we must bear in mind that there is no support of the woman's idea that the child was dead; she acted on her own conviction with great promptitude and great secrecy.

The narrative clearly indicates that the restoration of the child involved so much physical exhaustion for Elisha, that he had to stop in the middle of it, and restore his own wasted breath by walking to and fro in the house. We may say that it was a case of miraculous restoration in which the material agency employed was unusually extensive and long-continued.

A Cloth on the Face.

2 KINGS viii. 15: 'And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died.'

Question.—*Did Hazael do this as a remedy, or with the distinct intention of putting his master to death?*

Answer.—The *Revised Version* renders, 'He took the coverlet.' The word used means literally 'The woven cloth.' This alteration of the *Authorized Version* suggests that Hazael attempted to administer what we should now call the 'water-cure.' He may have applied it at an unsuitable time, or it may have proved unsuitable for this particular patient. We only know that the result was fatal, but the record leaves open the question whether the death was designed or accidental. If there is bias in the narrative, it certainly is *against* Hazael, who seems to have been excited to action by the prophecy of his becoming king. The words spoken by Elisha to Hazael (verse 12) indicate that he was a man of violent and unscrupulous character, who would think little of removing his king if he stood in the way of his ambitions.

Harper takes the view that Hazael intended murder. Elisha saw from Hazael's face the black thought in his heart, for murder was seething there; and though he indignantly says, 'Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?' yet he goes back, and with a wet cloth suffocates his royal master, and usurps the throne.

Geikie's explanation is quite imaginative. 'Next day, however, Hazael was king. He, or some one commissioned by him, had

overpowered Benhadad in his bath, and had suffocated him with the wet cloths he had been using.'

Ewald says, 'On the next day, however, the king was found dead, not certainly from his illness, but from violence; as he was going to take his bath, his servant (we do not know from what particular motive) dipped the bath-cloth into the warm water, and, before the king could call for help, drew it so tight over his head that he was smothered.'

Josephus tells us that Hazael strangled his master with a mosquito-net.

Dr. Lumby thinks the means Hazael employed was probably the coverlet of the bed, which, soaked and laid over the sick man's face, would effectually stop his breath. Death so caused would give very little sign of violence, and might in those early times be readily referred to the disease of which the king was sick.

The *Speaker's Commentary* thinks that the article used was 'a cloth, or mat, placed between the head and the upper part of the bedstead, which in Egypt and Assyria was often so shaped that pillows (in our sense) were unnecessary.' It mentions, but only to reject, the notion of Geddes, Boothroyd and Schultz, that Benhadad is the subject of the verbs 'took,' 'dipped,' 'spread,' and that he put the cloth on himself to give himself relief, and so unintentionally caused his own death. As illustration, it notices that Suetonius declares the Roman Emperor, Tiberius, to have been smothered with his pillow as he lay upon a sick-bed.

Bruce, in his travels, gives an account of a fever which prevailed in Abyssinia, called the *nedad*, and he adds: 'If the patient survives till the fifth day, he very often recovers by drinking water only, and throwing a quantity of cold water upon him, even on his bed, where he is nevertheless permitted to lie without attempting to make him dry or to change his bed, till another deluge adds to the first. Such a custom suggests the possibility that Hazael was doing his best, or perhaps only pretending to do his best, to effect a water-cure.'

Stanley says, Elisha 'gazed earnestly on Hazael's face; saw his future elevation, and saw with it the calamities which that elevation would bring on his country . . . . Hazael himself stood astounded at the prophet's message. He, insignificant as he seemed, a mere dog, to be raised to such lofty power, and do such famous deeds! But so it was to be. By his deed, or another's, the king died, not of his illness, but by an apparent accident in his bath; and Hazael was at once raised to the throne of Syria.

(NEW TESTAMENT.)

The Medicine of our Lord's Time.

MARK v. 26: 'And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse.'

Question.—*Is it possible to discover any scientific elements in the medical system of the time of our Lord?*

Answer.—The Cyclopædias deal fully with the medical systems associated with the Old Testament, and but little with those associated with the New Testament.

Dr. E. Stapfer, in his work on 'Palestine in the Time of Christ,' has collected some curious and interesting information. He says: 'Everyone at this moment meddled with medicine, yet no one understood its very first principles. Scientific medicine had been known in Greece for five hundred years, but it had been confined to that country. The persistent ignorance of the Jews on the subject of medicine is accounted for by their belief that sickness was the punishment of sins committed either by the sufferer himself or by his relations; hence it was almost always attributed to the action of evil spirits. The only cure possible, therefore, was the expulsion of the evil spirit (or spirits, for there might be many), and the whole science of medicine consisted in discovering the best method of exorcising the demon. It was not the most educated man who was competent to this work of benevolence, but the most religious. The more pious a man was, the more fit was he to heal the sick, that is, to cast out the evil spirits. Everyone, therefore, practised this art of healing as best he could for himself and for those who belonged to him. The rabbis, scribes, and doctors of the law undertook the casting out demons, and some of them were considered very skilful in the art. The healing art was simply exorcism. . . . When the sick man was not possessed, the methods of cure were more serious. . . . Some doctors tried to employ real remedies. The Essenes, for example, were acquainted with some medicinal herbs, and knew their properties. They were the possessors of the famous Book of Incantations said to be by King Solomon. Perhaps it contained some recipes which may have been of use. The softening, soothing properties of oil seem to have been appreciated even then. It was often mixed with wine, and this remedy is still very efficacious in certain cases. The sick man was anointed with oil. These unctions may, however, have been credited with some magic virtue. Nor is this all. Occasionally the Talmuds

speak of prescriptions for other complaints. The cedar cone was used in medicine. Ophthalmia was common. The traveller is struck now with the number of blind people in the East. Thus the Bible speaks of eye-salve. It was a favourite remedy to wash the eyes with saliva and wine. This gave much relief, but it was forbidden to use it on the Sabbath-day.'

Stapfer gives a curious passage from the Talmud of Babylon illustrating the treatment of a patient suffering as did the woman mentioned in the passage at the head of this paragraph. We know who these physicians were. They were the rabbis. And we know also what remedies they had prescribed for this poor woman. Rabbi Yochanan says: 'Take a denarius weight of gum of Alexandria, a denarius weight of alum, a denarius weight of garden saffron, pound all together, and give it to the woman in some wine. If this remedy does not succeed, take three times three logs of Persian onions, boil them in the wine, and give this to the woman to drink, saying to her, "Be free from thy sickness." If this does not succeed, take her to a place where two roads meet, put in her hands a cup of wine, and let some one coming up behind, startle her, saying to her: "Be free from thy sickness." If still nothing answers, take a handful of saffron and a handful of *fænum græcum*, boil them in some wine, and give it her to drink, saying: "Be free from thy sickness."'

The Talmud goes on thus, proposing a dozen other means to be used, among them the following: 'Dig seven pits, and burn in them some vine-branches not yet four years old. Then let the woman, carrying a cup of wine in her hand, come up to each pit in succession, and sit down by the side of it, and each time let the words be repeated: "Be free from thy sickness."'

The mixture of science and superstition in these very curious prescriptions is striking.

Saliva as a Curative Agent.

JOHN ix. 6: 'When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.'

Question.—*Are we to recognise in the clay so mixed an actual agent in effecting the recovery of this man's eyesight?*

Answer.—The incident is to be viewed entirely from the side of the blind man. The use of an agent was not necessary for the people, or for the disciples, but the man, being unable to see, could only be approached and influenced through feeling. The feeling

had to be one which he would be able to recognise; the remedy was probably one which he had tried before. It had hitherto been inefficient; then, since it was now efficient, the difference lay not in the clay, but in the *person administering*. So his faith was drawn out to Christ.

The point needing illustration is the popular sentiment concerning saliva in the time of our Lord. There can be little doubt that the means used by our Lord found their place in the ordinary prescriptions of the day. 'We know from the pages of Pliny, and Tacitus, and Suetonius, that the *saliva jejuna* was held to be a remedy in cases of blindness, and that the same remedy was used by the Jews is established by the writings of the Rabbis. That clay was so used is not equally certain, but this may be regarded as the vehicle by means of which the saliva was applied. Physicians had applied such means commonly to cases of post-natal blindness, but congenital blindness had always been regarded as incurable.'

Farrar and *Geikie* both tell us that it was the belief, in antiquity, that the saliva of one who was fasting was of benefit to weak eyes, and that clay relieved those who suffered from tumours on the eyelids. It may be that Jesus thought of this.

Dr. Plummer says: 'Regard for Christ's truthfulness compels us to regard the clay as the *means* of healing; not that He could not heal without it, but that he willed this to be the channel of His power. Elsewhere He uses spittle, to heal a blind man (Mark viii. 23); to heal a deaf and dumb man (Mark vii. 33). Spittle was believed to be a remedy for diseased eyes (comp. Vespasian's reputed miracle, "Tac. Hist.," iv. 81, and other instances); clay also, though less commonly. So that Christ selects an ordinary remedy, and gives it success in a case confessedly beyond its supposed power (v. 32).'

Trench says: 'The virtue especially of the *saliva jejuna*, in cases of disorders of the eyes, was well known to antiquity.'

Devil-Possessions, viewed Medically.

MATTHEW ix. 28: 'There met him two possessed with devils (demons) coming forth out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way.'

Difficulty.—*Medical Science seems able to account for these and similar cases without having any resort to suppositions of spirit possessions.*

Explanation.—In the former volume, 'Handbook of Biblical Difficulties,' p. 515, this topic was somewhat fully treated. It is

only necessary to add here some of the more recent additions to the elucidation of a difficult subject.

Dr. E. Stapfer says: 'Cases of madness, hysteria, hallucination, were frequent among the Jews in the first century. If they were wrong in calling almost every sort of disease "possession," it was very natural that they should give the name of possessed persons, or demoniacs, to the sufferers from those strange nervous affections which still baffle science. We know now what these so-called "possessions" were, and anyone who has witnessed one of the crises of mania can easily understand how among the Jews, and in the middle ages, people believed in the influence of demons. These affections were all the more frequent in the time of Christ, on account of the state of high-strung religious and political excitement in which the Jewish people were living.'

It should be kept in mind, that the descriptions given of these 'demoniacs' in the New Testament depend entirely on the casual observation of the beholder, toned by the common sentiment and superstition of the age. In no instance have we anything that can be called a scientific record of the signs of the disease. It is, therefore, difficult for us to say whether modern medical science has covered and included all the New Testament cases. Scientific details *now* given can hardly be expected to match precisely what are merely vague and indefinite hints and descriptions. But a candid mind could hardly fail to recognise, that the presumption is wholly in favour of the strictly medical character of all these so-called devil-possessions. Indeed, the explanation of them as spirit-possessions would never be suggested to anyone unless a previous theory in relation to the malevolent influence of spirits were held. We can hardly hesitate to class them under 'diseases.'

There is, however, still found among Bible writers an unwillingness to yield the idea that some unique form of suffering through the agency of spirits is meant; and we must therefore submit the matter to the judgment of our readers, who are likely to take one or the other view, according as they are related to the materialistic or spiritualistic schools of thought.

Stalker says: 'Besides these bodily cures, He dealt with the diseases of the mind. These seem to have been peculiarly prevalent in Palestine at the time, and to have excited the utmost terror. They were believed to be accompanied by the entrance of demons into the poor imbecile or raving victims, and this idea was only too true.'

Vallings say: 'The psychology of demonism is obscure. Modern

lunacy furnishes points of contact, and apparent instances of it now and then. But the two are not to be confounded, as the ordinary lunatic may merely suffer from some cerebral disease, while the demonized need have none.' But proof of this distinction is lacking.

Medicinal Value of Music.

1 SAMUEL xvi. 16: 'Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man who is a cunning player on the harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well.'

Difficulty.—*There may be a soothing value in music, but only in a way of accommodation can it be called a medicinal agent.*

Explanation.—It is quite true that all disease involves the disturbance of some bodily process, the injury, or unnatural working, of some bodily organ, and music can hardly be thought of as repairing or restoring such. But we are learning more and more clearly that many forms of disease have their true causes in conditions of mind. The diseased brain, or nervous system, may be the effect of the real disease, whose seat is in disposition, character, feeling, etc. There are two ways in which disease may be viewed. Bodily conditions may create mental conditions; but it is equally true that mental conditions may create bodily conditions. Constantly the doctor, visiting a fresh patient, will have to say: 'You have something on your mind;' or 'Have you not had some great trouble lately?' or 'You have been overworking the brain.' Now music may be a restorative agent when the cause of disease is mental, or belongs to character rather than to bodily organ.

Saul's case belongs to the mental, and not to the bodily, class, though the account we have of him suggests some slowness of brain-movement, which may have developed into an obscure form of insanity. Jealousy was the irritating cause of his times of unrestrained passion; and there are illustrations of the medicamental power of music in such cases.

The prominent feature of Saul's disease was fits of moodiness and melancholy, which sometimes were so severe as to become murderous mania. There is a story recorded concerning Philip V. of Spain. He was seized with a total dejection of spirits, which rendered him incapable of appearing in Court, or of attending to his affairs. A celebrated musician, Farinelli, was invited to Spain, and he gained power over the king by the fascination of his songs.

Edersheim writes, somewhat fancifully: 'The evil spirit sent from God was the messenger of that evil which in the Divine judgment was

to come upon Saul, visions of which now affrighted the king, filled him with melancholy, and brought him to the verge of madness—but not to repentance. It is thus, also, that we can understand how the music of David's harp soothed the spirit of Saul, while those hymns which it accompanied—perhaps some of his earliest psalms—brought words of heaven, thoughts of mercy, strains of another world, to the troubled soul of the king.'

Francis Jacox gathers up some very striking examples of what he calls 'Medicamental Music:' 'That there is something more than ordinary in music, Bishop Beveridge, in his "Private Thoughts," infers from this fact—that David made use of the harp for driving away the evil spirit from Saul, as well as for bringing the good spirit upon himself. The gentle prelate therefore recognises in music a sort of secret and charming power, such as naturally dispels "those black humours which the evil spirit is apt to brood upon," and such, too, as composes the mind into a more regular, sweet, and docile disposition, thereby rendering it "the fitter for the Holy Spirit to work upon, the more susceptive of Divine grace, and more faithful messenger to convey truth to the understanding."' And he cites his personal experience—*experto crede*—in favour of this view.

Buretti declares music to have the power of so affecting the whole nervous system as to give sensible ease in a large variety of disorders, and in some cases a radical cure. Particularly he instances sciatica as capable of being relieved by this agency. Theophrastus is mentioned by Pliny as recommending it for the hip-gout; and there are references on record by old Cato and Varro to the same effect. Æsculapius figures in Pindar as healing acute disorders with soothing songs:

> 'Music exalts each joy, allays each grief,
> Expels diseases, softens every pain,
> Subdues the rage of poison and of plague;
> And hence the wise of ancient days adored
> One power of Physic, Melody, and Song.'

Over Luther, as Sir James Stephen has remarked, there brooded a constitutional melancholy, sometimes engendering sadness, but more often giving birth to dreams so wild that, if vivified by the imagination of Dante, they might have passed into visions as awful and majestic as those in the 'Inferno.' Various were the spells to which Luther had recourse, to cast out the demons that haunted him; and of these remedial agencies the most potent, perhaps, was music. 'He had ascertained and taught that the spirit of darkness abhors sweet sounds not less than light itself; for music (he says), while it chases away the evil suggestions, effectually baffles the wiles of the

tempter. His lute, and hand, and voice, accompanying his own solemn melodies, were therefore raised to repel the vehement aggressions of the enemy of mankind.'

It is characteristic, as Herr Kohl observes, of music-loving Bohemia, that, in the lunatic asylum of its capital, music should be considered one of the chief aids and appliances for the improvement of the patients. In addition to the garden concerts, in which all assist who can, there is chamber-music—quartets, trios, etc.—every morning and evening in the wards, and a musical-director takes high rank in the official staff of the establishment.

Elizabeth Charlotte of Orleans, mother of the Regent, describes in one of her letters a Madame de Persillie, well born and well bred, but a dangerous lunatic; who, however, if you could but slip a guitar into her hand when the fury-fit came on, would become calm again as soon as she began to play.

Browning, in 'Paracelsus,' has the following lines:

> 'My heart! they loose my heart, those simple words;
> Its darkness passes, which nought else could touch;
> Like some dank snake that force may not expel,
> Which glideth out to music sweet and low.'

Paul's Thorn in the Flesh.

2 CORINTHIANS xii. 7: 'Wherefore, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn (stake) in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch.' (Rev. Ver.)

Question.—*Have modern discussions provided ground for a decision concerning this chronic affliction of the apostle?*

Answer.—It may be said with some confidence that the evidences and the arguments favour the idea that St. Paul suffered from chronic inflammation of the eyes. The word chosen by the apostle, which is translated 'thorn,' means a stake, or goad, a thing that *pricks*, and this would suggest the painful and extremely irritating pricking sensation that is characteristic of inflammation of the eye.

Various other suggestions have been offered. Tertullian is the first Christian writer who ventured on an explanation. He thinks it was a pain in the ear or head. Some think that the Apostle suffered from epileptic fits. The Greek commentators say the Apostle may be referring, in a figurative manner, to the opponents of his Apostolic authority.

Professor Lias elaborates a theory which may have novelty for some of our readers: 'Our last alternative must be some defect of character, calculated to interfere with St. Paul's success as a minister

of Jesus Christ. And the defect which falls in best with what we know of St. Paul is an infirmity of temper. There seems little doubt that he gave way to an outbreak of this kind when before the Sanhedrin, though he set himself right at once by a prompt apology. A similar idea is suggested by St. Paul's unwillingness to go to Corinth until the points in dispute between him and a considerable portion of the Corinthian Church were in a fair way of being settled. In fact, his conduct was precisely the reverse of that of a person who felt himself endowed with great tact, persuasiveness, and command of temper. Such a man would trust little to messages and letters, much to his own presence and personal influence. St. Paul, on the contrary, feared to visit Corinth until there was a reasonable prospect of avoiding all altercation. In fact, he could not trust himself there. He "feared that God would humble him among them." He desired above all things to avoid the necessity of "using sharpness," very possibly because he feared that when once compelled to assume a tone of severity, his language might exceed the bounds of Christian love. The supposition falls in with what we know of the Apostle before his conversion. It is confirmed by his stern language to Elymas the sorcerer, with which we may compare the much milder language used by St. Peter on a far more awful occasion. The quarrel between St. Paul and St. Barnabas makes the supposition infinitely more probable. The passage above cited from the Epistle to the Galatians may be interpreted of the deep personal affection which the Apostle felt he had inspired in spite of his occasional irritability of manner. The expression that he "desired to be present with them and to change his voice," would seem to point in the same direction. And if we add to these considerations the fact, which the experience of God's saints in all ages has conclusively established, of the difficulty of subduing an infirmity of temper, as well as the pain, remorse, and humiliation such an infirmity is wont to cause to those who groan under it, we may be inclined to believe that not the least probable hypothesis concerning the "thorn" or "stake" in the flesh, is that the loving heart of the Apostle bewailed as his sorest trial the misfortune that by impatience in word he had often wounded those for whom he would willingly have given his life.'

Farrar summarises the arguments in favour of ophthalmia: 'We know that he was physically blinded by the glare of light which surrounded him when he saw the risen Lord. The whole circumstances of that event—the noonday journey under the fierce Syrian sun, the blaze of sun which outshone even that noonday brightness, and the blindness which followed it—would have been most likely to

leave his eyes inflamed and weak. His stay in the desert and in Damascus—regions notorious for the prevalence of this disease—would have tended to develop the mischief when it had once been set up, and though we are never told in so many words that the Apostle suffered from defective sight, there are yet so many undesigned coincidences of allusion all pointing in this direction, that we may regard it as an ascertained fact. Apart from the initial probability that eyes which had once been so seriously affected would be liable to subsequent attacks of disease, we have the following indications: (1) When speaking of his infirmity to the Galatians, St. Paul implies that it might well have rendered him an object of loathing; and this is pre-eminently the case with acute ophthalmia. The most distressing objects, next to the lepers, which the traveller will ever see in the East—those who will most make him inclined to turn away his face with a shudder of pity and almost involuntary disgust—are precisely those who are the victims of this disease. (2) And this would give a deeper pathos and meaning to the Apostle's testimony that the Galatians, in the first flush of their Gospel joy, when they looked on the preacher of those good tidings as an ángel of God, would, had it been possible, *have dug out their eyes* in order to place them at the sufferer's service. (3) The term, "a stake in the flesh," would be most appropriate to such a malady, because all who have been attacked with it know that the image which it recalls most naturally is that of a sharp splinter run into the eye. (4) Moreover, it would be extremely likely to cause epileptic or other symptoms, since in severe attacks it is often accompanied by cerebral disturbance. (5) In spite of the doubt which has been recently thrown on the commonly accepted meaning of the expression which St. Paul uses to the Galatians, "Ye see in what large letters I write to you with my own hand," it must at any rate be admitted that it suits well with the hypothesis of a condition which rendered it painful and difficult to write at all. That this was St. Paul's normal condition seems to result from his almost invariable practice of employing an amanuensis, and only adding in autograph the few last words of greeting or blessing, which were necessary for the identification of his letters in an age in which religious forgeries were by no means unknown. (6) It is obvious, too, that an ocular deformity, caused as this had been, might well be compared to the brand fixed by a master on his slave. (7) Lastly, there is no other reasonable explanation of the circumstance that, when St. Paul had uttered an indignant answer to the high priest, and had been rebuked for it, he at once frankly offered his apology by saying that "he had not recognised the speaker to have been the

high priest." Now, considering the position of the high priest as *Nasî* of the Sanhedrin, seated at the end of the hall, with the *Ab Beth Dîn* on one side of him, and the *Chacham* on the other, it is almost inconceivable that Paul should not have been aware of his rank if he had not suffered from defective sight. All that his blurred vision took in was a white figure, nor did he see this figure with sufficient clearness to be able to distinguish that the overbearing tyrant was no less a person than the high priest himself.'

The Influence of the Moon.

DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 14: 'Blessed of the Lord be His land, for the precious things put forth by the moon.'

Question.—*Is there any scientific basis for the commonly received notion, that the moon can affect injuriously the bodies and the minds of men?*

Answer.—The idea is certainly sustained in tropical climates. The inhabitants of these countries are most careful in taking precautionary measures before exposing themselves to its influence. Sleeping much in the open air, they are careful to cover well their heads and faces. It has been proved beyond a doubt that the moon smites as well as the sun, causing blindness for a time, and even distortion of the features.

In Montgomery Martin's 'History of the British Colonies' we have the following account of the influence of the moon: 'In considering the climate of tropical countries, the influence of the moon seems to be entirely overlooked; and surely, if the tides of the ocean are raised from their fathomless bed by lunar power, it is not too much to assert that the tides of the atmosphere are liable to a similar influence. This much is certain, that in the low lands of tropical climates no attentive observer of nature will fail to witness the power exercised by the moon over the seasons, and also on animal and vegetable nature. As regards the latter, it may be stated that there are thirteen springs and thirteen autumns in Demerara in the year; for so many times does the sap of trees ascend to the branches, and descend to the roots. For example, the *wallaba* (a resinous tree, common in the Demerara woods, somewhat resembling mahogany), if cut down in the dark a few days before *the new moon*, is one of the most durable woods in the world for house-building, etc.; in that state, attempt to split it, and with the utmost difficulty it will be riven in the most jagged, unequal manner that can be imagined. Cut down another *wallaba*, that grew within a few yards

of the former, *at full moon*, and the tree can be easily split into the finest smooth shingles, of any desired thickness, or into staves for making casks; but if in this state it be applied to house-building, it speedily decays. Again, bamboos, as thick as a man's arm, are sometimes used for paling, etc.; if cut *at the dark moon*, they will endure for ten or twelve years; if *at full moon*, they will be rotten in two or three years: thus it is with most, if not all, of the forest trees. Of the effects of the moon on animal life very many instances could be cited. I have seen in Africa the newly-littered young perish in a few hours at the mother's side, if exposed to the rays of the full moon; fish become rapidly putrid; and meat, if left exposed, incurable or unpreservable by salt. The mariner, heedlessly sleeping on deck, becomes afflicted with *nyctolopia*, or "night-blindness," at times the face hideously swollen, if exposed during sleep to the moon's rays; the maniac's paroxysms renewed with fearful vigour at the full and change; and the cold, damp chill of the ague supervening on the ascendancy of this apparently mild yet powerful luminary. Let her influence over this earth be studied; it is more powerful than is generally known.'

The popular belief that the moon's rays will cause madness in any person who sleeps exposed to them has long been felt to be absurd; and yet it has appeared to have its source in undoubted facts. Some deleterious influence is experienced by those who rashly court slumber in full moonshine, and probably there is no superstition to which the well-to-do pay more attention. Windows are often carefully covered, to keep the moonbeams from entering sleeping-rooms. A gentleman living in India furnishes *Nature* with an explanation of this phenomenon, which is, at least, plausible. He says: 'It has often been observed that when the moon is full, or near its full time, there are rarely any clouds about. And if there be clouds before the full moon rises, they are soon dissipated; and, therefore, a perfectly clear sky with a bright full moon is frequently observed. A clear sky admits of rapid radiation of heat from the surface of the earth, and any person exposed to such radiation is sure to be chilled by rapid loss of heat. There is reason to believe that under the circumstances paralysis of one side of the face is sometimes likely to occur from chill, as one side of the face is more likely to be exposed to rapid radiation and consequent loss of its heat. This chill is more likely to occur when the sky is perfectly clear. I have often slept in the open air in India on a clear summer night, when there was no moon; and, although the first part of the night may have been hot, yet toward two or three o'clock in the morning the chill

has been so great that I have often been awakened by an ache in my forehead, which I as often have counteracted by wrapping a handkerchief round my head and drawing the blanket over my face. As the chill is likely to be greatest on a very clear night, and the clearest nights are likely to be those on which there is a bright moonshine, it is very possible that neuralgia, paralysis, or other similar injury caused by sleeping in the open air, has been attributed to the moon, when the proximate cause may really have been the *chill*, and the moon only a remote cause, acting by dissipating the clouds and haze (if it do so), and leaving a perfectly clear sky for the play of radiation into space.'—*The Galaxy.*

SUB-SECTION III.

DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO GEOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, AND TOPOGRAPHY.

Agreement of Mosaic Creation with Geology.

GENESIS ii. 4: 'These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the heavens and the earth.'

Question.—*How has the progress of geological science affected the Mosaic record?*

Answer.—While the record has remained the same, the scientific points of view from which it is regarded have materially changed, and are continually changing. Geology at first fashioned an explanation of existing phenomena by imagining a long continued series of catastrophes. Now it is trying to re-read the story of the earth in the light of a theory of evolution. We are not called upon to endeavour to square Bible records with any scientific theory that may be fashionable in any age. We are required to find essential harmony between the broad, general facts of Bible statement, and the broad, general facts of scientific discovery. Such essential harmony has been shown over and over again by men who must be recognised as fully competent to deal with geological questions.

Many of the efforts to make geological conclusions accord with Bible statements we cannot but regard as mischievous, because laying upon the early narration a burden which it was never intended to bear, and was wholly unfitted to bear. The possible questions that may be asked are indeed all settled if we can answer them by saying,

that God gave these early chapters of Genesis to Moses as a direct and immediate revelation. But very few intelligent persons find themselves able to take this ground. It is not God's way of dealing with men thus to act directly. He uses agencies. It is not fitting that we should even think of placing limitations on the agencies God may use, and it may please Him to employ the *legends* of pre-historic times, as well as the written records of historic times. It is better that we should distinctly recognise the legendary character of the early chapters of Genesis, and see what we call 'history' in its beginnings, and then only in its initial stages, in the records of Abraham.

Legendary matter must of necessity be largely imaginative and poetical; it cannot be strictly descriptive. And if we think closely, we shall be willing to admit that a description of the processes of creation is impossible in these scientific days, and must have been—if we may so speak—even more impossible in those unscientific days. Only certain broad features could be seized and exhibited: details of processes working through countless ages could find no fitting human language in which they could be clothed. It is poetry, not prose, that recounts such things as creation. And poetry utterly refuses to be imprisoned by scientific fact. Poetry sees things with a glamour on them.

But what needs to be clearly seen, what comes out fully from the strife over the first chapters of our Bible, is this: Legendary matter can be made revelational of moral and religious truth; and the moral purpose of these first chapters can be fully secured, whether modern science can or cannot fit its conclusions to the Bible statements. We are, indeed, lifted away from a merely scientific interest in these early world legends, when we can clearly see the moral purposes for which they are preserved.

This point has been efficiently stated in the following passage: 'The first chapter of Genesis is the introduction to a Book which is to contain the records of God's more direct dealings with man, the highest—the distinctly unique—creature which He was pleased to make. Unique, as a creature subject to all the natural laws by which he was surrounded, yet endowed with a marvellous power of independent will, which would enable him to mould, and modify, and control both those laws, and all other living creatures. It does not, therefore, consist of a really precise and definite account of the processes of creation; but, in view of its main and high object, it contains a series of distinct and repeated affirmations of God's supreme relations to all forms of existence, in all their order, all their origin,

all their growth, all their relations. It is designed to impress on us that the world was not created by chance, by self-generation, by impersonal powers of nature, or by many agents acting either in harmony or in antagonism. God is distinct from that He has made. God is the one primal source of all things. God's will is represented in all laws that rule. God's good pleasure shapes all ends. The proper religious object of this chapter is reached when it has strongly impressed on mind and heart the existence, independence, and personality of one Divine Being, the universality of His rule, the omnipotency of His power, and the eternal persistence of His relationship to the world He has created.'—'Age of Great Patriarchs,' p. 44.

Some opinions on the relations of geological science to the narrative of the creation may be interesting, and also helpful to the formation of a sound judgment on this subject.

Dr. Rainy says: 'That this chapter is very different, both in what it says and in what it leaves unsaid, from what many persons think they might expect, in view of all that is known of geological eras and processes, may be granted.'

Dr. Harold Browne writes: 'While we cannot say that we have in it a detailed scientific account, which may be tested at every point by the discoveries of geologists, we can safely affirm that the general outline and order indicated are in perfect accordance with geological conclusions.'

Dr. McCausland says: 'A correct reading of the Mosaic narrative, and a competent knowledge of geological facts, have made it plain that Scripture and science tell one and the same wondrous tale.'

Dr. Pusey very pertinently remarks: 'It would be well for geology to come to a result within itself before turning its results against revelation.'

Dr. Geikie collects a number of early legends of creation, with a view to showing the superiority of those preserved for us in the Bible. And he points out the moral bearing of the Bible record: 'In language, the simplicity of which befits the remote antiquity in which it was uttered, it declares the absolute and eternal distinction between the creation and the Creator, and between the creature and Him who formed it.' 'The God of Moses stands in the strongest contrast with all conceptions of the Divine Being attained by unaided reason.'

Professor W. Griffiths closes a chapter on the creation with these words: 'Science, when hand in hand with faith, does not demur to

the first words of the Bible, and refuse to pass the portal of Revelation, but freely enters the new temple of Truth, to pay her homage at its shrine.'

From the strictest orthodox standpoint, Dr. Pierson writes, in his recent work, 'Infallible Proofs': 'Geology teaches a watery waste, whose dense vapours shut out light. Moses affirms that, at first, the earth was formless and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. Geology makes life to precede light, and the life develops beneath the deep. Moses presents the creative spirit as brooding over that great deep before God said, "Let light be." Geology makes the atmosphere to form an expanse by lifting watery vapours into clouds, and so separating the fountains of waters above from those below. Moses affirms the same. Geology tells us that continents next lifted themselves from beneath the great deep, and bore vegetation. Moses also declares that the dry land appeared, and brought forth grass, herb, and the tree, exactly correspondent to the three orders of primeval vegetation! Geology then asserts that the heavens became cleared of cloud, and the sun and moon and stars appeared. Moses does not say that God *created* all these heavenly bodies on the fourth creative day, but that they then began to serve to divide day from night, and to become signs for seasons, days, and years! Geology then shows us sea-monsters, reptiles, and winged creatures. Moses likewise reveals the waters bringing forth moving and creeping creatures, and fowl flying in the expanse. Geology unfolds next the race of quadruped mammals; and so Moses makes cattle and beasts of the earth to follow, in the same order, and on the sixth day of creation. Geology brings man on the scene last of all, and so does Moses. Geology makes the first light and heat not solar, but chemical, or "cosmical." Moses makes light to precede the first appearance of the sun by the space of three creative days! Look at the order of animal creation! Geology and comparative anatomy combine to teach that the order of creation was from lower to higher. Fish, proportion of brain and spinal cord, 2 to 1; reptiles, 2½ to 1; birds, 3 to 1; mammals, 4 to 1; man, 33 to 1. Now this is exactly the order of Moses.'

It would be difficult to find sentences richer in practical wisdom, or more needing to be spoken over and over again, than the following, penned by *Dean Payne Smith:* 'The unwise disputes between science and theology almost always arise from scientific men crying aloud that some new theory just hatched is a dis-proof of the supernatural, and from theologians debating each new theory on the ground of Scriptural exposition. It is but just to the author of

Evolution to say that he never made this mistake. Really, every scientific hypothesis must be proved or disproved on the ground of science alone; but when the few survivors of the very many theories which scientific men suggest have attained to the rank of scientific verities, then at last the necessity arises of comparing them with Holy Scripture; for we could not believe it to be the Word of God if it contradicted the Book of Nature, which also comes from Him. God is truth, and His revealed Word must be true.'

A recent article by *Mr. W. E. Gladstone*, on the Mosaic account of the creation, concludes with the following words, after a careful dealing with some of the best known 'contradictionist' criticisms: 'We may justly render our thanks to Dana, Guyot, Dawson, Stokes, and other scientific authorities, who seem to find no cause for supporting the broad theory of contradiction. For myself, I cannot but at present remain before and above all things impressed with the profound and marvellous wisdom which has guided the human instrument, whether it were pen or tongue, which was first commissioned from on high to hand onwards for our admiration and instruction this wonderful, this unparalleled relation. And I submit to my readers that my words were not wholly idle words when, without presuming to lay down any universal and inflexible proposition, and without questioning any single contention of persons specially qualified, I said that the true question was whether the words of the Mosaic writer, taken as a whole, do not stand, according to our present knowledge, in such a relation to the facts of nature as to warrant and require thus far the conclusion that the Ordainer of Nature, and the Giver or Guide of the creation story, are one and the same.'

Note.—Our readers may be glad to have one early legend of creation, with which to compare and contrast the Bible record. We give the Babylonian, as preserved by Berosus, who lived B.C. 260: 'In the beginning all was darkness and water, and therein were generated monstrous animals of strange and peculiar form. There were men with two wings, and some even with four, and two faces; and others with two heads, a man's and a woman's, on one body; and there were men with the heads and horns of goats, and men with hoofs like horses, and some with the upper parts of a man joined to the lower parts of a horse, like centaurs; and there were bulls with human heads, dogs with four bodies and with fishes' tails, and horses with dogs' heads, creatures with heads and bodies of horses, but with tails of fish, and other animals mixing the forms of various beasts.

Moreover, there were monstrous fish and reptiles and serpents, and divers other creatures which had borrowed something from each other's shapes; of all which the likenesses are still preserved in the temple of Belus. A woman ruled them all, by name Omorka, which is in Chaldee *Thalatth*, and in Greek *Thalassa* (the sea). Then Belus appeared, and split the woman in twain; and of the one half of her he made the heaven, and of the other half the earth; and the beasts that were in her he caused to perish. And he split the darkness, and divided the heaven and the earth asunder, and put the world in order; and the animals that could not bear the light perished. Belus, upon this, seeing the earth was desolate, yet teeming with productive power, commanded one of the gods to cut off his head, and to mix the blood which flowed forth with earth, and form men therewith, and beasts that could bear the light. So man was made, and was intelligent, being a partaker of the divine wisdom. Likewise Belus made the stars, and the sun and moon, and the five planets.'

Mahanaim.

GENESIS xxxii. 2: 'And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.'

Question.—*Is it possible to decide in favour of either of the suggested places which have been identified as Mahanaim?*

Answer.—It must be borne in mind that the district lying east of Jordan is much less known than that on the west, and it has been subject to even greater changes. Moreover, we can never be quite sure that a name has not been applied to more than one place in the course of ages. In this case a tradition of Jacob's time may have lingered, and given a name to a city subsequently built in the neighbourhood, but not at the precise spot, of Jacob's adventure. There was no town in Jacob's day, and the name was naturally suggested to him when God's host, or camp, met, and seemed to join his. The term 'Mahanaim' means 'two hosts, or camps.'

It is only possible, in this handbook, to deal with a few specimen difficulties connected with the identification of sites, and as this is quite a representative case, the summary of the results of recent exploration and inquiry, as given by *Harper*, will be suggestive. 'Laban departs. Then the angels of God meet Jacob, who calls the place Mahanaim (the two hosts). The Septuagint says, where Israel "saw the camp of God encamped." Many have been the attempts to identify this place. *Canon Tristram* thinks he has found the place in *Birket Mahneh*, where there are five fine ponds—"Birket"—

and some ruins. *Dr. Merrill*, of the American Survey, does not accept this place. Mr. Laurence Oliphant thinks, after an examination of the country, that Canon Tristram is more likely to be right than Dr. Merrill; while Major Conder says the site is unsettled. He gives many reasons. Jacob was going to Edom to meet Esau (Gen. xxxii. 3). He had sent messengers, and they had returned, hearing that Esau was coming with 400 men. Jacob, afraid, divides his party, passes his wife Leah and flocks over the ford of Jabbok, while he remains on the other side. Then there is that wonderful wrestling with the angel, and Jacob calls the place Peniel, which means "face," or "appearing" of God. This "Peniel" would seem to have been a ridge, for Jacob passed over it as the sun rose; and Conder suggests that the high summit of the hill, now called Jebel Osh'a, is the place. In Murray's map a valley called Fâneh is marked. If this is correct the Arabic word would be a good translation of the Hebrew, Penuel. Jacob, no doubt, was going on the old pilgrim road to the north. And we find from Josh. xiii. 26 that Mahanaim is noted as opposite the border of Debir—"the edge of the ridge." Mahanaim was near a wood, for Absalom was killed there. The slopes of Mount Gilead are clothed with woods of fine oak.' (The 'wood' of Absalom's time is better rendered 'waar,' or 'thicket.')

On a later page of his work, *Harper* favours the identification suggested by *Dr. Merrill*, who says that the account given of the two messengers, sent by Joab to David, in the time of Absalom, gives a clue to the ground. 'Ahimaaz wishes to run, Joab declines to trust him, but selects a stranger, a Cushite, to run, but afterwards allows Ahimaaz to go, but says he will get no reward, implying that he cannot possibly come in first; but we are told Ahimaaz went "by the way of the plain." Doubtless he was familiar with the country, and took the easiest route, while the stranger might take the *direct* line, and yet, having to cross wâdies and broken ground, his speed would be impeded. Most travellers have suggested Mahneh, fourteen miles south-east of Bethshan. These ruins cover about a fourth of a mile in extent, but do not indicate any great age or importance, and no one could "run by the way of the plain" to reach it. There is no room in Wâdy Mahneh for troops to manœuvre by "thousands," and the distance at which the runners were discovered by the watchmen is not applicable to Mahneh. There does not exist for many miles in any direction from Mahneh a region corresponding to a field or a great plain; but six miles north of the Zerka, Wâdy Ajlun is found. It has three names. There is a large ruin called Fákaris at the mouth of the wâdy. Here is an important valley, abundance of

water, and the ruins of an important city. Three miles further north, passing about midway a smaller ruin, mostly buried, Wâdy Suleikhat is reached; this wâdy bears the name of El Kirbeh in its upper course. Here water is abundant, and at the mouth of the wâdy are the ruins of a large city lying on both sides of the stream. This is by far the largest ruin in the Jordan Valley east of the river. Khurbet Suleikhat is some 300 feet above the plain, and among the foothills in such a way that it overlooks the valley, while the road running north and south along the valley passes nearly a mile to the west of it. The surrounding country is most fertile, and hence we should naturally expect that the principal city of the valley would be placed here. A watchman from a tower could see to the north for a considerable distance, also clear across the valley to the west, and down the valley to the south, a long stretch, nearly or quite to the point where the Zerka and Jordan unite at the foot of Kŭrn Sŭrtŭbeh. In addition to these facts, if we consider that the town *is double* (Mahanaim means "two camps"), that these ruins lie on two sides of a stream, their size, the abundance of good water, the fertile region round about it, it would seem that here the principality of East Jordan in David's time probably stood.'

Names for Hermon.

DEUTERONOMY iii. 9: 'Which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion; and the Amorites call it Shenir.'

Difficulty.—*This paragraph indicates later knowledge than belongs to the Israelites in the time of Moses, and must be the insertion of a later editor.*

Explanation.—It must be admitted that no particular reason appears for the insertion of this parenthesis. Those for whom Moses wrote need not have been interested in the various names for Hermon, and they had no such connection with Sidon as to make Sidonian opinion at all important. But if we may suppose that the Book of Deuteronomy was re-edited, and received its present form in the times of Ezra, we can well understand how such an explanatory paragraph came to be inserted, for in those days the earlier name Hermon had probably been dropped, and the range was generally known as *Sirion* or *Shenir.*

If Moses knew the Sidonian name, it must have been through the constant traffic which had gone on from the most ancient times between Sidon and Egypt. 'Syria was repeatedly traversed in all directions by the Egyptian armies from the accession of the eighteenth

dynasty downwards. The transcription of Semitic words in the papyri of the nineteenth dynasty is remarkably complete.'

Dean Stanley gives the meanings of the various names applied to this mountain range. 'Rising with its gray snow-capped cone to a height of about 9,500 feet, it is visible from most parts of the Promised Land, and even from the depths of the Jordan valley and the shores of the Dead Sea. Hence it was "Sion," "the upraised;" or "Hermon," "the lofty peak;" or "Shenir," and "Sirion," the glittering "breastplate" of ice; or above all "Lebanon," the "Mont Blanc" of Palestine; the "White Mountain" of ancient times; the mountain of the "Old White-headed Man" (Jebel es Sheykh); or "the mountain of ice" (Jebel eth Tilj), of modern times.'

The *Targums* give Shenir as meaning 'the rock of snow;' and *Gesenius* translates Sirion as 'glittering like a breastplate.'

Dr. Geikie gives a different rendering to the names. 'We were now under the very top of Hermon—"the Lofty Height"—famous in Scripture, known as Jebel esh Sheikh—"the Mountain of the White-haired Old Man"—among the populations of to-day. . . . The Sidonians knew it as Sirion, the Amorites as Senir—both meaning "The Banner," a fitting name for the great white standard it raises aloft over the whole land. The mass of its gigantic bulk is of the age of the Middle Chalk, as shown both by the prevailing rock and by its fossil fish and shells, some of which I myself got, thousands of feet above the sea-level.'

Harper gives the meaning of the word Shenir as 'the Shining.'

The fact that the Book of Deuteronomy, in the form in which we now have it, represents the work of an editor living in the times of the Restoration, is now recognised by all competent scholars; but there are very different opinions as to the amount of original Mosaic matter that was placed at his command. Explanatory parentheses to bring a work up to date are the natural additions of editors.

The Extent of the Flood.

GENESIS vi. 13: 'And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.'

Difficulty.—*The idea of the flood covering the whole earth is given up by all well-instructed persons, but it is not easy to re-read the Bible records in the light of modern ideas and knowledge.*

Explanation.—It may be well to give first the latest dealing with this difficulty from the strictly orthodox standpoint. *Dr. A. T.*

Pierson, in his book on the Evidences of Christianity, entitled 'Many Infallible Proofs,' says: 'The Deluge, as recorded in the days of Noah, has been thought to be irreconcilable with modern science. The grand point where objections centre is that of the universal character of the flood. As the human race then occupied but a small part of the globe, to submerge the whole, so that even the loftiest mountains should be more than covered, seems a needless waste of Divine energy, especially as it may well be doubted whether the entire atmosphere, condensed into rain, would suffice to lift the seas to such a height; and there are believed to be many evidences, in certain parts of the earth, that no universal flood has prevailed within the last 6,000 years.

'To these objections it is only necessary to reply that the moment the Bible record is interpreted with reference to the inhabited world, all difficulties vanish. Such phrases as "the whole earth," "under the whole heaven," etc., are frequently used in Scripture of so much of the earth as was peopled; or even of Palestine, and the lands lying about it. Terms of a universal character are to be interpreted not literally, but by the design and end of the writer. When we are told that "all countries came into Egypt to buy corn," what do we understand? Are we to suppose that, if there were inhabitants in Britain, they journeyed to Egypt for grain? It would take about as much time, in those days, to get there and back, as it would to secure a new harvest. But if we understand that Egypt became a granary—a house of bread—to all the district over which the famine prevailed, the record is plain.

'Now, in the account of the Deluge, Moses is writing of God's awful judgment upon the sin of the race. His judgment fell upon the earth for man's sake, and only so much of the earth as was the scene of man's sin was necessarily concerned. If, then, we understand the "whole earth" to refer to the *entire inhabited surface*, the flood is still relatively universal, *i.e.*, universal as to mankind, and the usage of similar terms in other parts of Scripture justifies such interpretation.'

We ought to inquire carefully into the ideas concerning the shape of the earth, and the relations of the sky to the earth, in ancient times, and so try to think what ideas of the universality of the flood would come to those for whom Moses immediately wrote. A universal flood is so inconceivable to *us*, because we know that the earth is virtually round; but the ancients thought of it as an extensive and virtually flat plain, with only mountains, like mounds, making a rough surface; and the sky was a solid dome rising from the edge of the

plain. In fact, the earth and sky were like a dish with its cover, only the cover was conceived as fastened to the edges of the dish. Now a person with this notion in his mind need not stumble at the idea of a universal flood, covering the very tops of the hills. It is easy to conceive of the water rising the necessary height *within the limits of the cover.* We can think of many difficulties in the way of such an explanation, but they are difficulties which would not be suggested to an ancient mind. The limited scale of the flood is immediately suggested when a truer view of the shape of the earth, and of the relation of the sky to it, is taught. It can then be shown that the Divine purpose was fully accomplished by a flood which, though local, was effective to the removal of the race that had sinned.

There is a question arising when the local character of the Flood is admitted, which as yet has received very little attention. Perhaps it is one that never can be solved, and must be treated as belonging to the domain of pure speculation. What race of men is it that we are to understand was swept away by the Flood? There were two distinct human races—the Sethite and the Cainite. Now the Cainite race is removed from the Bible record after a very brief allusion to it, and the Bible is wholly concerned with the Sethite race. We are, indeed, told that the 'sons of God' married the 'daughters of men,' which probably means, that the men of the Sethite race took wives from the women of the Cainite race; and it appears that the people whose violence and iniquity aroused the Divine wrath, and called for the Divine judgment, were not the original Cainites, but the children of these mixed marriages. It is an assumption usually made that the Cainites were destroyed with the Sethites, and that only the Sethites re-peopled the earth after the Flood. But there is no real ground for any such assumption, and it would be equally reasonable to assume that the Cainite race was untouched by the Flood, which bore relation only to the Sethites. This subject may be referred to again in its ethnological bearings. If the continuance of a Cainite race can be admitted, the threefold original of all existing humanity, through Noah's sons, will have to be reconsidered.

This we may take as definitely settled—no competent scholar would for a moment attempt to argue the absolute universality of the Flood.

Attempts have been made to explain the natural agencies which might have been used in order to produce a vast and overwhelming local flood. *Dr. Geikie* says: 'A rise of 220 feet in the volcanic region of the Bosphorus would effect startling results, for it needs no more than that to spread an inland fresh-water ocean from the plains

of the Lower Danube and Southern Russia over the areas of the Black, the Caspian, and the Aral Seas, with their neighbouring steppes, far and near—to create, in fact, a second Mediterranean. With the surface of the earth rising and sinking by steady oscillation in so many regions even now, who can say that the tradition is wrong which ascribes the drainage of this vast region to a volcanic commotion rending open the Bosphorus about 1,500 years before Christ, and causing the terrible catastrophe which antiquity handed down in the legend of Deucalion's flood—the flood, it may be, of Genesis.' See also 'Hours with the Bible,' vol. i., pp. 210-219.

Blaikie says: 'It is a question among theologians and men of science, whether the Flood was absolutely universal, or whether it was universal only in the sense of extending over all the part of the world that was then inhabited. We do not here enter into this controversy; but we may notice the remarkable fact, that the district lying to the east of Ararat, where the ark rested, bears traces of having at one time been under water. It is a peculiarly depressed region, lying lower than the districts around, and thus affording peculiar facilities for such a submersion. The level of the Caspian is 83 feet below that of the Black Sea; and vast plains white with salt, and charged with sea-shells, show that at no distant period the Caspian was much more extensive than now. From Herodotus, and other ancient writers, it appears that at one time the Sea of Azoff (the *Palus Mæotis* of the ancients) was nearly equal in extent to the Black Sea.'

Heywood W. Guion, of North Carolina, has suggested a theory of the Deluge, which both harmonizes all the discoveries of science with the record in Genesis, and may yet displace all previous conceptions of the subject. He takes literally the statement of St. Peter, 'The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.' In Genesis we read, 'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear.' In both passages there is no hint of more than one continent or more than one sea. The dry land or earth seems to be by itself in one grand elevation above sea-level, and the waters gathered in one place. This would imply, as every scientist knows, certain peculiar conditions. This solitary continent, rising in one mass from the midst of one sea that surrounds it, would present no great inequalities of surface, though there might be elevations that, compared with the rest, would be hills, or even mountains; there would be a great uniformity of climate and temperature, no rains or clouds, but heavy mists constantly keeping the earth moist; and consequently vast vegetable

growths, very luxuriant and abundant, making animal food unnecessary either for man or beast—there would be a paradise of verdure, and one perennial spring. This, Mr. Guion holds, was the case. At the time of the Deluge, this huge dome, that rose out of the water, was shattered by volcanic explosions and a great earthquake, and its grand roof fell in and became the bed of what is now the Pacific Ocean, while its shattered and irregular ruin was tilted up into the great mountain ranges that line the eastern boundary of the Pacific; and the bed of this original ocean was lifted into the continents of our eastern and western hemispheres, while the sea rushed into the new bed formed by the submersion of the original continent. This would give us, in the new order of things, great mountain ranges, with marked inequalities of climate and temperature—and all the phenomena of the changing seasons, winds, clouds, storms of rain and snow, and consequently the first rainbow. Animals inhabiting barren districts would be driven to devour animals weaker than they, and animal food would become necessary to man. This theory makes the whole original world to be submerged, and all the high hills covered. The gigantic animals of that primeval continent engulphed in the foaming waters, and afterwards buried beneath the superficial mass of shifting soil, would furnish the remarkable remains found in so many places, showing that the creatures they represent were overtaken in some universal catastrophe.

For the Hindoo, Chaldæan, and Phrygæan accounts, or legends of the Flood, see 'Biblical Things not Generally Known,' Nos. 5, 264, 564.

There is an important principle of explanation of which we need to be reminded. A difficulty ought to be regarded as removed if a solution can be found that is efficient and reasonable, though it may not in actual fact be the true solution. Science vindicates the narrative of Scripture when it shows how an extensive, and, for the then inhabited world, virtually universal flood *could* have been caused.

The Cities of Argob.

DEUTERONOMY iii. 4, 5: 'And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these cities were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; besides unwalled towns a great many.'

Difficulty.—*Some of the descriptions of the buildings of this district seem to be strangely exaggerated and extravagant.*

Explanation.—We may often be led into error when testing the descriptions given by travellers by our own limited associations and

knowledge. The days of extravagant accounts of travelling experiences are long since past; and now anything reported by one traveller is soon supported or denied by another. And, on the whole, the statements made concerning the stone houses of Bashan are found to be true, with due allowance for sensational styles of writing.

The careful observations of members of the Palestine Survey parties, and such travellers as Schumacher and Merrill, have been gathered together in Harper's late work, 'The Bible and Modern Discoveries.' 'This region in the Bible is called "Argob," "a heap of stones." It would be difficult to mention a spot in civilized lands which could be compared to this ancient region in regard to its wild and savage aspect. It is one great sea of lava. The lava-bed proper embraces about 350 square miles; its average height above the surrounding plain is perhaps twenty feet; but it sends out black promontories of rock into the surrounding plain. There are few openings into the interior. Roads had to be excavated to the towns situated in Argob (now called Lejjah, "a place of refuge"). The surface of this "Argob" is almost black, and has the appearance of the sea when it is in motion beneath a dark, cloudy sky; but this sea of lava is motionless, its great waves are petrified. In cooling, the lava cracked and split, so there are great fissures and chasms which cannot be crossed. Often this lava-bed is broken into hillocks, and between them, and also in the rolling plains, are many intervals of soil, which is of amazing fertility. The country is full of extinct craters, too many to number. The whole lava region embraces several thousand square miles, extending to the Hauran mountains. The region is not waterless. In many places are copious living fountains, with abundant water, cool and sweet. Ruins of towns abound. The Arabs say that in the Haurân, which includes Argob, there are quite a thousand. The Bible especially mentions one place, Edrei, which would seem to have been the capital town of Og. This place has been identified and visited by a few travellers. Its present name is Ed-Dera'ah. It is a subterranean city. There is a small court, 26 feet long, 8 feet 3 inches wide, with steps leading down into it, which has been built as an approach to the actual entrance of the caves. Then come large basaltic slabs, then a passage, 20 feet long, 4 feet wide, which slopes down to a large room, which is shut off by a *stone* door; so this underground city could be guarded. Columns 10 feet high support the roof of the chamber into which you now enter; these columns are of later period, but there are other supports built out of the basaltic rock. Then come dark and

winding passages—a broad street, which had dwellings on both sides of it, whose height and width left nothing to be desired. The temperature was mild, no difficulty in breathing; several cross streets, with holes in the ceiling for air; a market-place, a broad street with numerous shops in the walls; then into a side street, and a great hall with a ceiling of a single slab of jasper, perfectly smooth, and of immense size. Air-holes are frequent, going up to the surface of the ground about 60 feet. Cisterns are frequent in the floors. Tunnels partly blocked, too small for anyone now to creep through, are found.'

'In 1874 the president of Queen's College, Belfast, found a curious old city about two miles in circuit, the buildings of black basalt. Some of the ruins were inhabited, but they were chiefly buried. The ancient houses were cave-like, of massive walls, of roughly-hewn blocks of basalt; stone doors of the same material, and roofs of long slabs closely laid together. Most of the houses were originally above ground. Others were excavated out of the solid rocks.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* thinks the threescore cities of Argob are identical with the Bashan-havoth-jair, *i.e.*, cities of Jair, in Bashan, of verse 14, and with the 'towns of Jair,' in Bashan, of the same number in Josh. xiii. 30; 1 Kings iv. 13; and 1 Chron. xi. 23. 'The Hebrew word rendered "region" means literally *rope*, or *cable*; and though undoubtedly used elsewhere in a general topographical sense for *portion*, or *district*, has a special propriety in reference to Argob. This name means *stone-heap*, and is paraphrased by the Targums "Trachonitis," or "the rough country;" both titles, like the modern Lejah (or Lejjah), designating, with the wonted vigour of Hebrew topographical terms, the more striking features of the district. The Argob is described as an island of black basaltic rock, oval in form, measuring 60 miles by 20, rising abruptly to the height of from 20 to 30 feet from the surrounding plains of Bashan. Its borders are compared to a rugged shore-line, hence its description as the "girdle of the stony country" would seem peculiarly appropriate.'

It hardly seems possible that travellers can exaggerate in their descriptions of so strange, so unique, and so wonderful a district.

Identification of Ur.

GENESIS xi. 28: 'And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.'

Question.—*Have recent investigations helped to fix, with reasonable certainty, the situation of Ur?*

Answer.—Though the identification with Orfa, the Edessa of the Greeks, well known in Christian times as the capital of Abgarus, its first Christian king, is not absolutely disproved, it is now almost universally abandoned. This Orfa was never included within the Chaldæan boundaries. There can be no reasonable doubt that Ur is identical with Mugheir, on the right bank of the Euphrates, some 6 miles back from the river. The ruins are 40 miles from Warka, 90 miles from Niffer, 150 miles from Babylon.

Harper says: '"Ur of the Chaldees" has been found, the ruins of its temples excavated; some of its engraved gems may be seen in the British Museum. The place is now called Mugheir, on the western side of the Euphrates, on the border of the desert west of Erech—low down near the Persian Gulf, and not the Ur of most Biblical maps, near Haran. The name "Ur" is Semitic for Accadian *eri* "city." The worship of Ur was that of the moon god. Abram's original name is found on an early Babylonian contract-tablet, written Abu-ramu, or Abram, "the exalted father." Haran, the place to which Terah emigrated, was the frontier town of Babylonia, commanding both the roads and the fords of the Euphrates. The word Haran means "road."'

Professor Sayce says: 'It is probable that Ur had passed into the hands of the Semitic "Casdim" before the age of Abraham; at all events, it had long been the resort of Semitic traders, who had ceased to lead the roving life of their ancestors in the Arabian desert.'

An article in 'Biblical Things not Generally Known' collects some further information, chiefly from *Professor Rawlinson*: 'The excavations conducted at Ur have brought to light the name of *Urukh*, which seems to have been borne by a very ancient king of that region. The basement platforms of all the most ancient buildings all through the entire region were built by this king, who calls himself in the inscriptions on the bricks King Ur, and also King of Accad. Professor Rawlinson considers that he was the immediate successor of Nimrod, or, at least, the oldest king after the great hunter of whose works any fragments at present remain. His bricks are of a rude and coarse make, and the inscriptions are marked by the most

primitive simplicity. His substitute for lime and mortar was either wet mud or bitumen, and the bricks are, for the most part, ill-set. The language of the inscriptions belongs to the Hamitic class, and on one of the bricks occurs the inscription: "Urukh, King of Ur, he is the builder of the temple of the moon-god." It is chiefly as a builder of enormous structures that Urukh is known; it is calculated that he used up no less than 30,000,000 square bricks in the construction of one building alone. . . . His erections are carefully placed with the angles facing the four cardinal points of the compass, and they were dedicated to the sun or moon, to Belus, Bel, Nimrod, or Beltis. Rawlinson places the date of Urukh's reign in the time of Terah, the father of Abraham.'

Does the Salt Sea cover the Site of Sodom?

GENESIS xix. 25: 'And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.'

Difficulty.—*The geological formation of the district does not admit of our seeking for lost Sodom beneath any portion of the present Dead Sea.*

Explanation.—There can be no doubt that the Dead Sea occupied its present position, to its full extent, long ages before the time of Abraham. But the level of its waters must have varied greatly at different times.

Sir J. W. Dawson, who writes on the 'Physical Features of Egypt and Syria,' gives the results of careful observation of the district: 'Standing on the beach we see before us the placid waters of this strange lake, blue and clear, but, owing to their great density, having a heavy and oily aspect. The shore on either side is formed of bare but brightly-tinted cliffs, running out in a succession of rugged points into the sea, and capped by grassy peaks and tablelands. But flanking these original margins we see successive flats and terraces of gray marly beds. These are the old deposits of the sea when it was larger than at present, and among them we find gravel layers marking beaches similar to the existing margin, but at higher levels. The lowest of these terraces is about 30 feet above the sea. A second attains an elevation of 100 feet, and others have been traced as high as 1,400 feet. . . . I may state that the deposits at the north end of the Dead Sea are evidently similar in kind and origin, though different in degree, from those which in Jebel Usdum, at the south end of the sea, rise to the height of 400 feet, and contain thick beds of rock-salt, and gypsum. At the north end,

where the principal supply of fresh water is poured in, and the evaporation is less, the deposition of salt is always likely to have been inferior to that at the southern end, south of the Lisan peninsula, which may always have represented a bar or shallow in the lake.'

The idea that the cities occupied positions south of the Lisan peninsula, and were submerged by volcanic action, has no scientific basis. It is no more than an imaginative effort to explain the entire removal of all trace of these ancient places.

Sir J. W. Dawson gives convincing proof that the cities occupied what is now known as the 'Plain of Jordan,' to the north of the Dead Sea. He says: 'It may be affirmed, in the first place, that Sodom and its companion cities were not, as held by later tradition, at the south end of the sea, but at its northern end, and that this must, at the time, have occupied, approximately at least, its present position. This appears from the name "Cities of the Plain," or Ciccar, that is, of the Jordan valley, or the lower end of it. It is also stated that Abraham and Lot could see this plain from the high ground between Bethel and Hai, whence only the northern end of the Dead Sea is visible. Abraham could not see the cities from Mamre, but he saw their smoke ascending. The most convincing geographical note, however, is that in Genesis xiv., which describes the invasion of Canaan by the five eastern kings in the time of Abraham. They are said to have come down on the east side of the Dead Sea, to have defeated the Hivites and Amalekites on the south, and then to have come up by way of Engedi, on the west side of the sea, and to have fallen on the Sodomites and their allies from the south-west. Thus the Book of Genesis, from which alone we have any contemporary account of these cities, fixes their position.

The *Speaker's Commentary* seems to think that much may be said in favour of the view that the Vale of Siddim corresponds with the southern bay of the Dead Sea. It admits, however, that there is no Scriptural authority for saying that Sodom and the other guilty cities were immersed in the sea; and that the arguments in favour of the northern site are very strong, and presented with great ability. *Harper* has gathered up the results of the Palestine Exploration Survey, and these distinctly favour the northern site, which is also advocated by *Tristram* and *Merrill.*

Harper's passage may suffice in support of the views already given from *Dawson*: 'We must now examine the position "of the cities of the plain," and see if the commonly-accepted notion is true, that the Dead (or Salt) Sea covers their sites. Lot, standing on the Bethel

hill, *saw* "the Valley of the Jordan." From no hill there, except one called by the Arabs "the Hill of Stones," can any view of the Jordan Valley or Dead Sea be seen; and what can there be seen is the *northern* end of the Dead Sea, the Jordan Valley, and the river running like a blue thread through the green plain. The hills of Engedi shut out completely all view of the *southern* end of the sea. I have wandered over all the Bethel hills, and tested this question. . . . Again, look at Abraham at Mamre, not 20 miles off; he hears nothing, sees nothing, though he is full of anxiety, till, early in the morning, Abraham got up to the place where he stood before the Lord, and he looks towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and sees the smoke. He had heard nothing, felt nothing, before. Had it been, as some say, an earthquake, why, Palestine would have shaken to its centre to make that deep depression. Geology proves—as, in fact, anyone can see—that the deep depression of the valley and the Dead Sea must have existed from prehistoric times, when in long ages past the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea were united through the Wâdy Arabah, and the whole plain was an inland sea. But we do not rest on these proofs alone. In Deut. xxix. 23 it is written: "And the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in His anger, and in His wrath." Nothing here about a sea covering the sites! And again, Deut. xxxii. 32: "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are the grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter." And St. Peter (2nd epistle ii. 6), speaking of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah by *fire*, remarks: "Turning the cities into *ashes*." Poets may write of

"That bituminous lake where Sodom flamed,"

but many things of Milton have been accepted as Bible truths with as little foundation in fact.'

A passage in Gen. xiv. 3, 'All these joined together in the Vale of Siddim (the same is the Salt Sea),' is the only Bible support to the southern identification; and it is at once evident that this passage is fully satisfied if we read it '(the same is the Salt Sea district).'

The River of Egypt.

GENESIS xv. 18: 'In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.'

Question.—*Can the identification of this river with Wâdy el Arish be confidently maintained?*

Answer.—The term 'River of Egypt' naturally suggests the Nile, but it is quite certain that there never was any sense in which the territory of Palestine could be said to have the Nile for its southern boundary.

Harper collects some interesting descriptions of the river, or river-bed, that must be meant, first premising that the word rendered 'river' is probably 'brook,' or 'torrent-bed' (see 2 Kings xxiv. 7; Josh. xv. 4, Revised Version). *Mr. G. J. Chester*, writing of his journey from *San* (or Zoan) to the border, says: 'Evening coming on, I again camped near the sea-shore, and the next morning arrived at the Wâdy Fiumara, or dry torrent-bed of "El 'Arîsh," so strangely and misleadingly termed in the Authorised Version "the river of Egypt." The town, or rather village, of clay houses, stands between the desert and the sea, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile from the latter. . . . To the west of the entrance of the wâdy, close to the sea-shore, are the remains of some ancient houses. Occasionally, in winter, when heavy rains have fallen amongst the mountains inland, the wâdy of El 'Arîsh is temporarily a turbulent rushing torrent. . . . El 'Arîsh, or rather the wâdy at that place, is the natural boundary of Egypt, and appears as such in many maps.' The *Rev. F. W. Holland* says that this wâdy has been traced from the Mediterranean Sea to Nakhl; it is really more than 100 miles in length. *Professor Palmer* shows how two great valleys drain the mountain plateau of the Tîh Desert, and how they 'combine their streams, and then, flowing into Wâdy el 'Arîsh, are carried on to the Mediterranean.' *Dr. Trumbull* says: 'Egypt proper is bounded definitely enough on the east by a line drawn from El Arîsh to Akabah.' *Harper* adds: 'Enough has been quoted to show how true was the expression "brook" or "torrent" of Egypt, and that it should neve be confounded with the Nile. So this, the southern frontier of the Promised Land, is seen to be a well-defined gorge or wâdy, which reaches from the Great Sea westward to Nakhl, and continues to Akabah on the Red Sea. If we look at 2 Chron. ix. 26, we read, "Solomon ruled over all the kings from the river (*i.e.* Euphrates) even unto the land

of the Philistines, and the *border of Egypt.*" The writer there did not confuse the "brook" with the Nile, as so many Bible commentators do now.'

The Crossing and Disaster of the Red Sea.

EXODUS xiv. 22, 28: 'And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground. . . And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them.'

Question.—*Can recent explorations be said to have fixed the precise point of the crossing and the disaster?*

Answer.—There are still various opinions held, and a certain decision may never be attained because of the physical changes of the district; but Sir J. W. Dawson has materially contributed to a settlement by a careful geological examination of the surrounding country. The chief points in his conclusions may be given. 'A still more important question is as to the precise locality where the Hebrews were overtaken, and where the crossing of the sea occurred. It is evident, in the first place, that no important town or city existed at the locality. This is implied in the description given and in the character of the names employed. The place of this great event was so important that care was taken to define it by mentioning three points, presumably well known to the narrator; but this method implies that there was no one definite name for the locality. All the names employed are Semitic, and not Egyptian, except, perhaps, the prefix Pi in one of them. Pi-hahiroth may have been a village, but its distinctive character is that of "place of reeds"—a reedy border of the sea, near the embouchure of fresh water from the Nile, or Sweet-water Canal. Migdol cannot have been, as supposed by some, a fortified place. It would have been madness, with Pharaoh in their rear, for the Israelites to have encamped near such a place. It must rather have been a commanding height used, as the name implies, as a watch-tower to command an extensive view, or to give signals. Baal-Zephon—"the Lord of the North"—is generally understood to have been a mountain, though both Jebel Attaka and the northern peak of Jebel er Rabah may lay claim to the title. In any case, the place so named by Moses was "opposite" to the camp of the Israelites, and consequently across the sea.

'After somewhat careful examination of the country, I believe that only one place can be found to satisfy these conditions of the Mosaic narrative, namely, the south part of the Bitter Lake, between station Fayid on the railway, and station Geneffeh. Near this place are

some inconsiderable ancient ruins, and flats covered with *Arundo* and *Scirpus*, which may represent Pi-hahiroth. On the west is the somewhat detached peak known as Jebel Shebremet, more than 500 feet high, commanding a very wide prospect, and forming a most conspicuous object to the traveller approaching from the north. Opposite, in the Arabian desert, rises the prominent northern point of the Jebel er Rabah, marked on the maps as Jebel Muksheih, and which may have been the Baal-Zephon of Moses. Here there is also a basin-like plain, suitable for an encampment, and at its north side the foot of Jebel Shebremet juts out so as to form a narrow pass, easy of defence. Here also the Bitter Lake narrows, and its shallower part begins, and a north-east wind, combined with a low tide, would produce the greatest possible effect in lowering the water. . . . It may further be observed as an incidental corroboration that the narrative in Exodus states that after crossing the sea the Israelites journeyed three days and found no water. From the place above referred to, three days' journey would bring them to the Wells of Moses, opposite Suez, which thus come properly into place as the Marah of the narrative, whereas the ordinary theory of a crossing at Suez would bring the people at once to these wells. They are also said to have journeyed for three days in the wilderness of Etham, and then to have come to the wilderness of Shur, or "the wall," whereas the wilderness of Shur is directly opposite Suez, and not three days' journey to the south. The three days' journey from the place of crossing would not be long journeys, the whole distance being about thirty miles, but there was now no reason for haste, and the want of water would not be favourable to long marches.'

For a full study of the question of the extension of the Red Sea northwards in ancient times, see *Dawson's* 'Egypt and Syria,' p. 67.

With this view of Dawson's may be compared the account given in a recent work on Exodus by *Professor Macgregor*. 'Not far from Suez, south and eastward on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, there is a plain, which reaches inland some twelve miles from that sea. At the upper extremity of that plain there is a height on which is an ancient fort named *Ajrud*. This Ajrud we shall take as the site of Pi-hahiroth. Pi means town. So that Pi-hahiroth is Hahiroth-town. And Hahiroth *may* have dwindled into Ajrud. From this Pi-hahiroth, at the head of the plain, facing towards the Red Sea at the foot of it, we look beyond the narrow sea, on the east side of it, for Baal-Zephon, which the Israelites saw, if they looked across the sea from this plain, between it and Ajrud. The geographer finds it by first observing that Baal-Zephon is a Zephon of Baal. And Zephon is a

Phœnician deity that was known to the Egyptians as the foreign god Sutĕch. Now this Sutĕch went into the composition of the name of a city which in old times was on that coast beyond the Red Sea. Finally, we need to have a *Migdol*, since that name, too, is in the history. And this by some geographers is found in Maktal, an ancient Egyptian fort (Migdol means "tower") near the site of a well named Bir Suaveis (the well of Suez). This Migdol, if the Israelites were in the plain, would be close upon them, near the sea, while Pi-hahiroth was behind them, on the height, and Baal-Zephon was before them beyond the Gulf. On their left hand the Gulf extended much farther toward the Mediterranean than it does at present; and the land was much under water, of marsh, lagoon or lake; while they have further been turned from that direction by the formidableness of the Philistines beyond the head of the Gulf. But if they thus be intercepted on their left side, on the right hand of the plain they have reached there is broken, if not mountainous ground, which practically barricades their way in that direction. And if, while they are thus shut in on the right hand and on the left, with the Red Sea before them, the Egyptians come up behind them, where there is the height and foot of Hahiroth, plainly, with no outgate but the sea, they are, as the history says, *entangled*—caught as in a trap, which they have entered, and which the Egyptians have now closed behind them.'

The Two Dans.

GENESIS xiv. 14: 'And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.'

Difficulty.—*If this is identified with Laish, it is strange to find it here called Dan, seeing that this name was not given to the place until after its conquest by the Danites.*

Explanation.—At first sight it may seem necessary to associate the name of this place with Dan, one of the sons of Jacob; but the word simply means 'a judge,' and so was in use long before Dan, Jacob's son, was born, and may have been the name of a place in Canaan in Abraham's time.

Two very simple explanations of this reference have been given. 1. *Le Clerc* suggests that the original name of the fountain was 'Dan'; that is, 'The Judge,' the neighbouring town being Laish; but that the Danites gave the name of the well, which corresponded with that of their own tribe, to the city as well as the fountain. 2. *Keil*, with *Kalisch*, noticing that Laish did not lie in either of the two roads leading from the Vale of Siddim to Damascus, suggest that

quite another place is referred to; they think it must be Dan-Jaan (2 Sam. xxiv. 6), apparently belonging to Gilead, and to be sought for in Northern Perœa, to the south-west of Damascus.

A traveller thus describes the situation of Laish: 'Laish, or Dan, is now called Tell el Kâdy ("the mound of the judge"), a broad round Tell, a mile south of Hermon, and stands prominently on the plain. Very fine springs exist, for the Jordan source is here. The top of the Tell comprises several acres. It would be difficult to find a more lovely situation than this; even now, on the west, are thickets of oak, oleander, and reeds.'

Dan-Jaan, which the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate* read as 'Dan in the Woods,' may be the ruin Dânian, 4 miles north of Achzib, between Tyre and Akka, as suggested by the Palestine Survey party.

For the seizure of the district of Laish by a party of Danites, see Josh. xix. 47; Judg. xviii. 29. It seems that the portion allotted to the tribe of Dan proved too small for the numbers of the tribe. *Stanley* says: 'Squeezed into the narrow strip between the mountains and the sea, its energies were great beyond its numbers.' They therefore sent out spies, who tracked the Jordan to its source, and found a town known as Leshem, or Laish, in a most fertile district. The inhabitants were a colony from Sidon, and under the protection of Lebanon, and in an out-of-the-way spot, they dwelt secure. Six hundred Danites from Zorah and Eshtaol seized this town and settled in this district, adding it to Danite territory.

The original allotment to the Danites was only about 14 miles of coast-line, from Joppa to Ekron; but it was one of the most fertile tracts in the land, the corn-field and garden of Southern Palestine.

Inglis gives a suggestion which deserves attention. As this town was situated near the sources of the river Jor*dan*, it might have been known from the earliest times as Dan.

This seems to be quite clear. The name of the place, as Dan, is not necessarily associated with the expedition of the Danites in the time of the Judges.

The Limits of the Solomonic Kingdom.

1 KINGS iv. 21: 'And Solomon reigned over all the kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt.'

Difficulty.—*Only in a special sense could the country of Israel ever be said to reach the river Euphrates.*

Explanation.—In the boastful style of Eastern language, the limits of a kingdom were made to include not only its natural territory, but also the territory of the countries that were, in any

sense, dependent on it. Solomon exercised a suzerainty over the kings of the countries lying north and east of Palestine, as far the Euphrates; but probably this involved little more than the sending to Solomon of a yearly present, as is even now done by some of the surrounding nations which regard themselves as dependent on China. This is the special sense in which Solomon can be said to have reigned over these kingdoms.

As to the southern limit, the confusion of the so-called 'River of Egypt' with the Nile, has now been fully corrected. See previous paragraph on the 'River of Egypt.' Wâdy el 'Arish is the natural southern boundary of Palestine, and equally the natural 'border of Egypt.'

Only when the original promises of God are carefully limited and qualified can the fulfilment in subsequent history be recognised. To Abraham (Gen. xv. 18) God said: 'Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the River of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.' Moses assures the people by saying (Deut. xi. 24): 'Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours, from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the utmost sea shall your coast be.' Joshua repeats the Mosaic form of expression (Josh. i. 4): 'From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.'

Dr. Geikie gives an account of the troubles of Solomon's early reign, and the way in which they were overruled to give him a secure and extensive kingdom: 'The various warlike nations which David had conquered fretted at their dependence, and hailed the great king's death, and that of Joab, his renowned captain, soon after, as the signal for revolt. Hadad of Edom, who had found refuge in Egypt, managed to escape, and flew to his native mountains, where he was forthwith acknowledged king by many of his countrymen, and was able to give Solomon great trouble, though he never succeeded in gaining the entire independence of his race. About the same time commotions arose in the north. Rezon, a Syrian, formerly an officer of the fallen King of Zobah, had risen as a local chief even in David's reign, and had roamed through the deserts as a freebooter. On Solomon's accession, an opportunity for bolder action seemed to offer, and, making a swoop on Damascus, he took it, and tried to make it the centre of a new power. He was not able, however, to hold it long, though his audacity continued to disturb Israel. Hamath, on the Orontes, also revolted, but Solomon soon re-

conquered it. Disturbances rose, likewise, in the west, where the petty kingdom of Gezer, or Geshur, between the hills and the Philistine cities, strove to regain its independence, probably with the help of various allies. The king of Egypt conquered it, and handed it over as part of the dowry of the Egyptian princess whom Solomon married.'

It does not appear that Solomon extended the borders of his country by war, but he was skilful in securing alliances, and offering protection to smaller states. It is, therefore, necessary to consider how far David enlarged the boundaries, and what size the kingdom was when Solomon came to the throne. By the defeat of Shobach, the general of Hadadezer, the kingdoms of Rehob, Maachah, and Tob passed under the rule of David, and the territories of Zobah became part of the Hebrew dominions. The Aramæan King of Damascus was involved in the ruin of Hadadezer, and his territory was held by Hebrew garrisons. 'Between the Euphrates and the Lebanon officials from Jerusalem levied tribute for the new Jewish empire.' The Edomites and the Ammonites were conquered, and the Philistines were subdued. 'The limits of the kingdom, a short time before, had been Dan and Beersheba, on the north and south. But David now reigned from the "River (brook) of Egypt" to the Euphrates; from Gaza, on the west, to Thapsacus, on the east; and from all the subject-nations in this vast empire yearly tribute was exacted; in part, probably, in the form of drafts of slave labour to toil on the royal buildings and other public works.'

Whence came the Water for the Carmel Sacrifice?

1 KINGS xviii. 33: 'And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.'

Question.—*Have recent researches effectually removed the difficulty of getting so much water high up on the mountain side?*

Answer.—It is not only the unlikely situation, but also the long continuance of the drought, that has occasioned difficulty, and suggested sceptical objections to the narrative. The River Kishon was certainly accessible, but its actual nearness depends on the position fixed for the great assembly. Both *Kitto* and *Thomson* find no natural impossibility in obtaining the water from Kishon. There were plenty of people about ready to fetch and carry, and from the dwellings of the district buckets could readily be obtained. Moreover, as Elijah knew what he intended to do, and there were long

hours during which the Baal prophets were trying to bring down the fire, the messengers of Elijah had plenty of time in which to fetch and store large quantities of water ready for the supreme moment. It may be therefore firmly held that the water *may* have been brought from the Kishon.

A perennial fountain has, however, been found near to the place of sacrifice, but opinion seems to vary concerning its sufficiency for Elijah's purpose. On this a few extracts from Bible writers may be given.

Jamieson says: 'Two hundred and fifty feet beneath the altar plateau there is a perennial fountain, which, being close to the altar of the Lord, might not have been acceptable to the people, and whence, therefore, even in that season of severe drought, Elijah could procure those copious supplies of water which he poured over the altar. The distance between this spring and the altar is so short as to make it perfectly possible to go thrice thither and back again; whereas it must have been impossible once in an afternoon to fetch water from the sea. The summit is 1,000 feet above the Kishon.'

Canon Tristram writes as follows: 'During my travels I was in the habit of collecting carefully the many species of small fresh-water shells which inhabit the streams, fountains, and wells of Palestine Now, among the best ascertained and most universally acknowledged sites of scenes of deep Scriptural interest, there is none more unanimously accepted than the site of Elijah's sacrifice at the east end of Mount Carmel. This spot was first brought to the notice of English readers by the Rev. G. Williams, and has been admirably described both by him and by Dean Stanley. The name of the place is El Moharakah, "the place of burning." There is the rocky platform standing out in front of the ridge, there is the gently sloping place below, with the sides of the hill gently spreading down to the plain, and washed by the Kishon, as it winds round the mountain's base. On its bank, full in view, is the artificial-looking knoll, or mound, Tell Kassis, "the mound of the priests," where Elijah slew the prophets of Baal. Close by the place of sacrifice, shaded by a noble old tree, by a rock on which the king may have sat, is a large natural cistern of sweet water, which the people of the neighbourhood say is never exhausted. One traveller remarks that in a very dry season he found it nearly dry (probably from having been largely drawn upon), but all others, at all times of the year, have found it full. The existence of this well at once solves any difficulty as to the copious supply of water at hand for Elijah, wherewith to drench the altar and its sacrifice. My search for shells illustrated the permanence of the

fountain in another way. It is well known that there are many species of pluviatila molluscs which can survive a long drought, buried in the mud at the bottom of pools. But this is not the case with all species. Especially the well-known genus *Neritina*, of which very pretty group of fresh-water shells one species is found in our English rivers, is very sensitive to removal from water, and only exists in permanent streams and pools. I found *Neritina Michonii*, the species common in the Kishon and neighbouring streams, in this fountain only of the neighbourhood. The inference is plain, viz., that, when the other pools and fountains of the district are dry, the fountain of Elijah, fed by the drainage of the limestone cliffs which tower above it, continues to afford a supply, as it did during the three years of drought.

Van de Velde says: 'Two hundred and fifty feet beneath the altar-plateau is a vaulted and very abundant fountain, built in the form of a tank, with a few steps leading down into it, just as one finds elsewhere in the old wells or springs of the Jewish times. Possibly the water of the spring may have been consecrated to the Lord, so as not to be generally accessible to the people even in times of fearful droughts. In such springs the water remains always cool, under the shade of a vaulted roof, and with no hot atmosphere to evaporate it. While all other fountains were dried up, I can well understand that there might have been found here that superabundance of water which Elijah poured so profusely over the altar.'

Josephus distinctly states that it was from the neighbouring well (ἀπὸ τῆς κρήνης) the water was obtained.

Geikie assumes the sufficiency of the well. 'Close beneath the rocks, under the shade of ancient olive-trees, is a well which is said never to fail, and this, even after the long drought, still held sufficient water to supply Elijah with as much as he required.' Describing more minutely in his latest work, *Geikie* says: 'There are still some fine trees in the amphitheatre, overhanging an ancient fountain, with a square stone-built reservoir about eight feet deep beside it, traces still remaining of the steps by which the water was reached when low. This spring never dries up, as is shown by the presence of living fresh-water molluscs, which would die if water were at any time to fail them. One can thus understand how, although drought had scorched the land for three years, and the Kishon, after shrinking to a string of pools, had dried up altogether, there was still water for the sacrifice of Elijah, though he needed so much.'

Canon Rawlinson speaks of this perennial fountain as being 'fed by the dews that the wooded upland condenses from the moist

Mediterranean air, even when it is not sufficiently charged with vapour to descend in rain.'

One or two things need to be considered by way of correcting the commonly-received impressions concerning this incident. (1) The term 'barrels' is quite confusing. No such things as we call 'barrels' could have been found among the people under such circumstances, and it is this word which has suggested large quantities of water. The term is the same as is used in Gen. xxiv. 14-20, Judg. vii. 16, 19, and it clearly means the common pitcher, or water-jar, which the maidens used to carry on their heads. (2) The altar was only a simple heap of stones, of no great size, and so lightly put together that every drop of water poured on it would run through and be caught in the trench; and the trench was only a big furrow hastily dug round the stones, so as to keep the water from draining away. A few pails of water sufficed to meet Elijah's purpose, and prove the impossibility of deception.

This may be regarded as an illustration of the way in which Scripture difficulties are needlessly manufactured. We imagine things that are altogether beyond the record, and then find all sorts of perplexities in the endeavour to explain what we have imagined.

It is only necessary to add Thomson's criticism of the suggestion that the fountain sufficed to supply Elijah's need: 'I cannot agree with Van de Velde that the water poured upon the sacrifice was procured from the fountain he mentions. The fountain was nearly dry when I saw it; nor do I think that it could hold out through the dry season even of one ordinary summer . . . nor are there any marks of antiquity about it. The water was obtained, as I suppose, from those permanent sources of the Kishon at the base of Carmel.'

Dr. Kitto may be quoted as supporting this explanation of Thomson's: 'The water thus copiously provided was probably from the Kishon, which, towards the end of its course, is supplied from perennial springs in Carmel, where the upper part (which is but the bed of a winter torrent) has become dry. Being so near the sea, these fountains may not have dried up from lack of rain.'

Identification of Adullam.

1 SAMUEL xxii. 1: 'David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam.'

Question.—*Have recent explorers succeeded in discovering this interesting cave?*

Answer.—The traditional site is the cave at *Khureitun*, 5 miles south-east of Bethlehem, but this is quite untenable. Some are

inclined to place it at Deir Dubbân, about 6 miles north of Beit Jibrin (Eleutheropolis).

M. Clermont Ganneau, however, was the first to discover the site of Adullam, and the existing name of Ayd el Mieh, which preserves all the essential letters of the Hebrew. Major Conder has now made a careful survey of the spot. He finds the ruins of an ancient town (Gen. xxxviii. 1, 12, 20) strongly situated (Josh. xii. 15, and 2 Chron. xi. 7) on the height commanding the broad valley of Elah, which was the highway by which the Philistines invaded Judah (1 Sam. xvii. 17), and where David killed Goliath. Roads connect it with Hebron, Bethlehem, and Tell es Safiyeh—the probable site of Gath. There are terraces of the hill for cultivation, scarped rock for fortification, tombs, wells, and aqueducts. The 'cave' is a series of caves, some of moderate size and some small, but quite capable of housing David's band of followers. If this site be adopted it will be seen that some of the most picturesque events of David's life are collected into a small area, bringing out most clearly the nature of the incidents recorded, such as the swiftness with which he avenged the foray of the Philistines in Kilah; the strong places which he held barring the valley to the enemy on the one hand, and protecting himself from Saul on the other.

Fuller details serve to give us confidence that this most interesting site has certainly been recovered. *Harper* says: 'Adullam was a city in the low country between the hill country of Judah and the sea. It was very ancient, being mentioned in Gen. xxxviii. 1, 12, 20. Now the great valley of Elah was the highway from Philistia to Hebron, and Wâdy es Sŭnt is identified with Elah. It answers all the requirements of the sacred text. Eight miles from the valley head stands Shochoh. The wâdy is here a quarter of a mile across. Getting deeper and deeper, it runs between rocky hills to an open vale of rich cornland, flanked by ancient fortresses, and ends at the cliff Tell es Safi. Two miles and a half south of the great angle, near Shochoh, there is a large and ancient terebinth, the tree from which Elah took its name. Near are two ancient wells, with stone water-troughs. A high hill near is covered with ruins. Caves, tombs, and rock-quarryings exist. A building dedicated to "the notable chief" is here placed. Ruins below and near the wells are called "the feast of the water," or "feast of the hundred." The Arabic words are identical with the Hebrew Adullam. We may, therefore, safely consider these ruins to be the *city* of Adullam; and the cave is on the hill. The Crusaders fixed on some caves east of Bethlehem. We know on what slight grounds they identified places. The present

Adullam is ruinous, not deserted; the sides of the valley are lined with caves, some now used to fold flocks and herds. There is one separate cave, with ample accommodation for 400 men. The hill is 500 feet high, and the whole of the country of David's exploits with the Philistines is close at hand.'

In his latest work, 'The Holy Land and the Bible,' *Geikie* gives what appear to be the results of personal observation: 'About two miles to the south of the scene of David's triumph the Palestine Surveyors appear to have discovered the Cave of Adullam, so famous in the after-life of the Hebrew king. It lies in a round hill about 500 feet high, pierced with a number of caverns, the hill itself being isolated by several valleys, and marked by ancient ruins, tombs, and quarryings. At its foot are two old wells of special antiquity, one measuring 8 to 10 feet in diameter, not unlike the wells at Beersheba, and surrounded, as those are, by numerous stone water-troughs. Near these wells, under the shadow of the hill which towers aloft, a veritable natural stronghold, are other ruins, to which the peasants give the name of Aid-el-Ma, which is identical with the Hebrew Adullam. Such a verification seems to mark the spot as, beyond question, that in which the famous cave should be found, for it was near the royal city of Adullam, and the ruins on the hilltop may well be those of that place. . . . The road from Hebron to the plains passes the hill, winding along the valley of Elah, here called Wâdy es Sir, from the side of which the hill of Adullam rises, the road continuing down the valley, which is called Wâdy es Sŭnt, from Socoh to the plains. Other roads trend off in different directions, marking Aid-el-Ma as an important centre of communication in former ages. A cave which completes the identification exists in the hill, which, in fact, is pierced by many natural caverns. It is not necessary to suppose that the one used by David was of great size, for such spacious recesses are avoided by the peasantry even now, from their dampness and tendency to cause fever. Their darkness, moreover, needs many lights, and they are disliked from the number of scorpions and bats frequenting them. The caves used as human habitations, at least in summer, are generally about 20 or 30 paces across, lighted by the sun, and comparatively dry. I have often seen such places with their roofs blackened by smoke; families lodging in one; goats, cattle, and sheep stabled in another; and grain or straw stored in a third. At Adullam there are two such caves on the northern slope of the hill, and another farther south; while the opposite sides of the tributary valley are lined with rows of caves, all smoke-blackened, and mostly inhabited, or used as pens for flocks and herds. The cave on the

south of the hill itself was tenanted by a single family when the surveyors visited it, just as it might have been by David and his immediate friends, while his followers housed themselves in those near at hand.'

Identification of Hormah.

NUMBERS xiv. 45: 'Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.'

Question.—*Can a decision be made between rival candidates for this site?*

Answer.—The two suggestions are: (1) Zephath, south of Beersheba (2) Khŭrbet Hôra, east of Beersheba.

Harper says: 'Zephath, or Hormah, has not been identified, though the name Khŭrbet Hôra has been found east of Beersheba. A low hill, an important site, with wells and underground granaries, a large bell-mouthed cistern, and five small towers. The site occupies a circle of one-and-a-half miles in diameter. *Rowlands* thought it was S'baita, where there are extensive ruins; a ruined fortress also; it would be near Geder and Arad. The latter is sixteen miles from Hebron, where there is a large ruin, now called Tell 'Arad, on a large mound.' After explaining the recent discovery of Kadesh-barnea, and the correction of our idea of the later movements of the Israelites which this discovery involves, *Harper* adds: 'It shows us that the Israelites did not use the "Arabah" as their main camping ground. That great wâdy, surrounded as it was by their enemies, would have been no safe camping-ground for them; but stopping at Kadesh, and the desert near, they would be out of the track and in defensible positions. So also the traditional Mount Hor must be recognised as an impossible Mount Hor. . . . Blind to all warning, the Israelites presume to "go up into the hilltop," and are defeated, and discomfited even to Hormah. The word means "banning," and is identical with Zephath. This has been identified by Palmer with "S'beita," and he discovered, close by, the ancient "watch-tower" (which again is the meaning of the Hebrew word). This tower is on the top of a hill. The ruins are primeval, though there are more recent fortifications. From this fort the Amorites and Canaanites most likely issued to attack Israel. The Arabic words used for the valley near the mountain mean, "the ravine of the Amorites," and the mountains themselves are called by a word meaning "head," or "top," of the Amorites.'

Geikie adds some points of interest, and favours the Zephath rather than the Hôra site. 'The inhabitants of the region between Israel

and Palestine were "Amalekites and Canaanites," who had occupied a comparatively fertile expanse of country, partly arable, partly pastoral, between Kadesh and Engedi. They allowed the invaders to penetrate far towards Palestine, and then turning upon them, pursued them as far as Hormah, a city which has been identified as situated on the southern verge of the table-land, about twenty-four miles north of Kadesh. Its name at the time of the attack was not Hormah, however, but Zephath, "the watch-tower;" "Hormah," "a desolated place," being the name given it after its utter destruction by the Israelites in the times succeeding Joshua (Judg. i. 17). It was the great point from which the roads across the desert, after having been all united, again diverge towards Gaza and Hebron, and its site is still marked by the ruins of a square tower of hewn stones, with a large heap of stones adjoining, on the top of a hill, which rises a thousand feet above the wâdy on the edge of which it stands.'

SUB-SECTION IV.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO NATURAL HISTORY.

Clean and Unclean Foods.

LEVITICUS xi. 2: 'Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth.'

Question.—*Is the Mosaic distinction between 'clean' and 'unclean' based on the wholesomeness or unwholesomeness of the different kinds of food?*

Answer.—It should be borne in mind that the distinction between clean and unclean beasts is a natural one, which was fully recognised in the arrangements made for preserving the species in the Ark. 'Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven and seven, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male and his female' (Gen. vii. 2). The terms appear to mean 'fit for human food,' 'unfit for human food'; or 'domestic' and 'wild.' But clearly Noah must have had some well-known signs by which he recognised the distinctions between them, and those signs may well have been 'parting the hoof' and 'chewing the cud,' which we find in the Mosaic legislation.

Duns says: 'Clean beasts were originally such as were offered in sacrifice. The rest were unclean. As the race increased, the dis-

tinctions were carried further. Men became acquainted with a greater number of animals. Certain animals came to be associated with the idolatrous habits of certain tribes. This introduced other considerations. The habits of some disgusted the conventional feelings of one tribe, while they were regarded with favour by another. Circumstances of climate also were taken into account in connection with the food best suited to the inhabitants of such countries. All these things influenced men's views of the lower animals, and they are acknowledged in the Levitical arrangements.'

Bishop Harold Browne says: 'The boundary-line between clean and unclean animals is marked by nature. Every tribe of mankind would distinguish between the sheep and the hyæna, between the dove and the vulture. Whether animal food was eaten before the Deluge or not, it is certain that flocks and herds were fed for the sake of their milk and wool, and that of them victims were offered in sacrifice. This alone would separate between the clean and the unclean. It is not improbable that the distinction even of the names "clean and unclean" had been fully established by custom long before it was recognised and ratified by the Law.'

Keil's suggestion is altogether too vague: 'The distinction between clean and unclean beasts is not first made by Moses, but only becomes fixed in the law as corresponding to it, though existing long before. Its beginnings reach back to the primitive time, and ground themselves on an immediate conscious feeling of the human spirit not yet clouded by any unnatural and ungodly culture, under the influence of which feeling it sees in many beasts pictures of sin and corruption which fill it with aversion and abhorrence.'

S. Clark, M.A., in 'Speaker's Commentary,' gives some of the opinions formed as to what considerations directed the line by which clean animals were separated from unclean. 'It has been held (1) That the food forbidden was such as was commonly eaten by the neighbouring nations, and that the prohibition served as a check to keep the people away from social intercourse with the Gentiles. (So *Davidson.*) (2) That the flesh of certain animals from which the Egyptians abstained, because they held it to be sacred, was pronounced clean, and treated as common food, and that the flesh of other animals, which was associated with the practice of magic, was abominated as unclean, in order that the Israelites might, in their daily life, bear a testimony against idolatry and superstition. (3) That it is impossible to refer the line of demarcation to anything but the arbitrary will of God. (4) But the notion which has been accepted with most favour is, that the distinction is based wholly or mainly on

symbolical ground. By some it has been connected with the degradation of all creation through the fall of man. The apparent reflection of moral depravity in the disposition of some animals has been identified in rather a loose way with the unclean creatures of the Law. (5) Many have considered that the prohibition of the unclean animals was based mainly or entirely on sanitary grounds, their flesh being regarded as unwholesome.'

'It cannot be doubted that the distinction which is substantially recognised by different nations is in agreement with the laws of our earthly life. All experience tends to show, that the animals generally recognised as clean are those which furnish the best and most wholesome sorts of food. The instinct of our nature points in the same direction. Everyone dislikes the snake and the toad. No one likes the form and habits of the pig. We shrink from the notion of eating the flesh of the hyæna or the vulture. When we are told of our fellow-creatures eating slugs, snails, and earthworms, and accounting the grubs found in rotten wood a delicacy, the feeling of disgust which arises within us would not seem to be the offspring of mere conventional refinement. This conclusion is not invalidated by the fact that our own repugnant feelings have been subdued in the case of the oyster and the pig. In regard to the distinction as it is laid down in the Mosaic Law, Cyril appears to be amply justified in saying that it coincides with our natural instinct and observation.' 'The chief part of the food of all cultivated nations has been taken from the same kind of animals. The ruminating quadrupeds, the fishes with fins and scales, the gallinaceous birds and other birds which feed on vegetables, are evidently preferred by the general choice of mankind.'

The law of clean and unclean appears in its broader shape to be this: All creatures whose food is wholly vegetable are wholesome food for man. All creatures whose food is wholly animal are unwholesome food for man. Creatures whose food is partly vegetable and partly animal may be wholesome, or may not be. And even after the *physical* influence of certain foods has been duly considered, we have to take into account their moral influence, the effects they produce by exciting bodily passion.

The Ways of the Partridge.

JEREMIAH xvii. 11: 'As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not.' *Rev. Ver.* renders, 'As the partridge that gathereth young which she hath not brought forth.' With marginal alternative, 'Sitteth on eggs which she hath not laid.'

Question.—*Is there any foundation in fact for this account of the partridge?*

Answer.—According to Epiphanius, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, and the Arabian naturalist Damir, there was an old belief that the partridge took eggs out of other bird's nests, and that when the young were hatched, and were old enough, they ran away from their false parent. Such a notion may have been held by the ancient Hebrews, though it is quite unfounded.

Geikie speaks of this as a 'popular fancy of Jeremiah's day.'

Fausset notes that the Hebrew name for this bird is *korea*, from a root 'to call,' alluding to its cry; a name still applied to a bustard by the Arabs. Its nest is liable, being on the ground, to be trodden under foot, or robbed by carnivorous animals, notwithstanding all the beautiful manœuvres of the parent-birds to save their brood. The translation, 'sitteth on eggs which it has not laid,' alludes to the ancient notion that she stole the eggs of other birds, and hatched them as her own, and that the young birds when grown left her for the true mother. It is not needful to make Scripture allude to an exploded notion as if it were true.

The *Speaker's Commentary* thinks the notion of the partridge stealing the eggs of other birds might easily have been taken from the great number of eggs which the partridge lays.

Dean Plumptre says: 'Modern naturalists have not observed this habit, but it is probable that the belief originated in the practice of the cuckoo laying its eggs in the nest of the partridge, as in that of other birds.'

Theodoric, the King of the Goths, in his letter quoted by *Cassiodorus*, refers to the popular belief that young birds brought up by partridges fly away to their own parents.

Identification of the Unicorn.

JOB xxxix. 9: 'Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib?' *Rev. Ver.* reads, 'Will the wild ox be content to serve thee?'

Question.—*Are there any one-horned creatures that can possibly be referred to by the English term 'unicorn'?*

Answer.—The Revised Version seems to have fixed a decision in relation to this animal, whose name in Hebrew is *reem*. It was

the wild bull, a two-horned creature. Remains of this animal have recently been discovered in Palestine. One of the earliest Assyrian kings, probably Tiglath-Pileser I., speaks of 'wild *rimi* destructive, which he slew at the foot of Lebanon,' plainly meaning wild-bulls.

The rhinoceros is the only animal we know that bears one horn, but it must be borne in mind that though the English translation sets us upon seeking an animal with one horn, the Hebrew term provides no such condition. Dr. Good thinks there can be no doubt that rhinoceros is the proper term; for this animal is universally known in Arabia by the name of *reem* to the present day. The traveller, Mr. Browne, says that the Arabians call the rhinoceros *Abu-kurn*, 'father of the one horn.' This creature is distinguished from all other animals by the remarkable and offensive weapon he carries on his nose. This is very hard horn, solid throughout, directed forward, and has been seen four feet in length.

It is certainly a very remarkable thing that the LXX., in all the passages of the Bible in which the word occurs, with one exception, should have rendered the word *monokeros*, that is, 'unicorn,' if the existence of some such animal had not been familiar to them.

But the identification with the rhinoceros cannot be sustained. The fact that the *reem* was an animal with two horns is settled by the passage, Deut. xxxiii. 17, which reads: 'His horns are like the horns of a *reem*' (see the margin, Authorised Version). The two horns of the reem represent the two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim, which sprang from the one tribe Joseph.

The only trace of a one-horned creature which we have been able to hear of, besides the rhinoceros, is a kind of antelope, but not a fierce enough or a strong enough creature to answer the Bible descriptions of the *reem*. *Abbé Huc*, in his 'Travels in Tartary and Thibet,' says that the 'unicorn really exists in Thibet. It is represented in the sculptures and paintings of the Buddhic temples. Even in China you often see it in landscapes that ornament the inns of the northern provinces. M. Huc had at one time a small Mongol treatise on natural history for the use of children, in which the unicorn formed one of the pictorial illustrations. He was not, however, fortunate enough to see one during his travels. Mr. Hodgson, an English resident in Nepaul, has succeeded in getting possession of one, the skin and horn of which were sent to Calcutta. It is a species of antelope, reddish in colour, with white belly. Its distinctive features are, first, a black horn, long and pointed, with three slight curvatures, and circular annulations towards the base. There are two tufts of hair which project from the exterior of each nostril,

and much hair also down round the nose and mouth, which gives the animal's head a heavy appearance.'

The following extracts will show whence we have derived the heraldic figure of the unicorn. *Ctesias* (B.C. 400) says: 'The *Onoi Agrioi* are as large as horses, and even larger, with white bodies, red heads, blue eyes, and have each on their foreheads a horn a cubit and a half long, the base of which is white, the upper part red, the middle part black. Drinking-cups are formed of these horns, and those who drink out of them are said to be subject neither to spasm, nor epilepsy, nor to the effects of poison. Other asses have no astragalus; but these have one, as well as a gall-bladder. The astragalus I have seen myself; it is beautifully formed, in shape like that of an ox, and very heavy and red throughout. The animal is so swift that no horse can overtake it, and so strong and fierce that it is with difficulty destroyed by arrows and javelins. It begins its running slowly, but gradually increases its speed. It shows great attachment to its young, which it defends against its pursuers, fighting with horn, teeth, and heels. The flesh is so bitter that it is not eaten; but men set a high value on the horns and astragali.'

Pliny (A.D. 70) says: 'The Orsæan Indians hunt a very fierce animal, called the *monoceros*, which has the body of a horse, the head of a stag, the feet of an elephant, and the tail of a wild boar; it utters a deep lowing noise, and has a single horn, two cubits long, projecting from the middle of its forehead. They say this animal cannot be taken alive.'

Ælian (A.D. 130) gives a further account of this *monoceros*. 'It is as big as a full-grown horse, with a mane and yellow woolly hair, of greatest swiftness, with feet like the elephant, and the tail of a wild boar. It has a black horn growing between the eyebrows, which is not smooth, but with natural twistings, and is very sharp at the point. It utters loud, harsh sounds. It lives peaceably with other animals, but quarrels with those of its own kind, the males even destroying the females, except at breeding-time, at which season the animals are gregarious; but at other times they live in solitude in wild regions.'

Making due allowance for inexactnesses and extravagances of description, the above may be referred to the rhinoceros, when that was a little known animal.

The Coney and Hare stated to Chew the Cud.

LEVITICUS xi. 5, 6: 'And the coney, because he cheweth the cud but parteth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you. And the hare, because she cheweth the cud but parteth not the hoof, she is unclean unto you.'

Difficulty.—*The description given of these animals is not correct.*

Explanation.—It is the description which would be given by a mere observer. Whenever the hare is at rest on its form, the restless motion of its jaws betrays the constant working of its teeth, and the same habit has been noticed in the coney. The similarity between this movement and that of the cow's mouth when chewing the cud could not fail to strike the unscientific observer, who would naturally give the same explanation for each case. It is rather a remarkable thing that the Arabs of the present day class the hare among animals lawful to be eaten, on the express ground that it does chew the cud.

This presents a striking illustration of the unscientific character of the Scriptures. They record popular fallacies in matters of science. Moses repeats the common opinion of his day in all such things as natural history.

Neither the hare nor the coney does, in fact, chew the cud. Neither creature is provided with the necessary internal apparatus. For them both it is a natural impossibility. They were thought to do it in Moses' day. It is thought by many persons still that they do it. It is only fair and straightforward to recognise a scientific error in this classification of the hare and coney among ruminants.

Tristram tries to get over the difficulty by saying that the Hebrew word does not imply 'having a ruminant stomach,' but simply *re-chew*, or masticate. But there is no point in the passage if in these two cases the term is to be taken in some sense that will not apply to the cow, or other ruminant creatures. *J. D. Michaelis* takes the same line as *Tristram*. 'Although there may have been no genuine rumination in the strict sense of the term, yet the act of the hare munching its food went popularly by the name of rumination, or chewing again.'

How curiously persistent the unscientific notion has proved is shown in the fact that *Linnæus* classed the hare with ruminating animals, speaking from the popular opinion with regard to it. And the poet Cowper—who kept hares, and observed them diligently—says that 'one of his hares chewed the cud all day till evening.' And *Goldsmith* tells us that 'the rhinoceros, the horse, the rabbit, the marmot, and the squirrel, all chew the cud by intervals,' which is utterly untrue.

The scientific fact is thus stated by *Houghton*: 'The simple fact is that all ruminants are bisulcate—*i.e.*, divide the hoof into two parts —and all bisulcates are ruminant. The hornless ruminants belonging to the genera *Camelus* and *Llama* differ somewhat from other ruminants in the structure of the foot. The toes of the camel are conjoined nearly to the apex, and the feet are callous beneath; in the llama the sole is cloven as far as the middle of the fore part. Hence, in point of fact, all ruminants are bisulcate, but not to an equal extent.'

The Ceremonial Uncleanness of Swine.

LEVITICUS xi. 7: 'And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be cloven-footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean unto you.'

Difficulty.—*Surely there must be some deeper reason for forbidding the eating of swine's flesh than appears in the fact that swine do not chew the cud.*

Explanation.—There can be little doubt that the association of this animal with idolatrous worship was the real reason for its prohibition. But it should be noticed that the food of the pig is not strictly confined to vegetable substances. It is to a considerable extent a *flesh-eater*, and therefore is unwholesome food.

Kalisch gives some of the associations of swine with idolatrous systems: 'The abhorrence of the Israelites to pork struck the heathen as the most conspicuous characteristic of their religion, and it was believed they would eat human flesh with no greater repugnance than pork. This peculiar aversion to the pig must have had a peculiar reason; it must in some way have been connected with the very essence of the Hebrew faith itself. In searching for the reason, we obtain welcome aid from statements of classical writers. It cannot be doubted that the swine, on account of its prolificness, was extensively regarded as an emblem of the fertility of Nature and of her productive powers; it received, therefore, a cosmic significance; it represented the main principle of all heathen religions—the eternal working of the elements and of the innate forces of matter, a principle directly opposed to that of Hebraism, which rigorously insists upon one personal Deity creating, ruling, and preserving the universe and all mankind. Hence many pagan nations sacrificed the swine to those gods to whom they attributed the fertility of the soil and the fruitfulness of cattle. Though the Egyptians commonly avoided the pig as particularly unclean, they offered and consumed one once every year, at the feast of the full moon, in honour of Isis and Osiris, the fructifying powers of Nature, and this was done so scrupulously

that the poor, who could not afford a pig, were ordered to shape one of dough, and to hallow and eat this image. The pig was indeed believed to have suggested the first idea of ploughing and the ploughshare by breaking up the earth with its protruding snout. In Egypt it was no unimportant agent in securing agricultural success; for in some parts of the country, especially in the Delta, as soon as the subsiding Nile had irrigated the fields, the husbandmen turned swine into their land to press the seed into the ground, thus protecting the grain from the birds; and at harvest-time pigs were employed to tread out the corn. The famous Zodiac of Denderah represents, under the sign of the fishes, a man carrying a small pig, which points to the Egyptian swine-offering in reference to the progress of the seasons. A pig formed the usual sacrifice for Demeter. Thus the Athenians generally offered one in their mysteries, which mainly related to the secret activity of Nature. On Athenian Eleusinian coins Ceres is figured together with a swine. The Bœotians, at an annual festival celebrated in their sacred grove near Potniæ in honour of Demeter and Kora (Proserpine), let down into subterranean chambers pigs, which were supposed to reappear in the following summer at Dodona, near the old and sacred oracle. The early Romans honoured Ceres or Tellus, after the conclusion of the harvest, by the sacrifice of a pig, generally a fat and pregnant sow, which, indeed, was considered to have been the first offering slaughtered to Ceres, if not the first of all sacrifices, "because the swine is useful to men mainly by its flesh," that is, by its death. Therefore pigs, so far from being detested, were often declared holy. Thus the Syrians in Hierapolis, who neither ate nor offered swine, did so, according to some ancient authorities, "not because they believed pigs to be a pollution, but sacred animals." The Cretans held the pig holy, not on account of the mythical reason put forth by some foreign writers that a sow allowed the infant Jupiter to suck her teats, and by her grunting prevented the child's cries from being heard, but because it was the emblem of fruitfulness, whence the Praisians, a tribe of Crete, regularly sacrificed a sow before marriage. Callimachus called Venus Castnietis the wisest of her sisters, because she was the first among them who accepted the sacrifice of swine. . . . Hence, again, as Ceres, or agriculture, was looked upon as the originator of all personal and civil ties, of matrimonial law, of special and political order, the swine was employed for various solemn and imposing rituals connected with domestic and public life. The Athenians, on entering the national assembly, used certain parts of the pig for purification. When they desired to expiate a house, a

temple, or a town, the priests carried young pigs round the edifice or the city; and they sprinkled with pig's blood the benches used at popular assemblies. . . . Moreover, as pork was, in its nature and taste, considered to resemble human flesh, the offering of a swine was, on peculiar emergencies, substituted for a human sacrifice.'

'Can it then be surprising that the Jewish doctors and sages, anxious to wean the people from the worship of Nature and her powers, and to imbue them with reverence for the one eternal Creator, the bestower of all earthly blessings, looked with implacable detestation upon the animal which typified a main feature of paganism, and declared the eating of pork as nothing less than a revolt against the foundations of Judaism—nay, that the early teachers among the Christians shared the same repugnance, and relaxed in it only after long struggles? The very persecution and ridicule which the Jews constantly suffered on that account helped to intensify their abhorrence, especially as the eating of pork was in later times also enforced and regarded as the first and most conspicuous act of the Jewish renegade, as among Mohammedans it is still held to be equivalent to abjuring the Islam.'

Kalisch summarizes the things that made the pig hateful to the Jews: 'Loathsome uncleanness, unwholesomeness, carnivorous ferocity, and dangerous seduction to paganism.'

Swine are still held in abomination by Moslems, Jews, Druses, and most Orientals. Even some Christians refuse swine's flesh.

The Eagle's Ways with her Young.

DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 11 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'As an eagle that stirreth up her nest, that fluttereth over her young, He spread abroad His wings, He took them, He bare them on His pinions.'

Question.—*Is this poetical figure based on any such observations as can now be verified?*

Answer.—*Thomson* thinks it may be a precise description. 'The eagle is strong enough to do it, but I am not aware that such a thing has ever been witnessed.' He reports having himself seen 'the old eagle fly round and round the nest, and back and forth past it, while the young ones fluttered and shivered on the edge, as if eager but afraid to launch forth from the giddy precipice. And no wonder, for the nest "is on high," and a fall from thence would end their flight for ever.'

A recent traveller, writing in view of a deep chasm in the range of Lebanon, says: 'It is not necessary to press every poetical figure

into strict prosaic accuracy. The notion, however, appears to have been prevalent among the ancients that the eagle did actually take up her yet timid young, and carry them forth to teach them how, and embolden them to try their own pinions.'

Moses could not but be observant of the wild birds during his long sojourn in Arabia, and this is quite a matter of careful observation, not one in which science has any special concern. A person accustomed to observe accurately the habits of animals reports having seen an eagle in one of the deep gorges of the Himalayas thus teaching its young to fly. While with his glass he watched several young ones on a ledge of rock at a great height, the parent bird swept gently past the young, one of which ventured to follow, but seemed as if unequal to the flight. As it gently sunk down with extended wings, one of the parent birds glided underneath it, and bore it aloft again.

Sir Humphrey Davy writes: 'I once saw a very interesting sight above one of the crags of Ben Nevis, as I was going in the pursuit of black game. Two parent eagles were teaching their offspring, two young birds, the manœuvres of flight. They began by rising from the top of a mountain in the eye of the sun. It was about mid-day, and bright for this climate. They at first made small circles, and the young birds imitated them. They paused on their wings, waiting till they had made their first flight, and then took a second and larger gyration, always rising towards the sun, and enlarging their circles of flight, so as to make a gradually extending spiral. The young ones still slowly followed, apparently flying better as they mounted; and they continued this sublime kind of exercise, always rising, till they became mere points in the air, and the young ones were lost, and afterwards their parents, to our aching sight.'

Ants Storing their Food.

PROVERBS vi. 6-8 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise; which having no chief, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.'

Difficulty.—*Careful observation of the ants of Palestine does not confirm the fact which is here used as illustration.*

Explanation.—It must be admitted that no answer is given to this objection if we can only show that there are some kinds of ants, in some parts of the world, which do store up their food. It is necessary to show that such ants as came within the sphere of the *observations of this writer* did so. What can be known concerning the ants of Palestine?

Dr. C. Geikie, in his latest work, 'Holy Land and Bible,' writes with great confidence on this subject. 'Modern science has felt a difficulty in these words, since the ant does not live on grain, but on flesh, insects, and the sweet sap or other exudations of trees, which it could not store up for winter use, and since it sleeps during winter, in all but very hot climates. The truth is, we must not look in Scripture for science, which was unknown in early ages, for it is not the purpose of Revelation to teach it, and the sacred writers, in this as in other matters of a similar kind, were left to write according to the popular belief of their day. We find the same idea in another passage of Proverbs (ch. xxx. 24, 25): "There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise: the ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer." It was universally believed in antiquity that ants did so. *Thomson* and *Neil* still cling to the idea. Ants do, indeed, fill their nest with many things, but it is to pad them warmly, and keep themselves from the damp earth; and hence, though they are undoubtedly assiduous in harvest-time in carrying off grains of corn, chaff, grass, seeds, and vegetable husks of all kinds, they do so to make their underground rooms comfortable, not to lay up food for a season during which, in many parts, they eat nothing. Anyone may see the proof of this for himself by opening an ant's nest. He will find everything to make it warm, but the supposed "stores" are left quite untouched.

'It is not certain, indeed, that in Palestine ants hibernate, for they may be seen—at least in the warm district round the Dead Sea—busy on the tamarisk-trunks, seeking their food, even in January. The mistake is similar to that which prevails very generally, even in our own day, as to ants' eggs, which is the name popularly given, both in England and Germany, to the *pupæ*, or ants in process of transformation into the perfect insect. They then closely resemble grains of corn, and are carried out daily by their nurses to enjoy the heat of the sun, and taken in again before evening. Who that has broken into an ant's nest, by accident or intentionally, has not seen the workers rushing off with these white, egg-like bodies, in trembling haste, to bear them to a place of security? But if we nowadays make a popular mistake in thinking these to be eggs, how much more natural was it that erroneous ideas, on another point of ant-life, should obtain three thousand years ago! Mr. Neil's experience, indeed, shows how easily a mistake might arise. While encamped, about the middle of March, near Tiberias, on the Lake of Galilee, he noticed a line of large, black ants marching towards their nest, each laden with a grain of barley, larger and longer than itself, so that they looked

like a moving multitude of barleycorns. This line, he found, extended to a spot where some of the corn for his beasts had been spilt by the mule-drivers, or had fallen from the nose-bags, and was now being appropriated by the ants. That they should carry it off seemed at once to justify the supposition that they were doing so to lay up food for the winter, and yet, as I have said, nothing is more certain than that ants do not eat dried barley, or any other dry grain.'

Houghton says: 'That the ant stores up grains of corn is quite true, but the corn is not eaten by the insects, which are chiefly carnivorous in their habits, though they are also fond of saccharine matters. Ants take a pleasure in running away with various small objects, as beans, seeds, etc., which they convey to their nests, and use as a lining to keep out the damp.'

The late *Colonel Sykes* tells of a species of Indian ant, the *Atta providens*, so called from his having found a large store of grass-seeds in its nest; he says that this insect carries seeds underground, and brings them again to the surface, after they have got wet during the monsoons, apparently to dry, thus corroborating what the ancients have written on this particular point.

Tristram's note will be regarded as altogether satisfactory. He says: 'The ancients unanimously believed that the ant stored up food for winter consumption; and who that has watched the incessant activity of these little creatures, issuing in long files from their subterranean labyrinths by a broad, beaten track, and gradually dispersing in all directions by pathways that become narrower and fainter as they are sub-divided and diverge, while a busy throng is uninterruptedly conveying back by the same paths every movable object which they are able to drag with their powerful forceps, would not at once arrive at the same conclusion? The language of the Wise Man is in accordance with the universal belief; and the lessons of wisdom and industry are none the less forcible because the more accurate observation has shown that, in most countries at least, the stores are not husbanded for food, but for furnishing their homes. The language of the inspired writer must be read simply as we read the expressions of the sun rising and setting, explained by the discoveries of more recent astronomy. At the same time, it has not yet been ascertained that, in the warmer climates of the Holy Land, the ant is dormant throughout the winter. Among the tamarisks of the Dead Sea it may be seen in January actively engaged in collecting the aphides and saccharine exudations, in long files, passing and repassing up and down the trunk.'

Bees in a Lion's Carcase.

JUDGES xiv. 8: 'And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion; and behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.'

Difficulty.—*It is hard to believe that bees would settle inside the carcase of an animal.*

Explanation.—Two statements have been made, either of which suffices to remove this difficulty. *Rosenmüller* says: 'If one were to understand this of a putrid and offensive carcase, the narrative would lose all probability, for it is well known that bees will not approach the dead body of either man or animal. But in the desert of Arabia the heat of the summer season often so dries up the moisture of the bodies of dead men and camels within twenty-four hours, that they remain a long time like mummies, unaltered and without offensive smell.'

The other suggestion, however, seems more reasonable. The bodies of dead animals in the East are immediately attacked by carrion bird and beast, who swiftly remove every soft portion, and leave the mere bony skeleton to whiten in the sun. The skeleton would be a not unlikely place for a bee-hive; and it was in the dried skeleton of the lion that Samson found the bees.

Herodotus gives a story which is strikingly illustrative of this one. He tells of a certain Onesilas, who had been captured by the Amathusians, and had been beheaded, that his head, after having been suspended over the gates, had become occupied by a swarm of bees.

In Palestine bees are abundant; the dry recesses of the limestone rocks everywhere afford shelter and protection for the combs.

Rosenmüller quotes the authority of the physician Aldrovand for the story that swarms of bees built their combs between the skeletons of two sisters who were buried in the church of Santa Croce, at Verona, in 1566.

Hugh Miller, in 'Schools and Schoolmasters,' tells the following story: 'A party of boys had stormed a humble-bee's nest on the side of the old chapel-brae, and digging inwards along the narrow winding earth-passage, they at length came to a grinning human skull, and saw the bees issuing thick from out a round hole at its base. . . . The wise little workers had actually formed their nest within the hollow of the head, once occupied by the busy brain; and their spoilers, more scrupulous than Samson of old, who seems to have

enjoyed the meat brought out of the eater, and the sweetness extracted from the strong, left in very great consternation their honey all to themselves.'

The Bear of Palestine.

1 SAMUEL xvii. 37: 'David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.'

Question.—*Is there any evidence that the bear of Palestine was a special foe of the shepherds?*

Answer.—It appears to have been dreaded at particular times of the year. *Van Lennep* gives the fullest account of the habits of this creature. 'The bear is powerful, keen-scented, sagacious, and cunning. He is generally harmless, and greatly terrifies people by the cool, unconcerned manner in which he makes his nightly calls to the choicest fruit-trees, even when close to an inhabited dwelling. The depredations of the bear are very extensive, for he not only consumes a vast quantity of fruit, but breaks many branches of the trees on which he climbs, and roughly handles other people's property.

'As long as the fruit season lasts, the bear is well-behaved and harmless. He hides on the lofty mountains during the day, and comes down at night to the gardens, or orchards and vineyards, and skilfully avoids the snares laid for him. Honey is his favourite food, and he will often run considerable risks in order to gratify his greediness for it. When winter comes, and the snow covers the lofty mountains which he inhabits, the bear withdraws to a cave, and awaits the return of spring in a dormant state. It is during the interval between the cessation of autumnal fruits and crops, and his retirement to winter quarters, that he manifests his carnivorous propensities, and becomes ferocious and aggressive even to man. He prowls about mountain villages, and fiercely attacks the flocks of goats and sheep, even in broad daylight. We remember visiting a village on the Anti-taurus, which the day before had suffered the depredations of a bear of monstrous size. He had surprised a flock of goats, and when attacked by the shepherds and their dogs with a hue and cry which brought out every villager from his hut, he had slowly retired, flinging stones at his pursuers with such accurate aim and force that severe wounds were inflicted on them. Later in the day he had gone boldly into the fold on the edge of the village, and carried off a goat, which he dragged to a hillock near by, and deliberately devoured, in plain sight of the inhabitants, who, not pos-

sessing a single gun, dared not disturb the audacious brute. He was pointed out to us ranging over the hills, already covered with a slight fall of snow; and, watching with our spy-glass, we saw him dig up the remains of another goat which he had partly devoured and buried there. We have repeatedly known the bear at this season to fall upon and devour children who had strayed out but a short distance from the mountain villages; and we particularly remember a Turkish girl about thirteen years of age, who thus lost her life on the Ak-dagh, near Amasia.

'Some have supposed that the bear has not the thirst for blood which is characteristic of the wolf or panther. He sometimes, however, seems quite as ferocious, and has been repeatedly known to kill apparently for the pleasure of it. In a certain mountain village the sheep were shut up in one of those stables which are partly dug out of the mountain side, and have a room in front built of rough stones, with a flat roof overhead, and a broad chimney. The door was made fast at evening, and the dogs, being released from duty, had sought refuge from the cold in their master's house. A bear came, however, at dead of night, and, descending by the chimney, strangled every one of the sheep. After gorging himself with their blood he piled their bodies in the wide fireplace, and climbing thereon, escaped unperceived!'

Meen gives a much less favourable account of this creature: 'Concealing himself in some thicket, the bear watches his victim, then steals upon him in silence; escape, either for man or beast, being all but impossible. Although many animals surpass it in the rapidity of their movements, few men are swift enough to elude him. The widest river, the most inaccessible rock, or the loftiest tree, offers no protection. His whole aspect is such as to inspire terror. Morose, sullen, and capricious, we fail to discover any redeeming quality except in its attachment to its young, which cannot be surpassed. The Syrian bear not only preys on animals, but also devastates the fields. The lion and other beasts spring on their prey with a single bound, but the bear has a mode of attack peculiar to itself. Stealing up to his victim in silence, he rises upon his hind legs, and throwing his horrid arms around, crushes him to death. The female is more formidable than the male, and on the loss of her young she is almost driven to madness.'

It may be interesting to add, that the Hebrew name for the bear is *dôb*, being identical with the modern Arabic name *dub*, a 'he-bear;' *dubbé*, a 'she-bear.' Some writers derive the word from a Hebrew root, *dâbâb*, 'to walk slowly;' but others, with more probability, refer

it to an Arabic root, meaning 'to be hairy;' *dôb* being thus the '*shaggy* animal.' The name of the bear occurs on the Assyrian monuments; the word phonetically is read *dâbu*, evidently the Hebrew *dôb*.

Layard says that at the present day bears appear not to be uncommon in the neighbourhood of Tiyari, a district north of Assyria, where they are very mischievous, robbing the trees of their fruit, and taking the fruit when laid out to dry. 'These bears are probably the descendants of those hunted by the Assyrian monarchs more than 2,500 years ago.'

A Plague of Mice.

1 SAMUEL vi. 5: 'Wherefore ye shall make images of your tumours, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land.'

Difficulty.—*Mice are such small creatures, and so well within the control of man, that it is strange to find them becoming a serious national plague.*

Explanation.—The reference here is to the field-mouse, and not the household mouse with which we are familiar. This class of animals multiplies with amazing rapidity. The field-mouse has its natural enemies, which keep its numbers in check. If by any circumstances these natural enemies are removed from a district, the breeding proceeds with an amazing rapidity, and the creatures become a nuisance, and even a plague. Illustration may be found in the rabbit-pest of Australia, or in the destructive work of a large species of bat in New South Wales. As illustrating the rapidity with which the rodents breed, mention may be made of a farmer's daughter who had a pair of Norwegian rats given to her, and in three or four months found them increased to seventy.

The Hebrew word *'akhbar* seems to include any small destructive rodent, the root of the name meaning 'to bite to pieces,' or 'to gnaw.' 'The mice that marred the land of the Philistines were probably some kind of field-mice, of which several kinds occur at the present day in the Holy Land. The short-tailed field-vole, commonly known as the field-mouse (Arvicola arvalis), is very common there, and perhaps there is not a more destructive little creature in existence than it. In our own country extensive injury both to newly-sown fields and to plantations has often been caused by this little agricultural pest. In the years 1813 and 1814 the ravages were

so great in the New Forest and the Forest of Dean that considerable alarm was felt lest the whole of the young trees in those extensive woods should be destroyed by them.'

Herodotus has a curious story about the mischief that can be wrought by mice. When Sennacherib invaded Egypt in the time of Sethôs, Vulcan sent a great multitude of field-mice, which devoured all the quivers and bows of the Assyrian army, as well as the thongs by which they managed their shields; thus were the Assyrians overthrown.

Van Lennep tells of a brown rat which multiplies with such amazing rapidity that, were it not for its numerous foes, a single pair would increase to nearly a thousand individuals in one year. *Van Lennep* gives an interesting account of the short-tailed field-mouse which abounds throughout Western Asia, and 'must be endowed with great powers of increase, for he has many enemies. The owl is after him by night, and by day the hawk, with other birds of prey, flutters in the sky, and comes down with a swoop, and carries him off to his nest, while the indefatigable little ferret creeps into his hole, successfully encountering him, and destroying his little ones; yet he seems in no wise diminished. You see him in all the arable lands, running across the fields, industriously carrying off the grain to stow it away for winter, chirping gaily from time to time, sitting up on his haunches to get a good sight of you as you approach, and then suddenly diving into his hole. This animal is apt so greatly to multiply as at times to cause a sensible diminution of the crops, and its ravages are more generally dreaded than those of the mole. A perfectly trustworthy friend has informed us that in 1863, being on a farm (*chiflik*) of an acquaintance in Western Asia Minor, he saw about noon the depredations committed by an immense number of these mice, which passed over the ground like an army of young locusts. Fields of standing corn and barley disappeared in an incredibly short space of time, and as for vines and mulberry-trees, they were gnawed at the roots and speedily prostrated. The annual produce of a farm of one hundred and fifty acres, which promised to be unusually large, was thus utterly consumed, and the neighbouring farms suffered equally.'

Aristotle, in his 'History of Animals,' says: 'In many places mice are wont to appear in the fields in such unspeakable numbers that scarce anything is left of the whole crop. So rapidly do they consume the corn, that in some cases small farmers have observed their crops ripe and ready for the sickle on one day, and coming the next with the reapers, have found them entirely devoured.'

In 1848, it is said, the coffee-crop in Ceylon was entirely destroyed by mice.

It is difficult to imagine what can become of such vast multitudes of creatures, and what natural agencies are employed to restore the proper balance and proportion of the creatures in a given district; but of the possibility of a really serious 'plague of mice' there is abundant evidence.

Changed Nature of the Beasts.

ISAIAH xi. 6: 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.'

Question.—*Is this to be taken as a literal prophecy of what shall one day happen?*

Answer.—There is no necessity whatever for forcing Scripture references in such a bald and bare way. The imagination of such a time sufficiently met the case of the prophet. A man's sphere of illustration may reasonably include what he can imagine, as well as what he knows. It is not conceivable that the characteristic peculiarities of the animals will ever be altered. They would then become other animals than they are. The prophet has in mind men who may be represented by the wolf, the leopard, the lion, the bear, and the asp; and the nature of men—or rather the *un*-natural condition of men—may be changed by Divine grace.

Bishop Wordsworth takes this view. The ancient expositors declared their judgment that these predictions have been verified by the moral and spiritual change wrought in savage nations, which formerly were like *lions*, *leopards*, *bears*, and *wolves*, and by the bringing together of hostile tribes to dwell together in peace in the Church of Christ, as the savage and tame creatures, the unclean and clean animals, dwelt together in the Ark of Noah, the type of the Church.

The *Speaker's Commentary*, while admitting that the allegorical sense is the primary one, says: 'This need not exclude a real fulfilment of the prophecy in the subordinate sphere of animal life. To a mind which is not so enslaved by the actual facts of history that it dares not consider what the ideal order of nature may fairly be thought to demand, there is nothing unphilosophic in such an expectation. On the contrary, reason itself requires us to cherish it. The existence of so many creatures, in which it might almost seem that bad passions or tempers were embodied, is of itself a perplexing

phenomenon. It indicates an abnormal condition of the world, a state of temporary *frustration* (Rom. viii. 20) or corruption of nature, from which we may well believe it shall be emancipated as soon as the Redeemer of mankind shall have fully established His kingdom of righteousness. How gladly the human mind turns to contemplate such a change is shown by the fourth Eclogue of Virgil.'

Professor Rawlinson says: 'Primarily, no doubt, the passage is figurative, and points to harmony among men, who, in Messiah's kingdom, shall no longer prey one upon another. But, from the highest spiritual standpoint, the figure itself becomes a reality, and it is seen that, if in the "new heavens and new earth" there is an animal creation, it will be fitting that there harmony should equally prevail among the inferior creation. Human sin may not have introduced rapine and violence among the beasts—at least, geologists tell us that animals preyed one upon another long before the earth was the habitation of man—but still, man's influence may prevail to eradicate the beasts' natural impulses, and educate them to something higher.' Already domestication has done something towards this end.

The Curse on the Serpent.

GENESIS iii. 14: 'And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.'

Difficulty.—*This curse seems to imply an immediate change in the form, the habits, and the food of the serpent-class of creatures; and if science can trace signs of a gradual change, it finds no indication of any sudden change.*

Explanation.—It must be fully admitted that geological discoveries have proved that the serpent-form, as we know it, is anterior to the age of man. There were serpents on the pre-Adamic earth whose structure was analogous to that of the true serpents (*Ophidia*) of our day. Geological discoveries have put this as much beyond doubt as the fact that there were shell-fish in those primæval times.

The *Ophidia* range from the top of the chalk, up through the Tertiary group of rocks, and culminate at the top of the highest member of that series—the *Pliocene.*

Professor Owen says: 'The earliest evidence of an Ophidian reptile has been obtained from the eocene clay of Sheppey; it consists of vertebræ indicating a serpent of twelve feet in length—the *Palæophis*

toliapicus. Still larger, more numerous, and better-preserved vertebræ have been obtained from the eocene beds of Bracklesham, on which the species *Palæophis typhæus* and the *Palæophis porcatus* have been founded. These remains indicate a boa-constrictor-like snake of about twenty feet in length. Ophidian vertebræ of much smaller size, from the newer eocene at Hordwell, support the species *Paleryx rhombifer* and *Paleryx depressus.* Fossil vertebræ from a tertiary formation near Salonica have been referred to a serpent, probably poisonous, under the name of Laophis. A species of true viper has been discovered in the miocene deposits at Sansans, in the South of France.'

It is said that embryo legs and feet have been found under the skin of serpents, indicating that they were once of a lizard type; but this can only apply to some kinds, and has not been established as a fact concerning all serpents.

Possibly the curse means that, henceforth, degrading and repulsive associations shall be in the minds of men in connection with the crawling or grovelling of the serpent types, and certainly there are no creatures which are so repulsive to man. *Dean Payne Smith* seems to approve of this explanation: 'The serpent is but the type; diabolic agency the reality. First, therefore, the serpent is condemned to crawl. As he is pronounced to be "cursed above" (or, rather, *among*) "all cattle"—that is, the tame animals subjected to man's service, and also "among all beasts of the field"—that is, the wild animals, but a term not applicable to reptiles—it has been supposed that the serpent was originally erect and beautiful, and that Adam had even tamed serpents, and had them in his household. But such a transformation belongs to the region of fable, and the meaning is, that henceforward the serpent's crawling motion is to be to it a mark of disgrace, and to Satan a sign of meanness and contempt. He won the victory over our guileless first parents, and still he winds in and out among men, ever bringing degradation with him, and ever sinking with his victims into deeper abysses of shame and infamy.'

The part of the curse relating apparently to the serpent's food is explained by *Thomson* in the 'Land and the Book': 'Perhaps the phrase "eat dust" has a metaphorical meaning, equivalent to "bite the dust," which, from time immemorial, has been the favourite boast of the Eastern warrior over his enemy. To make him eat dust, or, as the Persians have it, *dirt*, is the most insulting threat that can be uttered. In pronouncing sentence upon the serpent, we need not suppose that God used the identical Hebrew words which Moses

wrote some thousands of years afterwards; but the Jewish lawgiver was guided to a proverb which fully expressed the purport of that Divine communication. We may paraphrase it after this fashion: Boast not of thy triumph over a feeble woman, proud, deceitful spirit; you shall be overthrown and reduced to the most abject degradation.'

Ayre, in his 'Treasury of Bible Knowledge,' takes the position which can be most wisely and hopefully held: 'There was no change wrought in the constitution of the serpent. Geological research has demonstrated the existence of serpents with serpent forms, and (we may conclude) with the same habits and propensities, in the earlier periods of the world's history. But it is not by any means a strange thing for a natural object to have a new significance given to it. Doubtless from ordinary causes the rainbow had been seen long before it was made the sign of God's covenant to Noah (Gen. ix. 12-17). The curse on Cain wrought no physical change in him (Gen. iv. 11). So there was no change in the physical conformation of the literal serpent. But the serpent's habits, trailing on its belly amid the dust, venomous, and loathsome to the eye of man, read to every age a striking lesson, and expose the tempter, whose vehicle of mischief it was, as cursed and to be hated. Mischief indeed he has done, and can still do; he can bite the heel, but it will always be to the bruising and crushing of his own head. The facts of the fall, as narrated by the sacred historian, must not be explained away, or regarded as of a mythic character. Other parts of Scripture bear testimony to their literal truth (2 Cor. xi. 3), but yet to comprehend their whole significancy we must look beyond the reptile to the dark power who for a time identified himself with it. Hence it was that the serpent was feared, and thought a being to be propitiated. And hence that strange worship which in so many ages and so many lands was offered to it. It was *from* this well-known practice, true in the main, but not true in the particular instance, that part of the Apocryphal story of Bel and the Dragon was constructed.'

Morning Cloud and Early Dew.

HOSEA vi. 4 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the dew that goeth early away.'

Question.—*Are there any marked peculiarities in the dew of Palestine which may account for the frequent allusions to it in Scripture?*

Answer.—The influences of the dew are not prominent in the minds of those who dwell in rainy countries, though its import-

ance ought always to be recognised. In Eastern lands vegetation is very largely dependent on it, and the dews are far more copious than we can imagine. In warm countries the night-dews supply the place of showers.

Savary says of Egypt: 'It would be uninhabitable did not the nocturnal dews restore life to vegetables. These dews are so copious, especially in summer, that the earth is deeply soaked with them, and in the morning one would imagine that rain had fallen during the night.'

The usual scientific explanation of the dew is as follows: 'It is formed during the night by a gradual deposition, on bodies rendered, by radiation, colder than the bodies round them, of part of the moisture which rises invisibly from the surface of water into the air during the heat of the day. In a clear night, the objects on the surface of the earth radiate heat to the sky through the air, which impedes not, while there is nothing nearer than the stars to return the radiation: they consequently soon become colder; and if the air around has its usual load of moisture, part of this will be deposited on them in the form of dew, exactly as the invisible moisture in the air of a room is deposited on a cold glass bottle when brought into it from a colder place. The reason why the dew falls or is formed so much more copiously upon the soft spongy surface of leaves and flowers, where it is wanted, than on the hard surface of stone or sand, where it would be of no use, is the difference of their radiating powers. There is no state of the atmosphere in which artificial dew may not be made to form on a body, by sufficiently cooling it, and the degree of heat at which the dew begins to appear is called the *dew-point.* In cloudy nights, heat is radiated back from the clouds; and, the earth below being not so much cooled, the dew is scanty or deficient.'

Dr. Duns, explaining the relation of the dew to Gideon's fleece, remarks: 'It is a curious fact that wool is one of the substances best fitted for the reception of moisture in the form of dew. The metals are least so. Gideon was led to choose a substance on which the sign sought for would be most distinctly marked. It is not necessary here to seek to establish that the phenomena described were miraculous. They served as a sign; this was the only purpose for which they were regulated. By a few simple experiments the appearances which met the eye of Gideon can be produced. The point of the narrative is, that by the arrangement of Him in whose hands are all the forces of nature, the phenomena for which His servants looked were produced at the time and in the circumstances determined on

by Him, without any artificial interferences thereto. Gideon had noticed that in nature, when dew was formed, all the articles in the same area became covered with it. Let there then be an exception to this—let the fleece be wet, and all the earth around dry. It was so. Again, let the earth be wet and the fleece dry. "And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground." In the one case, the sky needed to be clouded except at the point which looked down on the fleece; in the other, it needed to be all clear except above the fleece. Thus though natural means might be used in producing the effect, these were so guided as to shut Gideon up to the direct acknowledgment of God's interference in making the phenomena a sign.'

One of the freshest things in Dr. Geikie's 'Holy Land and Bible' is his explanation of the causes of dew in Palestine. Writing of the melon-growing district of Palestine, he says: 'The secret of this luxuriant fertility lies in the rich supply of moisture afforded by the sea winds which blow inland each night, and water the face of the whole land. There is no dew, properly so called, in Palestine, for there is no moisture in the hot summer air to be chilled into dew-drops by the coolness of the night, as in a climate like ours. From May till October rain is unknown, the sun shining with unclouded brightness day after day. The heat becomes intense, the ground hard; and vegetation would perish but for the moist west winds that come each night from the sea. The bright skies cause the heat of the day to radiate very quickly into space, so that the nights are as cold as the day is the reverse: a peculiarity of climate from which poor Jacob suffered, thousands of years ago, for he, too, speaks of "the drought consuming him by day, and the cold by night." To this coldness of the night air the indispensable watering of all plant life is due. The winds, loaded with moisture, are robbed of it as they pass over the land, the cold air condensing it into drops of water, which fall in a gracious rain of mist on every thirsty blade. In the morning the fog thus created rests like a sea over the plains, and far up the sides of the hills, which raise their heads above it like so many islands. At sunrise, however, the scene speedily changes. By the kindling light the mist is transformed into vast snow-white clouds, which presently break into separate masses, and rise up the mountain-sides, to disappear in the blue above, dissipated by the increasing heat. These are the "morning clouds and the early dew that go away" of which Hosea speaks so touchingly. Anyone standing at sunrise on a vantage-ground in Jerusalem, or on the Mount of Olives, and looking down towards the Dead Sea, must have seen how the masses of

billowy vapour, filling the valleys during the night, sway and break up when the light streams on them from over the mountains of Moab, their shape and colour changing each moment before the kindling warmth as they rose from the hollows of the landscape, and then up the slopes of the hills, till they passed in opal or snowy brightness into the upper air, and at last faded into the unclouded sky.'

SUB-SECTION V.

DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO ETHNOLOGY AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

Ancient Giant Races.

GENESIS vi. 4: 'There were giants in the earth in those days.'

Difficulty.—*It is strange that no traces of the existences of what we understand by giant races have ever been found in any part of the world.*

Explanation.—Families of unusual height, size, and strength have been found in every age, and in almost every country, but the general average of height, size, and strength has been preserved in all races. The variations from the tallest to the shortest have been but slight. 'So far as research has gone, ancient tombs, mummies, armour, etc., give evidence that from the earliest historic ages, the ordinary size of the human race has been nearly the same. But the existence of certain tall tribes is neither incredible nor improbable: indeed, we know on the surest evidence that, according to climate, there is a variety in the sizes of men; the natives of the extreme north, as the Laplanders and Esquimaux, being diminutive, while those of other regions—the Patagonians, for example, and other tribes of South America—though not so gigantic as they were once represented, are remarkably tall. Tallness of stature is often found to run in families; and there are plenty of examples within modern memory of individuals attaining the extraordinary height of seven or even eight feet.'

The term giants as applied to the antediluvians seems to refer to character rather than to bodily size. They were a fierce and depraved race, who had filled the earth with violence.

The allusions made to the Anakim, Emim, Rephaim, etc., indicate the fear of the Israelites, which led them to exaggerate the bodily

size and strength of their enemies. In fact, overgrown giants are not to be greatly feared, for they are usually unwieldy, clumsy, and dull-brained, as was Goliath of Gath. The literature of the nations constantly records how the quick-witted overcome the big-bodied, as in our own stories of 'Jack the Giant-Killer,' and Abbé Huc's story of the 'Giant of Efe.'

There is good reason, based on the measurement of the mummies, to believe that the average stature of the Egyptians was five and a half feet; and, to them, anything over six feet would seem to be gigantic. It should also be noticed that, though the height of some individuals is given in *cubits*, the size of the cubit varied, and it is impossible to decide, in any given case, which standard was used.

Referring to Goliath, Ishbi-benob, etc., *Dr. Geikie* says: 'These colossal warriors seem to have been the last of their race, which we do not need to conceive of as all gigantic, but only as noted for boasting some extra tall men among a people famous for their stature. The Goths in old times were spoken of in the same way by their contemporaries as a race of giants, but though they were huge compared with the populations they invaded, giants were a very rare exception among them, as among other nations.'

The word 'giants,' in Gen. vi. 4, means 'the distinguished' (*Tuch*), 'invaders' (*Keil*), 'tyrants' (*Luther*), 'fallen ones,' 'apostates' (*Delitzsch*). They were powerful men, and doers of violent deeds.

Dr. Duns notices that 'two classes are referred to: (1) the giants (*Nephilim*)—"There were giants in the earth in those days"; (2) the mighty ones (*Gibborim*)—"The same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown." The statement that there were giants is complete in itself. Having been told this, we are next informed that those were mighty men. They were thus both *Nephilim* and *Gibborim*—both giants and other strong ones. The giants are not affirmed to have been born of the daughters of men who had been united to the sons of God. The "strong ones" were their children. There is no necessity, either from the tenor of this verse or from the use of the word in other portions of Scripture, for holding that these "strong ones" were "giants." The same word occurs in the singular in Isaiah iii. 2, where it points to eminence as a military leader, and to a type of heroism which is well illustrated by the great captains of modern times. In them the qualities of greatness are moral and intellectual; they do not consist in personal strength and physical prowess. The expression which follows indicates men of the latter stamp—"the mighty man (the hero) and the man of war (the man of personal strength)." It thus appears that the *Nephilim* were men of

great stature, distinguished, because of well-marked bodily features, by the name "giants." Scripture usage is clear on this matter. The report of the men who were sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan concluded with the words, "And there we saw the giants (*the Nephilim*), the sons of Anak, which come of the giants (*the Nephilim*); and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so were we in their sight" (Num. xiii. 35). The way in which the giants are introduced in the sacred narrative suggests that they were regarded as the wonders of their time, and as comparatively rare among the families of men. The ordinary size of men seems to have been much the same in all time. That this was undoubtedly the case during the earliest periods of history, is seen from the tombs of Egypt. And there is no countenance given here to the popular impression that all the men in antediluvian times were giants. That there were, in those ancient times before the flood, men of a gigantic size and strength, is a thing very credible, both from later instances in historians both sacred and profane, and modern instances in our own times. But we must not conclude from this, as some have done, that mankind in general were, in the first ages, of a much larger stature than they are at present; though the number of giants seems to have been much greater before the flood than afterwards.'

Calvin says: 'I class myself on the side of those who think that these giants were so called because, like a tempest or hurricane which ravages the fields, and destroys the crops, these brigands, by means of their perpetual invasions, spread through the world devastation and carnage. Moses did not say that they were of extraordinary physical stature, but only that they were corporally very robust.'

The author of the 'Explication du Livre de la Genese' says: 'They were not, perhaps, all of an enormous height or size . . . but they were all, as the Scripture describes them, full of confidence in their strength, their prowess, their training, and their skill in every exercise of the body, but making no account of judgment, learning, piety, or justice.'

The Origin of Woman.

GENESIS ii. 21, 22: 'And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman and brought her unto the man.'

Difficulty.—*If this is strictly descriptive, it would seem reasonable to expect that man should have, on one side of his body, a rib less than woman.*

Explanation.—Early legends are wrongly treated when they

are regarded as descriptive or historical. They embody the poetry of the ages to which they belong; and this legend preserves, in a poetic form, the facts that woman as well as man is the immediate creation of God, and that God gave woman to be man's helpmeet.

There have been very curious traditions preserved which relate to the origin of woman; and science appears to have discovered some very curious facts bearing on the subject.

It should first be noticed, as entirely removing the difficulty connected with the *rib*, that the word should be translated '*side*,' and the sentence should read, 'The side he built up into a woman.' It is, however, no more easy for us to conceive of man's *side* being made into a woman, than man's *rib*.

The form in which the origin of woman is given to us in the early legend has suggested the idea that man and woman were originally united in one body, till the Creator separated them. But though we do find stamens and pistils—the two forms necessary to ordinary vegetable generation—on the same tree or flower, there are neither geological nor existent animals in which the male and female principles are combined.

The scientific notion is best represented by *Darwin*, who, in his second book, showed that 'man is developed like other animals from an ovule or egg about the one hundred and twenty-fifth part of an inch in diameter; in embryo he bears the closest resemblance to other embryonic forms; he has rudimentary muscles, like those which twitch the skin of horses; he has even the faint survival of a point to his ears and the genuine remnant of a tail. These and other details rank him merely as one of the Quadrumana (four-handed animals), and afford him a position among the primates, which include all the apes and monkeys. It is even possible to go further, and assign him a place among the Catarhine (downward nostril), and not among the Platyrhine (broad nostril) apes, on account of the character of his nose and teeth, and, as the former are confined to the Old World, and the latter to the New, to conclude that he first assumed his final characteristics in the eastern hemisphere, perhaps in Africa. In tracing his development to this position, we may believe that all the Quadrumana were derived from an ancient marsupial animal (*i.e.*, one with a pouch like the kangaroo), and this through a long line of diversified forms, from some creature dwelling half on land and half in water, and this again from some fish-like animal.' 'In the dim obscurity of the past we can see that the early progenitors of all the Vertebrata must have been an aquatic animal, provided with branchiæ' (gills, of which the faint

trace in his embryo are the last surviving proof in man), '*with the two sexes united in the same individual*, and with most organs of the body (such as the brain and heart) imperfectly or not at all developed.'

The Talmud declares, in the *Bereshith rabbâ*, that Adam was created at once male and female. There is a Babylonian legend of the creation, which makes the present world of living creatures be preceded by a world of *biform* monsters with two faces. 'Suppose then that the first being formed was a double being, both male and female in one, what we have recorded in Gen. ii. 21-23 would be the separation of the two into distinct beings, or the removal of the one from the other's "side."'

The following legends were related by Persian Brahmins to a traveller named John Marshall, in the early part of last century. Once on a time, as (God) was set in eternity, it came into His mind to make something, and, immediately, no sooner had He thought the same, but that the same minute was a perfect beautiful woman present immediately before Him, which He called *Adea Suktee*, that is, the first woman. Then this figure put into His mind the figure of a man, which He had no sooner conceived in His mind, but that he also started up, and represented himself before Him; this He called *Manapuise*, that is, the first man; then, upon a reflection of these things, He resolved further to create several places for them to abide in, and accordingly assuming a subtil body, He breathed in a minute the whole universe, and everything therein, from the least to the greatest.'

'The Brahmins of Persia tell long stories of a great giant that was led into a most delicate garden, which, upon certain conditions, should be his own for ever. But one evening, in a cool shade, one of the wicked devotas, or spirits, came to him and tempted him with vast sums of gold, and all the most precious jewels that can be imagined; but he courageously withstood that temptation, as not knowing what value or use they were of. But at length this wicked Devota brought to him a fair woman, who so charmed him that, for her sake, he most willingly broke all his conditions, and thereupon was turned out.'

There is an ancient Persian legend of the first man and woman which is very singular. Their names are given as *Meschia* and *Meschiane*, and they lived for a long time happily together: they hunted together, and discovered fire, and made an axe, and with it built a hut. But no sooner had they thus set up housekeeping than they fought terribly, and, after wounding each other, parted. It is

not said which remained master of the hut, but we learn that after fifty years of divorce they were reunited.'

Many Rabbis imagined that Adam and Eve were originally created with one body between them, and they curiously conceived that the two heads were turned back to back, Eve being afterwards separated, and presented to Adam as his wife. *Lenormant* gets over the difficulty by a satisfactory suggestion, if it can be duly supported. He thinks the Hebrew text means that Eve was formed *at* Adam's side, not *from* it. *Delitzsch* does not think Adam was double sexed. He says: 'To speak generally, the form of Adam was without sex. In its most refined nature Adam had the sexual contrast in himself. With its going forth from the unity of his personality, there necessarily connected itself that configuration which was demanded for the then commencing sexual life.'

The South Sea Islanders say that 'the first man, who had previously been a stone, thought one day he would make a woman. He collected the light earth on the surface of the ground in the form of a human body, with head, arms, and legs. He then plucked out one of his left ribs and thrust it into the breast of his earth-model. Instantly the earth became alive, and up starts a woman. He called her *Ivi*, which is their word for "rib."'

Joseph's Land Scheme.

GENESIS xlvii. 20: 'And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them; so the land became Pharaoh's.'

Difficulty.—*According to modern ideas, Joseph secured the independence of the crown at the cost of the liberties and natural rights of the people.*

Explanation.—All political devices have to be considered in view of the special circumstances of the nation with which they are concerned. The sovereignty of the people is entirely a modern, civilized, and Western notion. The prevailing idea throughout the world has been that peoples exist for the sake of their rulers, and even in Western lands it is difficult to get the better idea fully established—that rulers exist for the sake of the people.

It is curious, however, to notice that the modern socialistic movements tend in the direction of Joseph's scheme, and propose the resumption of land by the State, the removal of all private ownership of land, and the division of the country in the interests of the people.

The special circumstances of Egypt in Joseph's time may partly explain his scheme, and show it to have been good statesmanship.

If a foreign dynasty was ruling, Joseph's plan tended to give it fixity. But we may look for the real explanation of his scheme in the need for securing the country against possible recurrence of famine. The improvident people would never store their grain in any efficient way, but the universal tax which Joseph secured sufficed both for the royal and national expenditure, and for the full furnishing of the great national store-cities and granaries.

That Joseph's was a familiar Eastern scheme is shown by the condition of Egypt recently under Mehemet Ali. By an edict he appropriated the whole country to himself, so that Egypt became as much the property of its ruler as it was in the days of Joseph. The people were not turned out of their possessions, except when it pleased the Pasha to take the land under his own care. In that case the fellah was not permitted to seek some other residence, but had to remain as a labourer in the Pasha's service. Two-thirds of the rental went to the government as taxes.

It is now generally assumed that the Pharaoh under whom Joseph served was Apepi, the last shepherd (Hyksôs) king, and predecessor of Aahmes, who, after a long and severe struggle, expelled the Hyksôs, and re-established in Egypt the rule of a native dynasty.

Lange says: 'This proceeding of Joseph, reducing the Egyptians in their great necessity to a state of entire dependence on Pharaoh, has been made the ground of severe reproach, and, indeed, it does look strange at first. The promotion of earthly welfare, and of a comfortable existence, cannot excuse a theocratic personage in bringing a free people into the condition of servants.' Lange thinks Joseph did not act in an arbitrary manner, and that he could not be expected to advise Pharaoh from the points of view of modern constitutional governments. *Professor Tayler Lewis*, in a note to Lange, says: 'All this difficulty about Joseph's proceeding vanishes when one studiously considers what the Egyptians would have done, or how fatal their free improvidence might have proved, without his sagacious political economy. There would have been no cattle to be sold, the lands would have been barren for the want of hands to till them. Each one for himself, without a common weal, and a wise ruler taking care of it, and taxing them for such care, there would not have been, in their future prospects, any stimulus to frugality or industry. It is yet an unsettled question whether unregulated individual cultivation of land in small portions, or a judicious system of landlordism, for which, of course, there must be rent or tax, is the better method for the universal good. The 20 per cent. which Joseph exacted for the government care was not a

system of slavery, and it may have been far better than a much greater percentage, perhaps, to capitalists and usurers.' To this should be added that the proportion of a fifth enabled the government to secure stores of food against possible famine times, as is now done, to some extent, in China.

Kitto gives a hearty approval of Joseph's scheme, and adds: 'The Scripture, as usual, records the proceedings without passing any judgment upon them; and considering the influences by which he was surrounded, and the age and the circumstances in which he lived, it would be surprising indeed to find all his proceedings conformable to modern European notions of political justice. It would be enough to find that his measures were such as would in his own age be considered just and wise, and if in any point his ideas were in advance of his age, he is entitled to the greater credit, for we cannot rightly expect more from him than the spirit of his own age demanded.'

We may sum up the matter by saying that 'the change effected by Joseph in the tenure of the lands could only have been necessary if it were the policy of the king to secure his throne. Joseph bought up the goods and lands of the people, and let them out again at the fixed rent of one-fifth of the produce. He thus made the people directly dependent on the king, taking away from them all their rights of personal liberty and property. The priesthood were exempted from this arrangement, possibly because they were too strong a body, and exercised too wide an influence, to permit such interference with their liberties. It is very easy to see how Joseph's device was in the interests of the king, but very difficult to see that it could be a blessing for the people.'

NOTE.—The *Speaker's Commentary* gives the illustrations of Joseph's scheme that are found in Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo, and the monuments: 'Herodotus says that Sesostris divided the soil among the inhabitants, assigning square plots of land of equal size to all, and obtained his revenue from a rent paid annually by the holders. Diodorus says that Sesoösis divided the whole country into thirty-six nomes, and set nomarchs over each to take care of the royal revenue, and administer their respective provinces. Strabo tells us that the occupiers of land held it subject to a rent. Again, Diodorus represents the land as possessed only by the priests, the king, and the warriors, which testimony is confirmed by the sculptures. The discrepancy of this from the account in Genesis is apparent in the silence of the latter concerning the lands assigned to the warrior

caste. The reservation of their lands to the priests is expressly mentioned in Gen. xlvii. 22, but nothing is said of the warriors. There was, however, a marked difference in the tenure of lands by the warriors from that by the priests. Herodotus says that each warrior had assigned to him twelve *aruræ* of land (each *arura* being a square of 100 Egyptian cubits)—that is to say, there were no landed possessions vested in the caste, but certain fixed portions assigned to each person, and these, as given by the sovereign's will, so apparently were liable to be withheld or taken away by the same will; for we find that Sethos, the contemporary of Sennacherib, and therefore of Hezekiah and Isaiah, actually deprived the warriors of these lands, which former kings had conceded to them. It is, therefore, as Knobel remarks, highly probable that the original reservation of their lands was only to the priests, and that the warrior caste did not come into possession of their twelve *aruræ* each till after the time of Joseph.'

'It may be a question whether the division of the land into thirty-six nomes and into square plots of equal size by Sesostris be the same transaction as the purchasing and restoring of the land by Joseph. The people were already in possession of their property when Joseph bought it, and they received it again on condition of paying a fifth of the produce as rent. But whether or not this act of Sesostris be identified with that of Joseph (or the Pharaoh of Joseph), the profane historians and the monuments completely bear out the testimony of the author of Genesis as to the condition of land tenure, and its origin in an exercise of the sovereign's authority.'

Who was there to find Cain?

GENESIS iv. 14: 'And I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond' (wanderer) 'in the earth: and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me.'

Difficulty.—*This exclamation of Cain's appears to assume the recognised existence of other races besides that of Adam.*

Explanation.—It is quite certain that Cain would not fear his own descendants, and it is equally clear that the descendants of Seth (who was, however, born later than this) were not scattered over the earth so as to meet Cain in his wanderings, and avenge the blood of Abel. We seem to be shut up to two suggestions. Abel may have left a family, and it would keep the idea of blood-revenge. Or Adam may have had other children besides those mentioned in the Bible. Some would go further than these suggestions, and assume the existence of other races, with other human parentage than Adam's.

Delitzsch gets over the difficulty too easily. 'It is clear that the blood-avengers whom Cain feared must be those who should exist in the future, when his father's family had become enlarged and spread abroad; for that the murderer should be punished with death (we might even say that the taking vengeance for blood is the fountain of regulated law and right respecting murder) is a righteous sentence written in any man's breast; and that Cain already sees the earth full of avengers is just the way of the murderer who sees himself on all sides surrounded by avenging spirits, and feels himself subjected to their tormentings.'

Lange thinks that Cain knew nothing about the outside world, and only imagined that there might be in it human beings like himself. 'To the lawless, vindictive Cain, nothing would be more natural than the thought that, somewhere in the unknown waste, there might be beings like himself, who might be as malignant to himself as he had been to his slain brother.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* thinks we need not suppose Cain, Abel, and Seth, to have been the only sons of Adam. 'Indeed, from Gen. v. 4, "And he begat sons and daughters," we infer that there were others. Cain, Abel, and Seth are mentioned for obvious reasons: Abel for his piety and his early death; Cain for his wickedness, and the worldly wisdom of his posterity; Seth because he was the ancestor of the promised seed. There may, then, in 130 years, have grown up a very considerable number of children and grandchildren to Adam and Eve. An Eastern tradition assigns to them no less than thirty-three sons and twenty-seven daughters.'

Dr. Geikie imagines the 'expulsion from Eden to have been an event so distant, that children born to Adam, or perhaps even to his children, had grown into manhood, and a community had gradually been formed. A band from this fled with the banished one to Nod, the land of exile, and there the insecurity of their position led to the first gathering into town life.'

Dean Payne Smith gives two opinions. Some 'say that Adam's creation was not identical with Gen. i. 27, but was that of the highest type of the human race, and had been preceded by the production of inferior races, of whose existence there are wide-spread proofs. But others, with more probability, think that Cain's was a vain apprehension. How could he know that Adam and his family were the sole inhabitants of the earth? Naturally he expected to find farther on what he had left behind; a man and woman with stalwart sons; and that these, regarding him as an interloper come to rob them, and seeing in his ways proofs of guilt, would at once attack and slay him.'

Sons of God and Daughters of Men.

GENESIS vi. 1, 2: 'And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.'

Difficulty.—*The distinction between 'sons of God' and 'daughters of men' is only found in this connection, so we are left to guess what can be meant by these terms.*

Explanation.—No certainty can be attained on this subject, but a reasonable solution of the difficulty may be suggested. There does not seem to be any ground for the notion that the 'sons of God' were 'angels,' or beings from other worlds. Poetry has imagined the love of angels for the fair daughters of earth, as in Thomas Moore's 'Loves of the Angels.' And legends have gathered round the early records, some of which have been preserved to our time in the 'Book of Enoch,' which was probably written many years before the birth of Christ. A portion of one legend may be given: 'It happened after the sons of men had multiplied in those days that daughters were born to them, elegant and beautiful. And when the angels (the sons of heaven) beheld them, they became enamoured of them, saying to each other, "Come, let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men." . . . Then their leader, Samyaza, said to them, "I fear that you may perhaps be indisposed to the performance of this enterprise, and that I alone shall suffer for so grievous a crime." But they answered him, and said: "We all swear, and bind ourselves by mutual execrations, that we will not change our intention, but execute our projected undertaking." Then they all swore together, and bound themselves by mutual execrations. Their whole number was two hundred, who descended upon Ardis, which is the top of Mount Armon (query Hermon). . . . These were the names of their chiefs: Samyaza was their leader; Urakabarameel, Akibeel, Tamiel, Ramnel, Danel, Azkeel, Sarakuyal, Asael, Armers, Batraal, Anane, Zavebe, Samsaveel, Ertael, Zurel, Yomyael, Arazyal. These were the prefects of the two hundred angels, and the remainder were all with them. Then they took wives, each choosing for himself . . . teaching them sorcery, incantations, and the dividing of roots and trees. . . . And the women brought forth giants. . . . These devoured all which the labour of men produced, until it became impossible to feed them, when they turned themselves against men, in order to devour them; and began to injure birds, beasts, reptiles, fishes, to eat their flesh one after another, and to drink their blood.'

As no mention of angels is made in the chapters of Genesis previous to the sixth, it is not proper to introduce our later ideas of angels in order to explain this term 'sons of God.' It is better to seek in the earlier legends a key to the meaning of the phrase. The reference to cherubim, in Gen. iii. 24, does not at all help us.

What is clear from the early records is, that there were two distinct races on the earth, and that in the Divine idea these two races were to *keep* distinct and separate, each fulfilling its mission on strictly its own lines. The Cainite race, outside the special covenant, working out its destiny in merely human wisdom and strength; and the Sethite race, within the special covenant, working out its destiny in the Divine leading and inspiration. Confusion arose when bodily passion overmastered the lines of separation, and produced a mingled race, which was neither in strictly human, nor in strictly Divine leadings.

It is remarkable that the commingling should be spoken of as an approach of Sethite men to Cainite women; but no hint is given of any approach of Cainite men to Sethite women. This may, however, only mean that Scripture is concerned with the doings of the Sethite race, and introduces the Cainites only so far as they are brought into direct association with the Sethites. Sethite women marrying Cainite men would be lost to the covenant race.

Probably the generally received ideas on this subject are traceable to the remarks of *Josephus*, who says: 'The posterity of Seth were perverted, and forsook the practices of their forefathers, and did neither pay those honours to God which were appointed them, nor had they any concern to do justice towards men. But for what zeal they had formerly shown for virtue, they now showed by their actions a double degree of wickedness, whereby they made God to be their enemy; for many angels of God accompanied with women, and begat sons that proved unjust, and despisers of all that was good, on account of the confidence they had in their own strength, for the tradition is that these men did what resembled the acts of those whom the Greeks call giants.'

Some have suggested that there was another race of men on the earth contemporary with the Adamites, whose history has no place in the Bible. But it is not necessary to make such a supposition, if the distinction between the Cainites and the Sethites will meet all the requirements of the case. This suggestion is presented in a fourfold form: (1) We have historical evidence of the existence of a race of idolaters alongside of the Adamic race. (2) The apostasy, which was then all but universal, consisted in the daughters of the Adamites

forming marriage relationships with a race of idolaters already accursed. (3) The flood was sent upon the descendants of Adam, and those with whom they had contracted marriages; the other idolaters are not to be held as swept away by the deluge. (4) The Anakim of the days of Moses were the descendants of the Nephilim, or giants, of the time of Noah.

Others have suggested that the 'sons of God' were men of high rank, who married a number of wives from the lower ranks, thus extending polygamy and its evils. But there is no ground for such a notion, which anticipates the later formal divisions of society.

Dr. Porter says: 'The difficulties disappear when we interpret the narrative in its natural connection, keeping clearly before us the scope of the context. The scope may be embodied in the following propositions: (1) The human family is traced through two distinct lines; the line of the outcast Cain, and that of the elect Seth. (2) Seth was recognised by his parents as a special gift from God (Gen. iv. 25); and, according to Oriental idiom, he was therefore *a son of God.* Cain, on the other hand, "went out from the presence of God" (Gen. iv. 16). His aspirations were all human; and, according to the same idiom, he was *a son of man.* (3) In the line of Seth the worship of God was kept up. His *fatherhood*, so to speak, was acknowledged (Gen. iv. 26; v. 24). In the line of Cain, God's paternal care and government appear to have been almost wholly ignored.'

Canaanites not Native Races of Palestine.

EXODUS iii. 8: 'Unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.'

Question.—*How came these petty kingdoms to be established in Palestine?*

Answer.—It is important to observe that they had no natural rights in the land, and were conquerors holding possession on condition of good behaviour, just as truly as the Israelites were in later times. There is consequently no real difference between the Canaanites being subjugated and turned out by the Israelites when 'the cup of their iniquity was full,' and the Israelites being subjugated and turned out by the Assyrians and Babylonians when 'the cup of *their* iniquity was full.'

So far as we can gather, the aborigines of Palestine are represented by the Anakim, Rephaim, Emim, Horites, etc., of whom relics were left in the land.

Ewald gives careful attention to this subject: 'The first inquiry

naturally refers to the aborigines, tribes of whose immigration the later inhabitants retained neither proof nor even the faintest recollection. Before their subjugation or expulsion by other victorious invaders, these aborigines may have passed through many stages of fortune, forgotten as layer after layer of population flowed over this lowest and broadest stratum. Total expulsion, however, can rarely have befallen the original inhabitants upon a strip of coast like Palestine, the exit from whence was not easy to a settled population, whether on account of the great attractions of its soil, or because its boundaries were formed by deserts, seas, the easily-defended fords of the Jordan, and the mountain glens of the north. We are, therefore, justified in assuming that many relics of the primitive inhabitants must have been spared. For us, indeed, all such traces are almost erased, because the Israelitish invasion belonged to a later time, when the earlier strata of population were so intermixed that it was no longer easy always to discriminate the earlier and the later inhabitants.

'That in the very earliest age, long before the ancient migrations into Egypt (that is, long before the time of the Hyksos), a more homogeneous group of nations established themselves in this land is not only probable from the general relations among nations, but to be inferred also from more definite indications. A change in the name of a country, such as Seir, Edom, or Esau, itself points to the successive rule of three distinct nations, whose chronological sequence we can in this case distinguish with certainty. What these names prove to have happened to the land on the south-eastern border of the Holy Land, and is more easy of demonstration in that instance, is evidently true of other cases occurring within the land itself. Further, all the nations which were settled in the land in historical times, some of which are known even from Biblical testimony to have come in from foreign parts, though differing widely in other respects, possessed a Semitic language, of which, amid considerable dialectic varieties, the fundamental elements were closely related. Now this is not conceivable, unless one original nation, possessing a distinctly-marked character, had lived there, perhaps for a thousand years before the immigration of others, to whose language aftercomers had more or less to conform. This original nation, moreover, doubtless had its peculiar ideas, religious ceremonies, and customs, which more or less powerfully influenced subsequent immigrants; as the worship of the horned Astarte is known to have existed here from the earliest ages, and quite independently of the later Phœnicians.' (See Ashteroth Karnaim, Gen. xiv. 5.)

At the time of the Israelite occupation these aborigines had for many centuries been so completely subjugated, dispersed, and ground down, that but few remains of them were still visible. But then the immigrants were so various, so divided, and in some points even so weak, that it must have been very difficult to comprise such numerous and disconnected nations under one fitting appellation. The Israelites called them Canaanites, Amorites, or otherwise, according as one or other of them seemed the more important at the time, or they preferred to name several together. When a nation had been long resident in the land, no one thought of investigating the antiquity of its settlement there. So much the more remarkable is it that some few tribes are nevertheless described in the Old Testament as 'ancient inhabitants of the land.' This declaration is the more impartial and weighty because quite incidental. The nations thus described are very small and scattered tribes, but on this account the more likely to be the remains of the aboriginal inhabitants.

In the northern and more fruitful portions of the land, on this side Jordan, the aborigines must have been very early completely subjugated by the Canaanites, and blended with them, as not even a distant allusion to them is anywhere to be found. The case is different with the country beyond the Jordan, especially towards the south. Here we come upon the traces of a people, strangers alike to the Hebrews and their cognate tribes, and to the Canaanites, who maintained some degree of independence until after the Mosaic age —the *Horites* (dwellers in caves, Troglodytes) in the cavernous land of Edom, or Seir.

At the time of the Israelitish conquest, as we learn from some perfectly reliable accounts, there still existed many remains of the aborigines scattered through the land. They were then ordinarily designated by a name which suggests very different ideas—Rephaim or giants. A part of the population, which from its locality can hardly be anything else than the Rephaim, is very curiously also called by a perfectly distinct name—*Amorites*. Again, in the south-west of the land we find other traces of aborigines; possibly the Amalekites must be classed among them. And there was a district about Joppa, called Geshur, which was occupied by the Avvites, or Avvim. And in David's reign there was another small kingdom of the same name, Geshur, at the very opposite point, on the north-east, on the other side Jordan, and distinguished by the epithet *Aramœan*, as being surrounded by tribes speaking Aramaic. It is clear from all these signs that there was here a primitive people which once

extended over the whole land of the Jordan to the left, and to the Euphrates on the right, and to the Red Sea on the south; and that, as in many districts it was still disputing dominion with the Canaanites, it was completely subjugated only by the fresh incursion of the Hebrews under Moses. There can be no doubt that they were of Semitic origin.

Professor Wilkins names the aboriginal tribes the Rephaim, the Zanzummim, the Emim, and the Anakim.

Preservation of Species in the Ark.

GENESIS vi. 19: 'And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee: they shall be male and female.'

Difficulty.—*No single erection could possibly contain specimens of all the kinds of creatures now upon the earth.*

Explanation.—If the Flood was strictly local, though vastly extensive, it is evident that only the animals inhabiting the particular region affected would need to be preserved, and these would be within reasonable limitations. Some living creatures would exist beyond the reach of the Flood, some would migrate for the time into safe districts, and some would not be permanently injured by prolonged submersion. And it may also be recognised that the primary forms were comparatively few, the existing varieties being largely the result of developments under differing conditions of climate, food, etc.

Dr. Geikie summarizes the difficulties of assuming that representatives of all kinds of creatures were found in Noah's Ark: 'Nor is it possible to conceive of an assemblage of all the living creatures of the different regions of the earth at any one spot. The unique fauna of Australia—survivors of a former geological age—certainly could neither have reached the Ark nor regained their home after leaving it; for they are separated from the nearest continuous land by vast breadths of ocean. The Polar bear surely could not survive a journey from his native icebergs to the sultry plains of Mesopotamia; nor could the animals of South America have reached them except by travelling the whole length, northwards, of North America, and then, after miraculously crossing Behring's Straits, having pressed westwards across the whole breadth of Asia—a continent larger than the moon. That even a deer should accomplish such a pedestrian feat is inconceivable, but how could a sloth have done it—a creature which lives in trees, never, if possible, descending to the ground, and

able to advance on it only by the slowest and most painful motions? Or how could tropical creatures find supplies of food in passing through such a variety of climates, and over vast spaces of hideous desert? Still more, how could any vessel, however large, have held pairs and sevens of all the creatures on earth, with food for a year, and how could the whole family of Noah have attended to them? There are at least 2,000 mammals, more than 7,000 kinds of birds, from the gigantic ostrich to the humming-bird, and over 1,500 kinds of amphibious animals and reptiles, not to speak of 120,000 kinds of insects, and an unknown multitude of varieties of infusoria. Nor does this include the many thousand kinds of mollusca, radiata, and fish. Even if the Ark, as has been supposed by one writer, was of 80,000 tons burden, such a freightage needs only be mentioned to make it be felt impossible. Look which way we like, gigantic difficulties meet us. Thus, Hugh Miller has noticed that it would have required a continuous miracle to keep alive the fish for whom the Deluge water was unsuitable, while even spawn would perish if kept unhatched for a whole year, as that of many fish must have been. Nor would the vegetable world have fared better than the animal, for of the 100,000 known species of plants, very few would survive a year's submersion.'

Dean Payne Smith remarks that 'the terms are conditioned by the usual rules for the interpretation of the language of Holy Scripture, and by the internal necessities of the event itself. Thus the animals in the Ark could not have been more in number than four men and four women could attend to. Next, the terms exclude the carnivora. Not only was there no supply of animals taken on board to feed them, but half-tamed as they would have been by a year's sojourn in the Ark, they would have remained in Noah's neighbourhood, and very soon have destroyed all the cattle which had been saved, especially as far and wide no other living creatures would have existed for their food.'

The distinction made between 'clean' and 'unclean' suggests the two classes of what may be called domestic creatures—those which serve man for food, and those which serve man for labour; but the raven, as a flesh-eating bird, suggests a wider selection than from the domestic circle only. *Van Lennep*, however, speaks of the raven, or crow, as being closely related to the dwellings of men; and this bird may therefore have come into the class of domestic animals with which Noah was familiar. It is the only reference that can possibly suggest the preservation of what we call the wild animals. If we understand that Noah preserved in the Ark the defenceless animals

belonging to the domestic circle, we can abundantly fill his Ark, especially if food for so long a time as twelve months be duly taken into account.

Inglis observes that 'the carrying capabilities of the Ark have been over-estimated from forgetting that by far the greater portion of it was occupied with fodder and provisions. But to contain the immense number of different species of animals, the progenitors of those scattered from the north to the south pole, numbering many thousands, with a year's provisions, would have required a fleet of arks. Besides, from Gen. ix. 10 we learn that there were beasts on the earth after the Flood which had not come out of the Ark: "From all that go out of the Ark to every beast of the earth."'

On this latter sentence the *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'From it we can hardly fail to infer that the destruction of the lower animals was confined to a certain district, and not general throughout the earth.' The distinct species found in any one particular district would be strictly limited in number.

The Syrian Origin of the Israelites.

DEUTERONOMY xxvi. 5 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'And thou shalt answer and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous.'

Difficulty.—*The term Syrian must surely be used here in a very comprehensive sense.*

Explanation.—The margin of the Revised Version gives for 'Syrian,' 'Aramæan'; and for 'ready to perish,' 'wandering,' or 'lost.'

The reference is not to Abraham, the first father of the race, but to Jacob, who was looked upon as the second father.

Bishop Wordsworth translates the Hebrew words, 'an Aramæan perishing,' and thinks the reference is to Jacob, who served in danger and distress with Laban the Syrian (Gen. xxv. 20) for twenty years, and whose wives and children were from Padan-Aram (Gen. xxviii. 5; xxxi. 38-42). Israel may fairly be called an Aramæan because of his long sojourn there; and the sons of Israel were actually Syrian-born.

The term Syrian, or Aramæan, was an extensive one, and it might have been fairly used even of Abraham. We distinguish between Syria and Assyria, but the empire of Assyria was founded later, and includes portions of the Syrian territory.

Aram, meaning 'highlander,' was one of the sons of Shem, who, by his descendants, colonised the fertile country north of Babylonia, called Aram-Naharaim, or 'Aram between the two rivers,' the Euphrates and the Tigris, the country being thence denominated Mesopotamia by the Greeks, and sometimes by the Hebrews Padan-Aram, 'the level country of Aram,' or the 'upland plain.' In Scripture Aram is generally rendered Syria, that is Syria east of Lebanon. The Grecian name Syria is of doubtful origin, but is possibly connected with the root *tsur*, 'rock,' from which also comes Tyre. The 'highland' is part of the lofty and extensive chain of mountains known as Lebanon.

Assyria is to be distinguished from Syria, whose southern boundary was the land of Israel, and whose capital was Damascus. Assyria was the country east of the Tigris, bounded on the north by Armenia, east by Media, and south by Susiana and Chaldæa.

It would be therefore correct to speak of the Chaldæan origin of Abraham, and the Syrian origin of Jacob's family. Jacob was born in Palestine, but his independent start, as the head of a family, was made from Syria (Padan-Aram).

It need only further be observed that, in a comprehensive way, even Palestine may be included in the general term Syria.

Weeds and Thorns following on Man's Culture.

GENESIS iii. 18: 'Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.'

Question.—*Can we trace the natural way in which this Divine curse has been, and is constantly being, fulfilled?*

Answer.—Nature, left alone, preserves a perfect balance. If anything tends to grow or develop unduly, the restraining forces at once correspondingly increase. But man's toil interferes with Nature's arrangements, and disturbs the natural balance. The culture which develops the corn, develops the weeds which grow among the corn. The folly that shoots the birds, gives unchecked chance to the worm and caterpillar on which they feed. Man's self-will is a disturbance of the Divine order; but it may be but a material disability, which is permitted as working towards a higher moral good. Man is to gain virtue out of a struggle with the universe, which his self-will has disturbed.

Hugh Macmillan illustrates this point with singular felicity. 'It is a remarkable circumstance that whenever man cultivates Nature, and then abandons her to her own unaided energies, the result is far worse than if he had never attempted to improve her at all. There

are no such thorns found in a state of Nature as those produced by the ground which man has once tilled, but has now deserted. In the waste clearings amid the fern brakes of New Zealand, and in the primeval forests of Canada, thorns may now be seen which were unknown there before. The nettle and the thistle follow man wherever he goes, and remain as perpetual witnesses of his presence, even though he departs; and around the cold hearthstone of the ruined shieling on the Highland moor, and on the threshold of the crumbling log-hut in the Australian bush, these social plants may be seen growing, forming a singular contrast to the vegetation around them.

'No country in the world, now that it has been so long left out of cultivation, has such a variety and abundance of thorny plants as the once favoured heritage of God's people, the land flowing with milk and honey. Travellers call the Holy Land "the land of thorns." Giant thistles, growing to the height of a man on horseback, frequently spread over regions once rich and fruitful, as they do on the pampas of South America; and many of the most interesting historic spots and ruins are rendered almost inaccessible by thickets of fiercely-armed buck-thorns. Entire fields are covered with the troublesome creeping stems of the spinous *Ononis*, or rest-harrow, while the bare hillsides are studded with the dangerous capsules of the *Paliurus* and *Tribulus*. Roses of the most prickly kinds abound on the lower slopes of Hermon, while the sub-tropical valleys of Judæa are choked up in many places by the thorny *Lycium*, whose lilac flowers and scarlet fruit cannot be plucked, owing to erect branches armed at all points with spines. The feathery tree of the *Zizyphus spina Christi*, or Christ's thorn, that fringe the banks of the Jordan, and flourish on the marshy borders of the Lake of Gennesaret, are beautiful to look at, but terrible to handle, concealing as they do under each of the small delicately formed leaves of a brilliant green, a thorn curved like a fish-hook, which grasps and tears everything that touches it. *Dr. Tristram* mentions that, in passing through thorny thickets near Jericho, the clothes of his whole party were torn to rags. . . . In short, thorny plants, the evidences of a degenerate flora, and of deteriorated physical conditions, now form the most conspicuous vegetation of Palestine, and supply abundant mournful proof of the literal fulfilment of prophecy: "Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city."'

Lange explains that 'in their ground type, thorns and thistles must have existed before; but it is now the tendency of Nature to

favour the ignoble forms rather than the noble, the lower rather than the higher, the weed rather than the herb. In place of the ennobling tendency which would produce a fruit-tree or a rose-bush out of a thorn-shrub, or that wonderful flower of the cactus out of the thistle, there comes in a tendency to wildness or degeneracy which transforms the herb into a weed. The sickliness of nature: a falling back upon its subordinate stages, as a punishment of man for his contra-natural falling back into a demoniacal, bestial behaviour. Here now, along with the thorns and thistles, there is, at the same time, the positive opposition of nature to man. In place of the garden-culture, there is introduced not agriculture simply, but an agriculture which is, at the same time, a strife with a resisting nature, and in place of the fruit of paradise, is man now directed to the fruit of the field.'

Mining Allusions in Job.

JOB xxviii. 1, 2 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place for gold which they refine. Iron is taken out of the earth' (or dust) 'and brass is molten out of the stone.'

Question.—*Does not such knowledge of mining operations prove the Solomonic date of the Book of Job?*

Answer.—Though it is now known that mines were worked in Sinai at least a thousand years before the time assigned to Job, there were gold-mines in Egypt, and silver was brought from the far East by Phœnician merchants, yet it seems inconceivable that an Arab sheikh, such as we assume Job to have been, could have been so intimately acquainted with mining matters as to have written in such detail, and with such precision, about them. Too much cannot, indeed, be made of this argument; it is only fair to infer that the Solomonic associations with mining and metals amply supply the materials found in this remarkable chapter of Job. It seems more to the point to show that mining was early carried on in the districts of the Hauran, and in Lebanon, and that Solomon was in a very special sense interested in the useful and the precious metals.

The *Speaker's Commentary* very cautiously deals with this question: 'A great chieftain, whose camels were doubtless employed in transporting the productions of various regions, would have had opportunities such as few Israelites, *save in the age of Solomon*, could have enjoyed of exploring the excavations, and watching the ingenious processes by which the metals were prepared for the use of man. The local colouring altogether belongs to Idumæa, the Peninsula of Arabia, or to Egypt, certainly not to Palestine.'

As the principal metals are mentioned in the early Scriptures, it is certain that men must have, early in the human history, found out how to trace them, and how to separate them from surrounding earth by such processes as washing and burning. Gold is mentioned in Gen. ii. 11, 12, silver in Gen. xiii. 2, iron in Gen. iv. 22, copper in Gen. iv. 22—this metal, when hardened by some alloy, is known as brass —lead in Exod. xv. 10. 'The Hebrews were acquainted with the principal metals, but they drew their supplies mainly from other countries, specially by means of Phœnician commerce. The mineral wealth of Syria and Palestine seems to have been less developed than that of districts so near as the Sinaitic Peninsula.'

Delitzsch points out that the author's information on mining subjects could have been equally well obtained through knowledge of Egypt and Sinai, or through knowledge of the Hauran district, which is probably the place of Job's residence. *Delitzsch* has collected so much interesting information that much of his note may be given to our readers: 'The ruins of mines found show that the Sinaitic Peninsula has been worked as a mining district from the earliest times. The first of these mining districts is the *Wâdy Nasb*, where Lepsius found traces of old smelting-places, and where also Graul and his companions, having their attention drawn to it by Wilkinson's work, searched for the remains of a mine, and found at least traces of copper slag, but could see nothing more. A second mining district is denoted by the ruins of a temple of *Hathor*, on the steep terrace of the rising ground *Sarbut-el-châdim*, which stretches out into a spacious valley. This field of ruins, with its many lofty columns within the still recognisable area of a temple and round about it, gives the impression of a large burying-ground. . . . *Tischendorf* describes the wild terrific-looking copper rocks that lay around in their varied shades, now light, now dark. That these copper rocks were worked in ancient days is proved by the large black heaps of slag which Lepsius discovered to the east and west of the temple. The remains of a mine discovered by J. Wilson at the eastern end of the north side of the *Wadi Mucatteb* also belongs to this copper country; they lie near the road, but in back gorges; there is a very high wall or rock of granite or porphyry, which is penetrated by dark seams of metal which have been worked out from above downwards, thus forming artificial caverns, pits, and shafts; and it may be inferred that the yield of ore was very abundant, and, from the simplicity of the manner of working, that it is of very great antiquity. This art of mining thus laid open, as *Ritter* says, furnishes the most

important explanation of Job's remarkable description of mining operations.

'As to Egypt itself, it has but few places where iron ore was obtained, and it was not very plentiful, as iron occurs much more rarely than bronze on the tombs, although *Wilkinson* has observed important copper-mines almost as extensive as the copper country of Sinai; we only, however, possess more exact information concerning the gold-mines on the borders of Upper Egypt. *Diodorus* gives a minute description of them, from which it is evident that mining in those days was much the same as it was with us about a hundred years ago; we recognise in it the day and night relays, the structure of shafts, the crushing and washing apparatus, and the smelting-place.

'But if the scene of the Book of Job is to be sought in Idumæa proper (*Gebâl*), or in Haurân, there were certainly mines that were nearer than the Egyptian. In *Phunon*, between Petra and Zoar, there were pits from which copper was obtained even in the time of Moses, as may be inferred from the fact of Moses having erected a brazen serpent there. But *Edrîsi* also knew of gold and silver mines in the mountains of Edom, and there were also such mines in Arabia Petræa. Traces of former copper-mines are still found on the Lebanon; *Edrîsi* was acquainted with the existence of a rich iron-mine near Beirut; and, even in the present day, the Jews who dwell in *Deir-el-Kamar*, on the Lebanon, work the iron on leases, and especially forge horse-shoes from it, which are sent all over Palestine.

'The poet of the Book of Job might, therefore, have learned mining in its diversified modes of operation from his own observation, both in the Kingdom of Egypt, which he had doubtless visited, and also in Arabia Petræa and in the Lebanon districts, so as to be able to put a description of them into the mouth of his hero.'

A curious and interesting discovery was made in the mines of Midian, after minute explorations, by *Mr. Keast Lord.* The veins of metal had been worked by stone tools exclusively, many of which Mr. Lord brought away with him. This alone would suffice to prove how ancient mining operations are.

Dr. Geikie quotes, from *Agatharcides*, an interesting description of the old life and toil at the gold-mines. ('Hours with Bible,' vol. ii., pp. 229, 230.)

The Book of the Wars of the Lord.

NUMBERS xxi. 14: 'Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord.'

Question.—*Can we suppose that in the Mosaic period written historical records were made and preserved? Does not this assume too advanced civilization for the people and the period?*

Answer.—Nothing whatever is known about this book. There can only be suppositions concerning it. There is no absolute reason for thinking the book was in existence at the time of the events narrated in it. The reference seems to be made as a kind of confirmation, or proof, of the statement made by the writer, or possibly by some later editor.

There is other reason for thinking that a book of heroic poems was gradually compiled, which might include Moses' Song at the Red Sea, and general historical reminiscences. It is now quite understood that the art of writing long preceded Moses, and the keeping of chronicles of great historical events would be learned by Moses in his Egyptian education. There is nothing unreasonable in assuming that the man who devoted himself to the organization of a nation would provide for a systematic record of historical events.

The *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'It was apparently a collection of sacred odes commemorative of that triumphal progress of God's people which this chapter records. From it is taken the ensuing fragment of ancient poetry relating to the passage of the Arnon, and probably also the Song of the Well, and the Ode on the Conquest of the Kingdom of Sihon. The allusion to this book cannot supply any valid argument against the Mosaic authorship of Numbers, for it may be quite consistently allowed that Moses availed himself in some cases of pre-existing materials, and combined in his narrative the results of information obtained from others. . . . Nor is there any reason to believe that Moses wrote at one time the whole of what he may have himself contributed to this book. On the contrary, it seems in part to be composed out of memoranda, originally made at intervals ranging over thirty-eight years. . . . It is likely, indeed, that this book, as others, underwent, after it left the hands of its composer, a revision, or perhaps more than one revision, in which here and there later elements were introduced. These, indeed, cannot have been of any great bulk, and some passages have been quoted as instances which may well be otherwise explained. . . . Critics have pronounced it incredible that such a work as "the Wars

of the Lord" should be extant in the days of Moses, and have alleged further that the chapter quotes it as belonging to bygone times. But in the months which closed Moses' life, when great events succeeded each other rapidly, and scenes and circumstances were ever changing, the songs commemorative of Israel's triumphs would soon become historical. Moreover, "the Book of the Wars of the Lord" would probably commence with His noble works done in Egypt for the fathers of those who vanquished Sihon and Og.'

Food of Man before and after the Flood.

GENESIS ix. 3, 4: 'Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.'

Difficulty.—*Unless the constitution of man was changed after the flood, we must assume that he ate flesh from the beginning.*

Explanation.—There is no gainsaying the fact that man, as now constituted, has the characteristic teeth of the flesh-eating animals. And a careful consideration of this passage shows that the point of it lies, not in its permission, but in its prohibition, or in the qualification of the arrangement which had hitherto existed, and was renewed for the new conditions. It is most simple to understand that before the flood men had eaten flesh, but they had not always taken care that it was the flesh of dead animals, from which the life-blood had been carefully drained; and much of the wildness, ferocity, violence, and unrestrained passion of the old-world sinners may have been traceable to their eating flesh *with the blood in it.* Even the carnivorous animals are excited by blood, and a similar effect is produced on the animal nature of man. The food of man was the same before and after the flood, and no intimation is given of any change in his bodily organization to adapt him to the use of new food. But his range of food was placed under one severe and, indeed, absolute restriction. On no account must he eat a *living* animal, or the blood, which was to be regarded as the life of the animal.

This is not the view often taken of the passage, so other opinions may be given, on which an independent judgment may be formed. *Inglis* says: 'It has been thought that the barbarous practice which existed among the Greeks and Romans, at their Bacchanalian feasts, of cutting flesh from a live beast, and eating it raw, is here prohibited. But the existence of such a custom at this early period is without evidence, and is improbable, especially in the family of Noah.'

Another writer says: 'It is usually supposed that up to this time

in the history of the world men had lived entirely on the vegetables and fruits of the earth, and that *flesh* was only permitted as food after the flood. And it may be urged that, at the present time, a considerable proportion of the inhabitants of our globe live entirely on vegetable productions. A reason for the permission of animal food may be found in the shortening of human life after the flood. Before the flood, men had lived nearly a thousand years, but such prolonged lives had singularly favoured the development of vice and crime: presuming upon their long lives, men had yielded to every luxury and indulgence, and become abominably corrupt. God would now try the effect of a shortened life, letting the brevity and the uncertainty of it become a high moral force to restrain men from sin. Men now have no kind of lease of life, and, however extended, it is now but brief. But shortened life means harder labour; the same ends of life have to be reached in a short life as in a long one. Those who live a shorter time must toil more; those who toil harder must eat better, more stimulating food. Therefore, for the shorter-living and harder-working race, God provided *animal* food, so that, for as long as life lasted, it might be strong, well nourished, and active.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* notes that before the flood we have no *prohibition* of animal food, and says: 'It is likely that those who fed and sacrificed sheep, like Abel, who kept cattle, like Jabal, or who handled instruments of bronze or iron, like Tubal-Cain, would in the course of time have learned the use of animal food. If so, we may consider the words of this verse as a concession to the infirmities or the necessities of mankind, coupled with restrictions which may have been called for by the savage practices of the antediluvians.'

In another note the idea given at the beginning of this paragraph finds support. 'Rashi and some other Jewish commentators understand a prohibition of the practice of eating flesh cut from the living animal, and so Luther translated "the flesh which yet lives in its blood." The monstrous wickedness of the antediluvians, by which the earth was filled with violence, may have taken this form among others; and these words without doubt condemn by implication all such fiendish cruelty. They prohibit also the revolting custom of eating raw flesh; for civilization is ever to be a handmaid to religion.'

Dean Payne Smith compares the injunctions given to Noah with those given to Adam, and says: 'There is the same command to fill the world with human life, and the same promise that the fear of man shall rest on the whole animated creation; but this grant of

dominion is so extended that the animals are now given to man for his food. But just as there was a restriction as regards Adam's food, the fruit of the tree of knowledge being refused him, so now there is a prohibition against the eating of blood.'

Lange says: 'The eating of flesh, which had doubtless existed before, is now formally legalized; by which fact it is at the same time commended. A limitation of the pure kinds is not yet expressed. When, however, there is added, by way of appendix, *all that liveth* (that is, is alive), the dead carcase, or that which hath died of itself, is excluded, and with it all that is offensive generally. There is, however, a distinct restriction upon this flesh-eating, in the prohibition of the blood.'

Delitzsch explains that there was forbidden the eating of the flesh when the animal was yet alive, unslain, and whose blood had not been poured out, namely, pieces cut out, according to a cruel custom of antiquity, and still existing in Abyssinia. Accordingly there was forbidden, generally, the eating of flesh in which the blood still remained.

The natural law of healthy food for man seems to be this: it shall consist of that which groweth out of the earth, or of those creatures that eat only of what groweth out of the earth. Carnivorous beasts or birds do not provide healthy food for man.

Thomson, in 'The Land and The Book,' says of Palestine: 'In this country, not only blood-puddings, but every preparation of blood for food, is held in utter abomination. And so, also, it is unlawful to eat animals, fowls, and birds, strangled or smothered, and cooked with the blood in them. And, in my feelings, at least, the Orientals in this matter are right. Our hunters, when they shoot even a small bird, are careful to cut its throat and "pour out the blood thereof." God Himself declares, "I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among My people."'

Kitto says: 'It seems clear to us that animal food—even to this day but sparingly used in the East, and in some Eastern countries held in abhorrence—was not intended to be the food of man; at least, in his original condition. Instinctively we recognise the fitness that it should not have been so. The appetite for the flesh of animals is, after all, to a great extent, the effect of climatic influences; and it was probably not until mankind had spread into climes far distant from their first seat, that they began to transgress this rule of food; for we agree with those who think that the distinction of clean and unclean beasts, at the time of the flood, implies the *previous* use of animal food. . . . If, as the language most clearly implies, the

extension was first made after the flood, and was necessary to satisfy the conscience of a righteous man, it is manifest that animal food could only, before the flood, have been eaten by those whose transgressions brought that awful judgment upon the world. Whatever we say as to the period between the fall and the deluge, vegetable food only was allowed to man or used by him in his first estate. This abstinence from animal food is in fact preserved in the traditions of all nations as one of the characteristics of their golden age—the age of innocence. . . . But little animal food is used in warm countries, whereas large quantities are consumed in colder regions; and as we can observe in our own experience, the inclination for flesh-meat is less active in summer than in winter—the matter seems to be, in the result, chiefly one of climate—men residing in the colder latitudes requiring a stronger nutriment than vegetables supply to make up for the greater waste of animal heat.'

The Abomination of Desolation.

DANIEL xii. 11: 'And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.' (See also Matthew xxiv. 15.)

Question.—*What is the historical reference of this term?*

Answer.—Most of the commentators seem to be satisfied with its allusion to the desecration of the Temple at Jerusalem by Antiochus, as narrated in the books of the Maccabees (1 Macc. i. 29; 2 Macc. v. 24, etc.).

The following *résumé* of the incidents is given by the *Speaker's Commentary*: 'After two years Antiochus sent that detestable ringleader Apollonius to Jerusalem with an army of 22,000 men, and under general orders to slay the male adults, and sell the women and children. Apollonius, pretending peace, waited till the Sabbath-day, and then fell suddenly upon the city, and destroyed much people. He transformed the holy city into a stronghold for himself and his soldiers, shed innocent blood on every side of the sanctuary, and defiled it. In the autumn of the same year (B.C. 167) the edict was issued which formally forbad to the Jews the exercise of their religion and their national customs. The Temple was polluted, the abomination of desolation set up upon the altar, and idol shrines were erected throughout the land. The occupation of Jerusalem had made the Jews powerless to resist. Antiochus thought that by destroying the religion of the Jews he should also destroy the ground of their hatred to himself personally, and to his strange laws and

introductions. While some consented to the religion of Antiochus, sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the Sabbath, patriots like the sons of Mattathias, Eleazar, and the seven brothers, fought, conquered, or suffered death rather than flinch from their faith. Few histories are more spirit-stirring than the history of the struggle for religious liberty and political independence fought by the little handful of men against the armed legions of Antiochus. From the day that Mattathias struck to the ground the Jew who had dared to sacrifice to idols, till the day when the "lion," Judas Maccabeus, practically secured respect for his people by the defeats of Nicanor, the attention of the reader of the books of the Maccabees is fascinated by a valour which never would acknowledge defeat, by a cheerfulness which was inspired by prayer, and the consciousness of a just cause.'

Our Lord used the expression as a figure, and it is generally thought that He had in mind the appearing of the Roman eagles in the lines of the besieging legions under Cestius, A.D. 68. But *Dean Plumptre* says the explanation is probably to be found in the faction-fights, the murders and outrages, the profane consecration of usurping priests, which the Jewish historian describes so fully (Josephus, *Wars*, iv. 6, §§ 6-8). 'The Zealots had got possession of the Temple at an early stage in the siege, and profaned it by these and other like outrages; they made the Holy Place (in the very words of the historian) a "garrison and stronghold" of their tyrannous and lawless rule; while the better priests looked on from afar, and wept tears of horror.'

Kinsman Duties.

RUTH iii. 12: 'And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.'

RUTH iv. 6-8: 'And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it. Now, this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things: a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour; and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.'

Question.—*Is it possible to trace the origin of this idea of a kinsman's responsibilities, and to explain the retention of such social customs so late as the time of the Judges?*

Answer.—The ideas of the kinsman and the blood-avenger are certainly tribal, and belong to periods when there was no delegation of individual responsibility to organized governments. It could only exist when the family feeling was altogether more prominent than the

state feeling, when men were relatives rather than citizens. It was a survival of the time when Israel was one of many Arab tribes, and its revival in the time of the Judges was due to the absence of any national unity, or any systematic government which could authoritatively decide any matters of property or any civil disputes. The state of society is fully suggested by the sentence 'Every man did that which was right in his own eyes;' and in such times only ancient customs and family traditions put any effective check on men's wilfulness.

The customs hinted at in the above passages are so unfamiliar to Western minds and modern nations, that some account of them may usefully be given. It is difficult for us to apprehend the simplicity of the state of society in the time of the Judges. 'As each village was complete and independent, except in its shadowy relation to the chief of the tribe, so each family had within itself nearly all it required. The community was as independent in the wants of life as in government. Nor were there any special arrangements such as we have to maintain peace and order. There were neither judges to dispense justice, police to guard the laws, nor court-houses for the trial of offenders. The elders of each petty community decided cases at the gate of the village or town, and the execution of their sentences was carried out by those interested, without the intervention of public officers. In the same way private transactions were settled at the gate, without lawyers and without writing, but before the inhabitants, who served as witnesses.'

Dr. S. Cox writes: 'Among the many laws by which the Hebrew legislators sought to preserve their families from extinction was the law of the *goelim*, the law which made it incumbent on the nearest kinsman to take a childless widow to wife, and ordained that any son born of this marriage should inherit the name and possessions of the first husband. This kinsman was called the *goel*, because, "by raising up seed to his brother," he *redeemed* his brother's name and inheritance from being blotted out. . . . Boaz was among the *goelim* of Naomi and Ruth. He was not *the* goel, for there was a nearer kinsman than he; but he was *a* goel, and if this nearer kinsman should refuse to do his duty, then Boaz might step in and do it for him.'

The Mosaic rule, which at once preserved and properly limited the old tribal customs, is given in Deut. xxv. 5-10. The custom of 'loosing the shoe' had its origin in the fact that when a man took possession of landed property, he did it by planting his shoe on the soil; he asserted his right to it by treading on the land he had

bought. Thus the shoe symbolized a possession or an estate which a man actually held, and which he could tread with his feet at will. Naturally and easily, therefore, the taking off of the shoe and offering it to another came to signify that a man renounced his own legal claim to a possession, and transferred it to a neighbour to whom he gave his shoe; with the shoe he gave the right to tread and till the land. This singular custom was not peculiar to the Jews; it also obtained anciently among the Germans. But among the Hebrews of the earlier times it grew into common use as a symbol of exchange, and was employed as a sign of the transfer of rights of any kind, and not only to denote the transfer of land; in short, it seems to have been as common as signing a deed or handing over a warrant is with us.

See paragraph in *Handbook of Biblical Difficulties*, p. 251, 'Law of the Goel.'

Distribution of the Races.

GENESIS x. 32: 'These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.'

Difficulty.—*On the assumption that the flood was a local catastrophe, the distribution of the nations may be supposed to concern only the region that was affected by the flood.*

Explanation.—In accepting the fact that the flood was local, and probably confined to what may be called the basin of the Caspian Sea, we have still left unsettled the question whether it was effective to the entire destruction of humanity, including both the Cainite and Sethite races, or whether it was a judgment reaching only the Sethite race. Ethnology does not seem to have taken due account of the possible existence of Cainite races in the earth, distinct from the descendants of Noah. It is, however, very remarkable that the development of the arts and sciences is attributed exclusively to the descendants of Cain; and they are severely separated from the descendants of Seth. The sin which brought on the flood is distinctly stated to be the sin of the Sethite men, who 'saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all that they chose.' There is no passage in Genesis which distinctly mentions the Cainite race, or the 'sons of men,' as concerned with the judgment of the flood. The general terms, 'the earth' and 'all flesh,' cannot be pressed to mean any more than the earth and the people with whom the writer is directly concerned, and it may mean the Sethites, and the districts occupied by them.

If it be assumed that the Cainites were destroyed in the flood, we shall be puzzled to see how God's promised protection of Cain was fulfilled; for to spare him, and wholly destroy his descendants, would seem a strange way of carrying out the pledge, 'Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.'

Ethnology is a science that demands careful and prolonged study, and cannot be worthily treated in a brief paragraph. It is independent of any Bible statements, and is based on historical works and present observation. We may say that its independent conclusion is that the whole of the inhabitants now on the face of the earth *may be* the descendants of one pair of human beings; the similarities belonging to permanent things, the varieties being adequately explained by differences of location, food, etc. But it must be admitted that on the question of the physical unity of mankind the ablest scientific students are divided, and even *Professor Griffiths* doubts whether the Word of God stands committed to any verdict on the question of our physical oneness. For if the name, or rather the word, Adam does not denote the first man, but only the first elect and God-taught man, or if the term Adam is used generically for man in the abstract, it follows that the author of the Book of Genesis makes no direct allusion to singleness of source.

As to the division of existing humanity into three races, and the recognition of their descent from the three sons of Noah, much has been written, but little certainty has been obtained. Perhaps more hopeful results would have been reached if the inquiry had been limited to the districts round the cradle of the Noachic race. The Cainites were inventive and venturesome, and may have sought out new lands. The Sethites bear no such characteristics, and we may reasonably limit their migrations to the vast districts of Asia and Northern Africa. *Dean Payne Smith* gives the then-known world as referred to in Genesis x.: 'Armenia, the regions watered by the Tigris and Euphrates, the Arabian Peninsula, the Nile Valley, with the districts closely bordering on the Delta, Palestine, the Levant, and the islands of Cyprus, Rhodes, and Crete; with Lud on his journey to Asia Minor, and the Japhethites breaking their way into Europe through the country between the Caspian and the Black Sea.' A strictly limited area.

Kurtz remarks, in relation to the sources of this genealogical table, what tends to limit its scientific value. He says: 'Together with Hengstenberg and Delitzsch, we regard the sources of this ethnological table to have been the patriarchal traditions (and these must necessarily have been general and unscientific), enriched by the

knowledge of the nations that had reached the Israelites through the Egyptians. Hengstenberg had already begun to make available, in proof of this origin, the knowledge of the peoples that was expressed on the Egyptian monuments. In assigning its composition (as a constituent element of Genesis) to about the year 1000 B.C., *Knobel* must naturally regard the ethnological knowledge of the Phœnicians as its true source.'

Lange says: 'We may undervalue this table if we overlook the fact that, in its actual historical and ethnological ground-features, it presents, symbolically, a universal image of the one humanity in its genealogical divisions. We may overvalue it, or rather set a false value on it, when we attempt to trace back to it, with full confidence, *all the known nations now upon the earth.* Even the number seventy, as the universal symbol of national existences, can only be deduced from it by an artificial method. It is only in the symbolical sense that the catalogue may be regarded as amounting to this number.'

S. R. Pattison, from the orthodox standpoint, says: 'In a general way we may affirm that these three families subsist in well-marked distinction at the present day, and roughly correspond with leading divisions which have been established on the ground of scientific observation alone. There are also three families of speech: 1. The Aryan, or Indo-European, to which Latin, Greek, Persian, Sanscrit, Keltic, Slavonic, German, English, and most modern European languages belong. 2. The Semitic, comprising Hebrew, Phœnician, Armenian, Arabic, Assyrian, and Ethiopian. 3. The Turanian, embracing the Finnic, Hungarian, Tartar, Turkestan, Mongol, Indian Hill-tribe tongues, and Tamil.'

Professor Flower says: 'After a perfectly independent study of the subject, extending over many years, I cannot resist the conclusion so often arrived at by various anthropologists, and so often abandoned for some more complex system, that the primitive man, whatever he may have been, has, in the course of ages, divaricated into three extreme types, represented by the Caucasian of Europe, the Mongolian of Asia, and the Ethiopian of Africa, and that all existing individuals of the species can be ranged around these types, or somewhere or other between them.'

NOTE.—The uncertainty attaching to ethnological conclusions is strikingly shown in *Canon Isaac Taylor's* recent book on the 'Origin of the Aryans.' The following summary of its contents is taken from a careful 'Review' given in one of the leading newspapers:

'Max Müller and his school took it for granted too readily that the Aryan race must have originated in Central Asia, and spread from thence to India in one direction, and to Europe in the other. They took it for granted, too, that Sanskrit must necessarily approach more nearly to the primitive Aryan tongue than any other language of which remains have descended to us. The last ten years have seen the final overthrow of both these rough-and-ready provisional theories. Penke and his school have demonstrated, almost beyond the possibility of a doubt, that the Aryans were rather of European than of Asiatic origin; rather a northern, or intermediate, than a southern race. Evidence has been brought forward to show that Lithuanian approaches still more closely than Sanskrit to the earliest form of the Aryan tongue; and now Canon Taylor comes to the front to convince us that of the two great prehistoric races of Europe the primitive Aryan is to be identified rather with the smaller, darker, and broad-headed type than with the taller, fairer, and long-skulled Scandinavians who have been almost always accepted till quite lately as the purest representatives of the unmixed Aryan blood.

'The general result of this masterly and exhaustive survey—for, brief and popular as it is, it deserves to be called both masterly and exhaustive—will be to dethrone that almost mythical animal, our Aryan ancestor, from the pinnacle of superiority on which he had been placed by the poetic fancy of fashionable Max Müllerism. It is hardly too much to say that Canon Taylor has demolished for ever our Aryan ancestor—the idyllic ancestor, that is to say, that we all knew and loved, and were so inordinately proud of. His searching examination of the neolithic culture shows us almost conclusively that the primitive Aryans were barbarians in a very early stage of nomad existence, unacquainted with metals, clad mainly in skins, dwelling by summer in huts and by winter in circular-roofed pits, but roaming for the most part in waggons with their flocks and herds over an immense area of sparsely-populated pastoral country. They were not advanced philosophers; they were not pure-mined poetical patriarchs; and they were not immeasurably superior to all other competitors. Few things have been done in reconstructionary history to equal the interesting chapter on the Neolithic Culture, in which our latest iconoclast proves bit by bit, and step by step, these two cardinal principles—first, that the neolithic inhabitants of Central Europe *were*, some of them at least, primitive Aryans; and, secondly, that their civilization is shown by a hundred converging lines of evidence to have reached only the simple and undeveloped level of a pastoral tribe in its stone age.

'Altogether, the book is a most wholesome protest against an undigested mass of unproved assumptions. The pendulum may possibly have swung for the moment a trifle too far in the opposite direction; but it is a great gain at least to have reduced our Aryan ancestor from the exalted and incongruous position of a sort of primitive breechless Oxford don to something like prosaic and average equality with the general run of semi-civilized neolithic European herdsmen.'

Burning Dead Bodies.

1 SAMUEL xxxi. 12: 'All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them.'

Question.—*Was this burning of the bodies a general custom of the district, or a special act intended to secure these particular bodies from further desecration?*

Answer.—Burning bodies was not a Jewish practice. There can be little doubt that the men of Jabesh, having secured the bodies by a night-stratagem, feared a pursuit by the Philistines for the recovery of the bodies, and therefore they at once burned them, and then buried them, so as to prevent the possibility of their being again carried away and desecrated. It is singular that the burning should have been done so carefully as to preserve the bones intact, and allow the men of Jabesh to give the bones, or framework of the bodies, the usual honourable burial. 'And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.'

There were burnings in connection with the funerals of the kings, but it was a burning of odours and spices, not of the bodies (2 Chron. xvi. 14).

Burder has a curious note on this verse. 'The Chaldee and other Versions render the words, "and they burnt or kindled a light or lamp over them there, as they are accustomed to burn over kings." Upon which a Rabbi observes that this has reference to a custom, delivered down from their ancestors, of burning the beds and other utensils of the dead upon their graves, or to the burning of spices over them.'

It is singular that the writer of Chronicles should omit all reference to the *burning*. He simply says, they 'brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh.' But a mere *omission* must not be made to appear as a *contradiction*.

Solomon as an Avenger of Blood.

1 KINGS ii. 31 : 'And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him ; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father.'

Difficulty.—*Solomon's vengeance on Joab cannot be approved on any modern principles of righteousness.*

Explanation.—This must be fully admitted. If David failed to punish Joab for crimes committed during his reign, every reasonable and merciful consideration leads us to say he should have been left alone by David's successor. But we have to judge Solomon's action in the light of the ideas and sentiments of Solomon's age and people, and not according to modern and Western notions.

One long-established and well-established principle in ancient times was, that if an avenger of blood failed, during his life, to secure the death of the murderer, he left the duty of securing that death to his descendants. That duty fell on Solomon. David had failed to avenge the death of Abner by securing the death of Joab ; and therefore, as a recognised family duty, Solomon was bound to do what David had left undone. He so far tempered the idea of justice with mercy as to give Joab a chance of life, by putting him under conditions ; but Joab was too strong-willed a man to keep them ; and, in breaking them, he relieved Solomon of all claim to mercy, and made it right, according to the sentiment of the age, for the avengement to be carried out.

Canon Rawlinson says: 'David had never formally pardoned Joab ; and, indeed, it may be questioned whether by the law there was any power of pardoning a murderer. The utmost that the king could do was to neglect to enforce the law. Even in doing this he incurred a danger. Unpunished murder was a pollution to the land, and might bring a judgment on it, like the famine which had been sent a few years before this on account of Saul and of his bloody house, "because he slew the Gibeonites" (2 Sam. xxi. 1).'

Archdeacon Farrar writes: 'Solomon had determined that this dangerous and blood-stained man should die. The protection and pardon which David had promised him had ended with David's life. Innocent blood still remained unavenged. Joab had left himself without excuse. Solomon considered that recent events were as a Divine warning to wipe away in the blood of the guilty the dark stains of unpunished crime which might mar the prosperity of David's house. We must judge him neither by our customs nor by our moral standards. It was a just retribution, but a deplorable end

to a career of glory which had struck terror into the enemies of Israel. The conqueror of the City of Waters, the suppressor of Absalom's and Sheba's rebellions, died as a common criminal by the hands of justice.'

Evidently Solomon intended to bring Joab's case within the emphatic declaration of the Law, that no sanctuary should protect the wilful and treacherous murderer, and that innocent blood, so shed, and left *unavenged*, would pollute the land (Exod. xxi. 14; Num. xxxv. 33).

The Later Contents of the Ark.

2 CHRONICLES v. 10: 'There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.'

Difficulty.—*There were certainly some other things placed in it, and no one could have had authority to remove them.*

Explanation.—There may have been things usually spoken of in connection with it, which were not absolutely inside it, but were placed safely by the side of it. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of 'the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant' (Heb. ix. 4). But the earlier narratives rather indicate the placing of the 'pot' and the 'rod' *by* the ark than *in* it. The passages as given in the Revised Version are as follow: 'And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omerful of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations. As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept' (Exod. xvi. 33, 34). This certainly suggests the placing of the pot of manna in some position where it could be seen from the mercy-seat, or cover of the Ark. It could not have been *before* the Lord, it must have been *under* the Lord, if it was *inside* the Ark.

'And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and all their princes gave him rods, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron was among their rods. And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tent of the testimony. And it came to pass on the morrow that Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and put forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and bare ripe almonds. And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod. And the Lord said unto

Moses, Put back the rod of Aaron *before* the testimony, to be kept for a token against the children of rebellion' (Num. xvii. 6-10). The same expression '*before* the,' not '*in* the,' is also here employed.

The placing of the 'tables' inside the Ark is distinctly narrated in Deut. x. 5: 'And I turned and came down from the mount, and put the tables *in the ark* which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.'

The verse from Chronicles placed at the head of this paragraph certainly indicates surprise that nothing but the tables were found in the Ark, and it is manifest that, in the time of Solomon, the pot of manna and the rod were lost; but the surprise may have rested on tradition rather than on knowledge; and it must be borne in mind that no one but the High Priest could have certain information concerning the articles contained in the Holy of Holies. We may assume some neglect while the Ark was in captivity, the result of which was the loss of these sacred relics.

With regard to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, it need only be said that he is using an illustration, and simply repeats the commonly received tradition. He had no call to decide whether the 'pot' and the 'rod' were laid up *in* the Ark, or *before* the Ark. Whichever was the fact, it was equally effective for his purpose.

We incline to accept the view that there never was anything placed actually inside the Ark but the two tables of the covenant, which are said to have been 'written with the finger of God.'

The Scattering from Babel.

GENESIS xi. 8: 'So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city.'

Difficulty.—*This assumes a miraculous intervention to accomplish what would, in a natural way, come to pass in the process of time.*

Explanation.—It is well to bear constantly in mind that it is the genius of Holy Scripture to affirm the direct association of God with everything that happens. Every incident and event is seen on its Divine side. And God is as truly working in events that are long processes, as in events that are suddenly accomplished. A strange notion has taken possession of our minds, to the effect that God's works must be sudden and surprising—must be always in the nature of interruptions and interventions. But as soon as this tendency is pointed out to us, we see how it may blind us to the most important workings of God, who has 'all the ages to work in,' and is as truly working in the ordinary as in what we are pleased to call the

extraordinary. Indeed, what we call the supernatural is in fact 'God's natural,' which happens to be now beyond our apprehension.

There is no reason whatever for assuming that the scattering of the race preserved from the flood was accomplished suddenly, by some miraculous effect produced on their speech. Dialectic changes in language would soon come about in the ordinary way; and these, working together with the over-crowding, and its unhealthy conditions, and also with the migrating spirit which always works, as a master-passion, in a certain proportion of every race of men, would soon break up the race, and scatter it all over the land that was available, and could be reached from the principal race-centre.

When this great race-movement came to be narrated ages later on, all sense of time had been lost, the over-ruling of God was specially prominent, and the picture in which it is presented to us produces on us the impression of a sudden Divine interference.

Dean Payne Smith says: 'Though there is no assertion of a miracle here, yet we may well believe that there was an extraordinary quickening of a natural law which existed from the first. This, however, is but a secondary question, and the main fact is the statement that the Divine means for counteracting man's ambitious and ever-recurring dream of universal sovereignty is the law of diversity of speech. In ancient times there was little to counteract this tendency, and each city and petty district had its own dialect, and looked with animosity upon its neighbours who differed from it in pron nciation, if not in vocabulary. In the present day there are counteracting influences; and great communities, by the use of the same Bible, and the possession of the same classical literature, may long continue to speak the same language. In days also when communication is so easy, not only do men travel much, but newspapers and serials published at the centre are dispersed to the most distant portions of the world. In old time it was not so, and probably Isaiah would not have been easily understood thirty miles from Jerusalem, nor Demosthenes a few leagues from Athens. Without books or literature, a little band of families wandering about with their cattle, with no communication with other tribes, would quickly modify both the grammar and the pronunciation of their language; and when, after a year or two, they revisited the tower they would feel like foreigners in the new city, and quickly depart with the determination never to return. And to this day diversity of language is a powerful factor in keeping nations apart, or in preventing portions of the same kingdom from agreeing heartily together.'

Lange collects a variety of explanations of what he calls the

miracle of confounding the speech. 'According to *Koppen*, the miracle must have consisted wholly in an inward process—that is, a taking away of the old associations of ideas connected with words, and an immediate implanting of new and diverse modes of expression. According to *Lilienthal*, *Hoffman*, and others, it must have been wholly an outward process, a confusion of the lips, of pronunciation, of dialects; whilst *Scaliger* holds that differing meanings were connected with like words or sounds. The historical symbolical expression, however, may mean that the process of inward alienation and variation, the ground of which lay in the manifoldness of dispositions, and the reciprocity of spiritual tendencies, became fixed in diverse forms of speech and modes of expression, by reason of a sudden catastrophe brought upon them by God. According to *Kaulen*, the miracle consists in this: "That at that time, and in that region, there was introduced a linguistic change which, although it would have naturally come in in the course of things, would nevertheless have required for its full development other conditions of space and time than those presented." *Fabri* says: "A confounding of languages presupposes a confusion of the consciousness, a separation of the original speech into many, a disorder and a breach in the original common consciousness in respect to God and the world."'

It should be noticed that the scattering concerns, at the most, the race descending from Noah; and the insertion of this narrative in the very middle of the record of the descendants of Shem suggests that it concerns only that family. The vague and figurative expressions 'all the earth' or 'the whole earth' Bible students fully understand are not to be unduly pressed. They mean the earth with which the writer was cognizant, and have no absolute, universal, or exclusive character.

It is a remarkable fact that the character by which Babel is represented in the Assyrian tablets means, according to the opinion of *Oppert*, 'The city of the dispersion of the tribes.'

SUB-SECTION VI.

DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO NUMBERS AND CHRONOLOGY.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

UNCERTAINTIES IN BIBLE NUMBERS.

ALL Bible students recognise the difficulties of harmonizing differing statements of numbers in the several books, and of accepting as genuine certain of the numbers given, which bear evident marks of exaggeration on the face of them. It is quite certain that we must not expect to find in the Scriptures scientific precision in matters of 'numbers' or of 'chronology.' It is only needful to compare together the accounts of the same matters given in the Books of Samuel and Kings, and in the Books of Chronicles, to convince ourselves that exactness in estimates of numbers is not to be found in the Bible histories. One or two instances may suffice by way of illustration. In 2 Sam. viii. 4 we read that David took from the King of Zobah, 'a thousand and seven hundred horsemen'; but the statement made in 1 Chron. xviii. 4 is 'a thousand *chariots*, and seven *thousand* horsemen.' In 2 Sam. xxiv. 9, Israel is reckoned at 800,000 warriors, and Judah at 500,000; in 1 Chron. xxi. 5, the return is 1,100,000 for Israel, and 470,000 for Judah. In the Book of Samuel, David is said to have paid for the threshing-floor of Araunah, 50 shekels of silver; in Chronicles the sum paid is 600 shekels of gold.

The difficulties connected with Bible numbers are so numerous that it is only possible to select a few cases as illustrative of the various sources from which uncertainties arise. But when all the cases are carefully reviewed, the impression is left on the devout reader that they concern only the literature of the book, and in no way affect its value as a revelation of Divine moral and religious truth. The utmost that can be said is that there are flaws in the frame of the picture, but common-sense recognises that flaws in the frame do not, in any way, affect the artistic truth and value of the picture. Only hard and fast—and therefore unreasonable—notions of Divine Inspiration could lead us to expect absolute accuracy in matters of mere detail, in which human skill was competent to act, and inspiration need not be concerned. Men can make estimates of numbers killed in a battle, and human imperfection will characterise their estimate. Men can make a more or less correct census.

Men can copy records from State archives, and make mistakes in the copying. It is asking quite an unnecessary interference on the part of God, if we expect His Spirit to specially guide all men who make estimates on battle-fields, who undertake the census of a population, or who copy a public document. In all matters not directly bearing on morals and religion, there is the ordinary human element in Bible records; in all matters bearing on morals and religion, there is a manifest, and, we think, unquestionable, Divine supremacy.

The sources of divergence, uncertainty, and, possibly, error, may be noticed. When the Scriptures had to be copied by hand errors in copying were sure to occur. Let anyone now try to copy a single page of some other person's writing, and it will be strange indeed if he ensures absolute correctness; and though we may reasonably assume that every care was taken to ensure precision in all *authorised* copies, there must have been unauthorised copies, which may have come into use, whose errors affected later copies. Then it must be borne in mind that, in the Hebrew, the ordinary letters, and not special figures, were made to represent numbers: and several of the letters are so nearly alike, that even a slip of the pen would suffice to change one letter for another. Thus *Vav*, ו, stands for 6; *Zain*, ז, stands for 7; *Yod*, י, stands for 10; *Nun*, נ, stands for 50; *Resh*, ר, stands for 200; and the slightest lack of precision suffices to change one of these letters into one of the others. Then if the copyist made a mistake, and a later copyist found it confusing, he would be likely to *guess* what the right number was, insert his guess, and so increase the uncertainty.

We know how exceedingly difficult it is to secure accurate statistics on any subject. They depend on the skill and honesty of collectors, and when the crude materials are provided, they can be made to prove anything which the arranger of them may desire. Even our census, conducted on scientific principles, only produces results that are correct in a general sense; but in Old Testament times the census was merely a rough enumeration made by parties of military men marching through the country, and counting heads. The estimates of population in Palestine are hardly of more value than estimates made of populations now, in Thibet, or in Central Africa. And as to numbers killed on battlefields, they are always untrustworthy, and the estimates made by the victors and by the defeated, always significantly differ: the victor swells the number beyond anything reasonable, even sometimes making it more than that of the army opposing him; and the defeated limit the number unduly, so as, if possible, to minimise the effect of their disaster. Even nowa-

days, sober-minded people take care not to be carried away by the *first* reports of those placed *hors de combat* in a battle; the early report is certain to be qualified by strict examination of the regimental lists on both sides. But in ancient times there was no qualifying of the original extravagant estimates.

Nothing is more uncertain than the accounts different persons will give of the same crowd. Even political bias affects estimates, and one newspaper will give 20,000, where another persists that there must have been at least 40,000. And to all uncertainties that belong to every age must be added the strange tendency to exaggerated boasting, which is proved by the monuments which record the expeditions of Eastern kings. There is no sort of moderation in their accounts of the marvellous results they achieved; and this characteristic spirit of the age could not fail to influence the Bible writers.

In relation to Bible chronology, it need only be remarked that recent discoveries have brought to light the uncertainties of Scripture dates, in many cases, but that as yet a full correction of the Bible chronology is hardly possible. The time before the Flood cannot possibly be known, for it is not possible to trace perfectly the overlapping of the long-aged patriarchs: and, indeed, the date of Adam's creation is quite uncertain. Before the Flood, there can only be guess-work. Uncertainty attaches to the date of Abraham, to the length of the Egyptian sojourn, to the time of the Exodus, to the overlapping of the Judges, and to the actual lengths of the reign of the Kings. Elements of perplexity are found in the Hebrew way of reckoning *parts* of days as days; *parts* of years as years; and of counting the years in which a son was joint king with his father, both to the length of reign for the father and for the son.

These points have been summarised effectively by *R. F. Horton, M.A.* After showing that the Bible authors were often dependent on existing documents and previous histories, and that, therefore, their work reflects the varying degrees of accuracy, or fulness of detail, of their predecessors, Mr. Horton adds: 'And now a word or two must be said about the chronology. An accurate system of dating events seems so essential to the modern historical sense, that to deny accuracy of this kind to a work seems almost equivalent to destroying its value. Accordingly, the usual theory of Inspiration—which constantly gathers into its idea of an inspired writing all the excellences and perfections which from time to time are recognised or demanded in other writings—emphatically maintains that an inspired writer must be faultlessly exact, guaranteed from all possi-

bility of error in the matter of dates. Apart from this *à priori* theory, however, coming to look at the actual facts, we are immediately struck by the almost entire absence of chronological exactness in these historical writings. The writer does not even seem to have considered what his own chronological statements really signify, so that contradictions of the most glaring character occur. Quite at the beginning of the book (Kings), in the sixth chapter, he calls the fourth year of Solomon's reign the four hundred and eightieth after the Exodus. But if we add up the dates supplied in the other books which went before, we find that there would be more like five hundred and eighty years between the two dates; and we know from the New Testament how, in St. Paul's speech, the period from Joshua to Samuel alone is reckoned at 450 years. In fact, so completely irreconcileable is this statement with all the other dates suggested in the Scriptural reckonings that some commentators propose to strike out the clause. (See paragraph on 1 Kings vi. 1.) But even if we were to do this, the author's chronological reputation would still stand in rather a precarious condition, for this statement at the outset is simply an example of his general laxity in the matter of dates all through. If anyone tries to lay down the dates of the two lines of Kings in Israel and Judah from the notices contained in this book, he will quickly perceive that he is attempting to do what the author never attempted. He seems to have been content, in dealing with an Israelite King, to give the date reckoned by the year of the reigning King in Judah just as he found it stated in the Israelite Chronicles, and then to do the same in dealing with the dates of the Kings of Judah with reference to the reigning King of Israel; but he did not consider whether the two chronicles harmonised.

'We may take illustration from the latter part of the work. Hoshea began to reign in Israel (2 Kings xv. 30) in the *twentieth year* of Jotham the King of Judah. So far writes our author, following the records of the Northern Kingdom. For his next paragraph he turns to his records of the Southern Kingdom, and naïvely tells us that Jotham never reached a twentieth year, but only reigned sixteen years (verse 33); but even this is not the end of the difficulty: in chap. xvii. he goes back to the Northern Kingdom, and tells us that Hoshea began to reign, not in Jotham's reign at all, but in the reign of Ahaz, Jotham's successor; and if now he had said "in the fourth year of Ahaz," we might see our way through the perplexity, for the fourth year of Ahaz would at any rate be twenty years from the beginning of Jotham's reign, though Jotham himself had died after reigning

sixteen years; but he says, not in the fourth, but "in the *twelfth year* of Ahaz, King of Judah."

'In a word, it is abundantly clear that whatever we may mean by Inspired History we at least must not include that kind of chronological exactness which we require in modern historical works.'

It has been wisely said, that 'the Bible has, like other books, a human history, and is as much liable to reverent criticism as the sacred literature of other religions.' And that the recognition of mistakes, in matters of detail, is no new thing to Biblical students, may be shown by the following remarks of *T. Hartwell Horne*, whose volume on the 'Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures' now before us is dated 1834: 'The Old and New Testaments, in common with all other ancient writings, being preserved and diffused by transcription, the admission of mistakes was unavoidable; which, increasing with the multitude of copies, necessarily produced a great variety of readings.' *Horne* gives the chief sources of mistakes as (1) the negligence or mistakes of the transcribers; (2) the existence of errors or imperfections in the manuscripts copied; (3) critical emendations of the text; and (4) wilful corruptions made to serve the purposes of a party. He quotes an interesting illustration from *Dr. Bentley* on 'Free Thinking.' 'In profane authors, whereof only one manuscript had the luck to be preserved—as Vellius Paterculus among the Latins, and Hesychius among the Greeks—the faults of the scribes are found so numerous, and the defects so beyond all redress, that notwithstanding the pains of the learnedest and acutest critics for two whole centuries, these books still are, and are likely to continue, a mere heap of errors. On the contrary, where the copies of any author are numerous, though the various readings always increase in proportion, there the text, by an accurate collation of them made by skilful and judicious hands, is ever the more correct, and comes nearer to the true words of the author.' It seems, therefore, that in the very *variety* of the copies of the Bible may be found the material for ensuring correctness, and recovering the original statements.

Number of Souls going to Egypt with Jacob.

GENESIS xlvi. 26, 27: 'All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; and the sons of Joseph, which were born to him in Egypt, were two souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.'

Difficulty.—*The addition of two sons of Joseph will not make the 'sixty-six' of verse* 26 *into the 'seventy' of verse* 27.

Explanation.—It will be well to examine carefully what is actually said concerning the number of Jacob's family in the Bible. In the list given in Gen. xlvi. there is an apparent confusion, because Joseph's two children are mentioned in verse 20, but not counted into the summary of verse 26. The sixty-six is made up in the following way:

Children and grand-children through Leah - -	33
" " " Zilpah - -	16
" " " Rachel (but confined to Benjamin and his sons) -	10
Children and grand-children through Bilhah - -	7
	66

The number 'seventy' of verse 27 is made up by the addition of Jacob himself, Joseph, and Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, four additional persons. (It is singular to find no recognition or record of the *daughters* of Jacob.)

The number 'seventy' is confirmed by the reference to Exod. i. 5: 'All the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls; for Joseph was in Egypt already.'

But in Stephen's review of the history, in his great speech (Acts vii. 14), he refers to the number of Jacob's kindred, called into Egypt, as being 'threescore and fifteen souls,' adding five to the records given in Genesis and Exodus. Possibly in the hurry of excited speech Stephen failed to remember precisely; but if that had been the case Luke would surely have corrected such a mistake when preserving his record. It would rather seem that some tradition had been kept which differed from the early Scripture account.

Dr. Hales gets over the difficulty by the very simple suggestion that what Stephen quoted was a list giving only those who actually went down into Egypt, *including the wives*, but not including Jacob himself. This may be the explanation, but no hint of it is given in Stephen's speech, and only the accident of the numbers coming right by this calculation could have suggested it. *Dr. Hales* says: 'In this statement (Acts vii. 14), the wives of Jacob's sons, who

formed part of the household, are omitted, but they amounted to nine; for of the twelve wives of the twelve sons, Judah's wife was dead (Gen. xxxviii. 12), and Simeon's, as we collect from his youngest son, Shaul, by a Canaanitess (Gen. xlvi. 10); and Joseph's wife was already in Egypt. These nine wives, therefore, added to sixty-six, gave seventy-five souls, the whole amount of Jacob's household that went with him down to Egypt.' But we may enquire why Jacob's wives, Leah, Zilpah, and Bilhah, are not included in the summary; and why is not Jacob included; and if their father had four wives, or, at least, two, is it reasonable to assume that all his sons contented themselves with one? And it may be asked whether Simeon's having a son by a Canaanitish woman necessarily involves the death of his wife. Manifestly Dr. Hales' calculation is too easy a way out of a difficulty.

The fact appears to be that Stephen quoted from the Septuagint Version, which varies from the Hebrew Bible in verse 27, which it reads thus: 'The sons of Joseph which were born to him in Egypt were nine souls. All the souls of the house of Jacob who came with Jacob into Egypt were seventy-five.' It is most simple to assume that the five grandsons of Joseph, the sons of Manasseh and Ephraim, had been added to the list, so as to make it really include Jacob and *all* his sons and grandsons—though this brings in great grandsons in the case of the favourite Joseph.

Dr. Lumby has a very full and satisfactory note on Acts vii. 14: 'This number, 75, is taken from the LXX. In the Hebrew the number is but 70, including Jacob himself. The five additional names given in the LXX. are Machir the son, and Galaad the grandson of Manasseh, and the two sons of Ephraim, Soutalaam and Taam, and Soutalaam's son, Edom. So in Exod. i. 5 the Hebrew has 70, and the LXX. 75. There were many traditions current on this subject, and Rabbis notice too that 69 persons (they exclude Jacob) are reckoned for 70 in the accounts given Gen. xlvi. In the *Midrash Shemuel*, c. 32, there are various suggestions thrown out. First it is said that the one wanting was Jochebed, who became wife of Amram and mother of Moses, for it is mentioned (Num. xxvi. 59) that she was a daughter of Levi born in Egypt, and the tradition is that she was born "between the walls," *i.e.*, just as the people were entering Egypt, and so she is to be counted in the number. Another tradition is attached to Gen. xlvi. 23, "The sons of Dan, Hushim." As the last word is a plural form, and *sons* are spoken of in the verse, therefore it is thought that there were two Hushim, an elder and a

younger. Also there is mentioned that there was a twin with Dinah. We may thus see that there were traditions current which probably were well known to the translators of the LXX., and gave rise to their number. They, however, are not consistent, for in Deuteronomy (x. 22) they give 70 as the number which went down into Egypt. Stephen, as was to be expected from the other quotations in this book, and also because he was a Grecian Jew, follows the LXX. Stephen, as a Hellenistic Jew, naturally accepted, without caring to investigate, the number which he found in the Greek Version.'

The differences between the Septuagint translation and the original Hebrew will often explain New Testament difficulties and apparent contradictions.

The Number of the First-Born Males.

NUMBERS iii. 42, 43: 'And Moses numbered, as the Lord commanded him, all the first-born among the children of Israel. And all the first-born males by the number of names, from a month old and upward, of those that were numbered of them, were twenty and two thousand, two hundred and threescore, and thirteen.'

Difficulty.—*If the entire body of Israelites reached two millions, as is generally assumed, this represents an impossibly small proportion of first-born sons.*

Explanation.—The *Speaker's Commentary* carefully considers this difficulty, and says all that can be said in relation to it. Verses 40-43 give the numbering of the first-born males throughout the Twelve Tribes in order to effect the exchange commanded in verse 12.

'The result (verse 43) shows a total of 22,273. This, when compared with the number of male adults (603,550, *cf.* ii. 32), is disproportionately small, the usual proportion of first-born sons to a total male population being about one in four. The explanation is that the law of Exod. xiii. 1, 2, prescribed a dedication of those only who should be first-born *henceforward.* (So Vitringa, Scott, Keil, Wordsworth, etc.) This seems implied in the very language used: "Sanctify unto me the first-born, whatsoever openeth" (not *hath opened*) "the womb" (Exod. xiii. 2, 11, 12): by the ground which God is pleased to assign (iii. 13; viii. 17) for making this claim: by the fact that the special duties of the first-born had reference to a ritual which, at the time of the Exodus, had yet to be revealed: and by the inclusion in the command of the first-born of cattle, which obviously must mean those thereafter first-born, for we cannot imagine that an inquisition amongst the flocks and herds was made

at the Exodus to discover for immediate sacrifice the first-born already in existence.

'Hence the real difficulty is to explain how the first-born sons, amongst two millions of persons in a single year, could have been so many as is stated in the text; and it must be admitted, notwithstanding the well-known and often very remarkable fluctuations in statistics of this sort, that some unusual causes must have been concerned. Such, not to mention the Divine blessing, may be found in the sudden development of national energies which would immediately ensue on the Exodus. Before that event, the miserable estate of the people during their bondage, and especially the inhuman order for the destruction of their first-born, would check very seriously the ratio of marriages and births; and this ratio would naturally, when the check was removed, exhibit a sudden and striking increase. Commentators adduce some auxiliary arguments: *e.g.*, *Keil*, from statistics, argues that amongst the Jews the proportion of male births is usually very large. In truth, however, we have no sufficient data for entering into statistical discussions upon the subject; and it is obvious that inferences drawn from the statistics of ordinary and settled communities are not altogether relevant to a case so peculiar in many ways as that laid before us in the Pentateuch.'

The Number of the Slain Ephraimites.

JUDGES xii. 6: 'And there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.'

Question.—*Need we regard this as any more than the usual general and exaggerated estimate of the victorious general?*

Answer.—If so many as forty-two thousand soldiers belonging to one tribe fell in a single encounter, the army of Ephraim must certainly have been an immense one; and it seems more likely that this number is a very general one, not to be over-pressed, or regarded as accurately descriptive. It may be that the 42,000 represents the entire Ephraimite army, or this number may represent the total loss of the Ephraimites in the entire campaign: such a butchery at the fords is quite inconceivable by us. Even with the destructive weapons of our time such a slaughter would be horrible to contemplate.

It should also be noticed that Bible accounts of battles never distinguish between the wounded, the missing, and the dead. Moreover there seems to have been no systematic counting of the dead, and the numbers given are guess-work, merely the estimate formed by the victors.

Those who feel this number 42,000 to be unreasonable, get over the difficulty by suggesting that it includes the slain in battle, and those killed at the fords. Perhaps, too, they say, it is the whole number of the Ephraimite army which crossed over to attack Jephthah, and which was routed with great slaughter.

It is quite usual for the number of killed on a battle-field to be grossly exaggerated. It is part of the bragging of the victors, and a sign of their excited mood. In olden times the first exaggerations meet with no later qualifyings, as they do with us, when the actual numbers of the foe engaged in the battle comes to be known. But even with us calculations are made with the numbers of men in regiments at their full strength; and a complete regiment scarcely ever yet actually went into a battle-field. In the days of the Judges, it was not possible for a victorious general to find out the exact numbers of his foe, and he would be sure to guess it far higher than it really was.

Lange suggests that 42,000 was a sort of round number, vaguely indicating an immense slaughter, and probably in this direction the best explanation is to be found. He says: 'The number 42 (7 times 6) appears to be not far removed from a round number; but its occurrence is associated with severe and well-merited judgments on sin. As here 42,000 sinful Ephraimites fall, so 42 of the mockers of the Prophet Elisha are killed by bears (2 Kings ii. 24); and when the judgment of God breaks forth over the house of Ahab, 42 brethren of Ahaziah are put to death by Jehu (2 Kings x. 14).'

The Time of Ishbosheth's Reign.

2 SAMUEL ii. 10: 'Ishbosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years.'

Difficulty.—*Neither the age of Ishbosheth when he began to reign, nor the length of his reign, as given here, can be harmonized with other references to him.*

Explanation.—The expression 'when he began to reign' is said to be used only for the accession of a fully recognised sovereign. (Compare 2 Sam. ii. 4, and v. 4.) After Saul's death, Abner was engaged for five years in restoring the dominion of the house of Saul over the Trans-Jordanic territory, the plain of Esdraelon, the mountains of Ephraim, the frontier tribe of Benjamin, and eventually 'over all Israel,' with, of course, the exception of Judah. Ishbosheth was the representative of the house of Saul during those five years, but he was not regarded as King until the land was united in the

acceptance of him. His actual recognised sovereignty did but last two years.

Another suggestion has been made. 'Since David reigned seven years in Hebron over Judah only, it follows, if the two years of verse 10 are correct, either that an interval of five years elapsed between Ishbosheth's death and David's being anointed "King over all Israel," or that a like interval elapsed between Saul's death and the commencement of Ishbosheth's reign.' It is, however, very unlikely that, after Abner's negotiations, so long a time as five years passed before David gained the full sovereignty. Such a period would have involved serious divisions among the tribes who were without any recognised bond of union, or systematic government, and after such a period of anarchy David's position would have been far more difficult than the history declares it to have been.

It is not easy to fit the age of forty for Ishbosheth with other notices of Saul's family. If he waited five years before beginning his reign, and was then forty, he must have been thirty-five when his father died at Gilboa. He must have been born some three years before his father's accession, and he must have been five years older than David, the bosom friend of his elder brother, Jonathan.

It is probable that the numerals in this verse both need correction, and the passage illustrates the uncertainty attaching to the numbers given in Old Testament narrative.

The Numbers Smitten at Bethshemesh.

1 SAMUEL vi. 19: 'And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord, even he smote of the people seventy men, and fifty thousand men: and the people mourned because the Lord had smitten the people with a great slaughter.'

Difficulty.—*Bethshemesh was but a small place, and the number given is almost inconceivable. For such a proportion to be killed represents Bethshemesh as a vast city.*

Explanation.—The *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'Read threescore and ten, and omit fifty thousand.' And it adds the following explanatory note: 'The LXX. read: "And he smote of them 70 men, and 50,000 men." The old versions vary very much, and suggest various explanations. The Syriac and Arabic read 5,070. The Chaldee Targum of Jonathan has 70 elders, and 50,000 common people, in which he is followed by the Vulgate. Some rabbis of note interpret that the 70 slain were men of such renown as to be as good as 50,000. *Bochart* explains the meaning to be: "He smote 70 men, 50 *out of* a thousand," as if for 1,400 men who deserved

death God had mercifully smitten only seventy, or one in twenty. *Leclerc* explains it: "He smote 70 men out of 50,000." And most Christian as well as Jewish expositors feel the extreme improbability on every account of a slaughter of 50,000 men on such an occasion, and in such a place—a mere village.

'But all the above explanations are strained and unnatural. It is more to the purpose to observe: (1) That the sentence in the Hebrew bears manifest marks of corruption; (*a*) in placing the 70 men before the 50,000, contrary to Hebrew usage; (*b*) in the omission of the conjunction *and*; (*c*) in repeating the word *men*; (*d*) in speaking of the *people* as still existing after 50,070 were slain. (2) That Josephus only reads *seventy men* in his copies of the Bible, since he only speaks of so many as struck by lightning. And (3) that Kennicott quotes two Hebrew MSS. of great excellence and antiquity in which the words *fifty thousand men* are not found.

'We may therefore safely conclude that the words "50,000 men" are no part of the sacred text, but have crept in from the margin, where they had been marked as a various reading, the origin of such reading probably being to be sought in the custom of expressing numbers by *letters*, and the resemblance in the old Hebrew alphabet between the letter *ain*, which denotes 70, and the letter *nun*, which denotes 50,000.'

Canon Spence says: 'Bethshemesh was never a large or important place. There were, in fact, no *great* cities in Israel; the population was always a scattered one, the people living generally on their farms.'

Dean Payne Smith computes the population of Jerusalem in its best days at only 70,000, and it would be an awful desolation indeed for 50,000 of them to be slain at one fell stroke. And such a number stricken in one of the country villages is simply inconceivable. It is quite clear that the view we take of *inspiration* must reckon with the fact of this uncertainty and inaccuracy of Bible numbers.

Date of Building the Temple.

1 KINGS vi. 1: 'And it came to pass (in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt), in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.'

Difficulty.—*This insertion in the text may have only the authority of a late editor, and so be no basis on which to rest a chronological system.*

Explanation.—It is probably an explanatory note from the margin which has gained insertion in the text. It is of little value

until the date of the exodus can be definitely fixed. At present five systems of chronology give five different dates: B.C. 1648, 1593, 1491, 1531, 1320 respectively, the last date being peculiar to Bunsen.

Canon Rawlinson gives the following note: 'It is upon this statement that all the earlier portion of what is called the "received chronology" depends. The year of the foundation of the temple can be approximately fixed by adding the remaining years of Solomon's reign, the years of the kings of Judah, and the seventy years of the captivity, to the received date for the accession of Cyrus to the throne of Babylon. The chronology thus obtained is checked, and (in a general way) confirmed, by the ancient document called the "Canon of Ptolemy," by the recently-discovered "Assyrian Canon," and again by the chronology of Egypt. Amid minor differences there is a general agreement which justifies us in placing the accession of Solomon about B.C. 1000. But great difficulties meet us in determining the sacred chronology anterior to this. Apart from the present statement, the chronological data of the Old Testament are insufficient to fix the interval between Solomon's accession and the Exodus, since several of the periods which make it up are unestimated. The duration of Joshua's judgeship, the interval between his death and the servitude of Chushan Rishathaim, and the duration of the judgeships of Shamgar and Samuel, are not mentioned in Scripture. Again, the frequent occurrence of round numbers (twenty, forty, eighty) in this portion of the chronology seems to indicate an inexact reckoning, which would preclude us from fixing the dates with any accuracy. . . . The text itself is not free from suspicion. (1) It is the sole passage in the Old Testament which contains the idea of dating events from an era—an idea which did not occur to the Greeks till the time of Thucydides. (2) It is quoted by Origen without the words that are enclosed in brackets. (3) It seems to have been known only in this shape to Josephus, to Theophilus of Antioch, and to Clement of Alexandria, who would all naturally have referred to the date had it formed a portion of the passage in their day. (4) It is, to say the least, hard to reconcile with other chronological statements in the Old and New Testament. Though the Books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel furnish us with no exact chronology, they still supply important chronological data—data which seem to indicate for the interval between the Exodus and Solomon, a period considerably exceeding 480 years.' The years actually set down amount to 580, if not 600, and allowing for round numbers and overlappings, can hardly be reduced to 480. On the

whole, therefore, it seems probable that the bracketed words in this text are an interpolation, due to some copyist as late as the third century of our era.

Jehoshaphat's Men of War.

2 CHRONICLES xvii. 14: 'And these are the numbers of them according to the house of their fathers.'

Difficulty.—*The numbers here given cannot be harmonized with any other statements made concerning the military force.*

Explanation.—*C. J. Ball, M.A.*, in 'Ellicott's Commentary,' points out the signs of exaggeration in this estimate, and says all that can be said in favour of its correctness. *Canon Rawlinson*, in the 'Speaker's Commentary,' argues that the numbers given in our Authorised Version must be corrupt. Both notes may be given as the material on which our readers may form their own judgments.

Ball says: 'According to the above list, the army of Jehoshaphat was organized in five grand divisions, corresponding perhaps to five territorial divisions of the southern kingdom. The totals are the largest assigned to the two tribes anywhere in the Old Testament; viz., Judah 780,000, and Benjamin 380,000; in all, 1,160,000. At David's census (of the entire kingdom) Judah had 500,000 warriors (2 Sam. xxiv. 9), and Israel 800,000. Again, in chap. xiv. 8, Asa's army consists of 300,000 men of Judah, and 280,000 Benjamites. Clearly such an increase as our text indicates is unaccountable. At the same time, it is equally clear that the present numbers are not fortuitous results of clerical errors, for they follow each other in the order of relative strength; Judah, 300,000, 280,000, 200,000; Benjamin, 200,000, 180,000; and they are evidently not independent of the estimates of chap. xiv. 8. In the absence of adequate data for modifying these certainly startling figures, it is well to bear in mind, that we need not understand by them an army which ever actually mustered in the field or on parade, but simply an estimate of the total male population liable to be called out for the national defence; although, even upon that understanding, the total appears to be at least three times too great, considering the small extent of the country.'

Rawlinson says: 'These numbers have been with good reason regarded as corrupt by most critics. They cannot be successfully defended either as probable in themselves, or as in harmony with the other statements of the military force, or of the population, contained in our author. For (1) They imply a minimum population

of 1,480 to the square mile, which is more than three times greater than that of any country in the known world. (2) They produce a total which largely exceeds every other statement of the military force of Judah which we have in Scripture, the amount being *just double* that of the next largest estimate—the 580,000 of chap. xiv. 8. (3) They are professedly a statement, not of the whole military force, but of the force maintained *at Jerusalem* (verse 13), and are distinctly said to be exclusive of the numerous garrisons in the other cities and strongholds of Judah (see verse 19, and compare verses 2 and 12). (4) They are suspicious in themselves, the first (300,000) and second (280,000) being repetitions of the numbers in chap. xiv. 8, while the remainder (200,000, 200,000, 180,000) are formed from these by the deduction from them in each case of 100,000. Some writers would correct the passage by removing from each of the numbers one cypher, thus reducing the total from 1,160,000 to 116,000: but it is more probable that the original numbers have been lost, and the loss supplied by a scribe who took chap. xiv. 8 as his basis.'

The Limit of the Seventy Weeks.

DANIEL ix. 26: 'And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.'

Question.—*Is it possible to decide from what event these 'weeks' of years are to be reckoned?*

Answer.—It is manifest that the term 'weeks' is used in a figurative and prophetical sense, and it may be fairly questioned whether any definite time is intended to be given. The number may but represent what we can express as God's 'fulness of time.' It may be designed to *prevent* our seeking to fix dates. In God's good time; God's perfect time; the time altogether best left in God's hand, Messiah shall come. It is always true, 'times and seasons' God keeps in His own power. The use by Daniel of 'seven,' as the number representing 'perfection,' is very striking, and suggests that the mere numeral value cannot be intended.

Bishop Wordsworth says: 'It is generally supposed that these seventy weeks are weeks of years; and that, as all Hebrew and Christian Antiquity agree, they make a period of four hundred and ninety years.' The seventy is divided into seven, sixty-two, and one. 'Within seven weeks (*i.e.*, 49 years) the wall of Jerusalem would be built, and the city settled. This was fulfilled by Nehemiah's reformation, and by the sealing up of the Canon of the Old Testament within forty-nine years after the decree to restore the city.' The

sixty-two weeks of years represent the time between the Testaments; and then the week following was that which represented the time of Messiah; but by no computation can either the life of Christ, or His ministry, be made to fit precisely a prophecy of seven years (one week of years). If we cannot press literal exactness in regard to this *one week*, we need not seek historical exactness in regard to the other numbers of weeks. Those who seek for exact and literal applications of the prophecy, fix on the commission to Ezra, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes as the starting-point of Daniel's work; but the Bible gives no hint on the subject, and this alone would suggest that a general, rather than a precise, explanation of the prophetic numbers is to be preferred.

It will also be noticed that different prophetic schools explain the Bible numbers in different ways; and the very fact that such differing explanations are found possible suggests, to the thoughtful student, the questionable value of any man-made theories. And it must be added, that recent inquiries into the origin, date, and authorship of the Book of Daniel may necessitate a re-reading of the book in a new light, and an endeavour to find the references of its prophecies in the history of the immediately associated age.

The uncertainty of all strictly literal applications of the term 'seventy weeks' is shown by the variety of opinion concerning the date *from which* they are to be reckoned, and the date *to which* the seventy may be supposed to reach. On these essential points opinion must be quite arbitrary, and arguments in support of opinion must be purely human manufacture, that may appear to us more or less reasonable. Thus to the majority of the fathers, with Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Reinke, and Wordsworth, the 'terminus a quo' is the 20th year of Artaxerxes (B.C. 445); and the 'terminus ad quem' the public appearance of Christ (Luke iii. 1) at the end of the 69 weeks. With Auberlen and Pusey the 'terminus a quo' is the return to Jerusalem sanctioned by Artaxerxes in his seventh year (B.C. 457), the 'terminus ad quem,' the martyrdom of Stephen (A.D. 33). With others the 'terminus a quo' is either the edict of Cyrus, B.C. 536, or the conquest of Jerusalem by the Chaldæan army, B.C. 606, and the 'terminus ad quem,' the age of Antiochus Epiphanes. (See *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. vi., pp. 360-365.)

The way in which the difficulties of this subject oppress the careful student is shown in the following sentences from the closing part of the note in the *Speaker's Commentary:* 'It is in fact quite possible to admit, that while the historical horizon of these chapters appears to be terminated by the Grecian kingdom; while, moreover, the

cessation of the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes is connected with the Advent of an Anointed One, and the commencement of the Messianic kingdom, yet such historical restrictions do not exclude or supersede the belief that prophecy prefigured, under a historic garb, the repetition of many of these acts in later and Christian times, and their yet final fulfilment at the Second Advent.'

It seems better that we should not try to be wise above that which is written, and seek for a point from which to precisely reckon the 'seventy weeks,' when no such point has been authoritatively indicated to us.

SECTION III.

DIFFICULTIES RELATED TO MATTERS OF RELIGION OR THEOLOGY.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

It has not been an easy task to select topics for this section which, while fairly representing the different sources of difficulty in relation to religious and doctrinal matters, would preserve the strictly unsectarian and uncontroversial character of this work. Our readers may be reminded, that this book has been prepared with a view to presenting suggestively the materials on which a reasonable judgment can be formed. From beginning to end no dogmatic statement is made. As far as possible, correct information is given, and good opinions are stated; but there are no theories advocated; and it is hoped that no strife will be excited by it. On the great Biblical questions every man should be 'fully persuaded in his own mind.' But to be so persuaded he should have good and sufficient materials at his command, on which his judgment may be wisely formed.

This section must, of necessity, deal with some controversial subjects, but it only touches them on their literary and scientific sides. Our point of view is limited to Bible representations and teachings, and we have no concern with the forms and settings of doctrinal opinion, or the specialities of particular sects.

One of the leading principles guiding the treatment of difficulties relating to religion has been this—God has made His revelation of religious truth to men in *advancing stages*, and we have no right to expect the advanced forms of truth in the lower stages. Much confusion has been caused by the attempt to discover, in the Old Testa-

ment records of the earlier, limited, and preparatory revelations, the higher results of the Christian revelation. They can only be found as the oak-tree can be said to be found in the acorn. Both in matters of morality and of religion we have to accept ideas as *relative to their age.* And there is a great field for research open to those who can fit themselves to each generation, and, without prejudice, reproduce for us the actual moral and religious notions and sentiments of Noah, and Abraham, and David, and Isaiah.

We may reasonably assume that the underlying truths—the primary truths of morality and religion—have been the same in all ages; are, indeed, the common possession of humanity, and therefore are found at the basis of every religion. But these 'primary truths' can never be found separate from the national or individual forms which give them expression. And these forms are always *relative* to particular times, particular countries, and particular individuals. The form of an age, or of a nation, or of a man, has no binding force in any other age, on any other nation, or for any other individual. Each man may claim the right to give the primary truths expression in forms that suit his own genius. This distinction between *truth* and *forms of truth* may seem to many but a subtle, philosophical distinction, but it is, in fact, the keynote which alone enables us to realize the harmony of God's dealings with His creatures: and this distinction should be kept well in mind when studying this section on 'difficulties related to religion.'

Another point of importance is the recognition of the fact that ancient religions, outside Hebraism, influenced both the Mosaic system and the general sentiments of the people of Israel more than is usually estimated. The notion is generally entertained that the Hebrews were a people under the direct guidance of Jehovah, and their *entire* circle of thought, sentiment, association, were divinely arranged. Of course, that notion will not bear a moment's examination. The Hebrew race was not like a clean sheet of paper which God took, that He might write upon it what He pleased. The sheet was already written on when He separated it for His purposes. There were relics of Chaldee association through Abraham; relics of Syrian association through Jacob's residence with Laban; distinct impressions of tribal customs, such as that of the 'blood-avenger'; relics of association with Egypt; and manifest signs of the influence on the race of the 'mixt multitude' that came with them from Egypt; of the older inhabitants of Canaan, with whom they mingled; and of the immediately surrounding heathen nations. It may, therefore, often be that the explanation of a religious difficulty is found by

detaching the older association, which may have strangely distorted the actual Jehovah revelation.

The study of Comparative Religions has brought to light many curious and instructive things connected with the earlier forms of religious thought and rite; and it is likely to prove of unspeakable value, by aiding us to discover what the primary and universal religious truths for humanity are. It will not fail to bring out very forcibly the fact, that Christianity is the flower and crown of the religions of humanity, the last and the most perfect expression of the primary and essential truths.

The Divine Image in Man.

GENESIS i. 27: 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.'

Difficulty.—*What God's image is we do not know, so it would seem hopeless to seek for the image in man.*

Explanation.—It is evident that the first chapter of Genesis is written for those who have, independently of it, the knowledge of God. To tell the first created beings that they were made 'in the image of God' could have conveyed no idea to their minds, because they had no figure of God, and no ideas of God's being and nature, from which any likeness of man to God could be apprehended. Whatever view may be taken of the origin of the chapter—whether we see in it direct revelation, selection of documents, or early legend—it is certain that Moses presents the record to those who had extensive knowledge of God, and such belief in Him as enabled them to yield themselves to His guidance. Ideas of God had come to the Hebrew race through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for God even fixes His name for that race as the 'God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,' sending the Hebrew to the record of Jehovah's dealings with the patriarchs for adequate apprehensions of Jehovah Himself.

We ought, therefore, to inquire not what was the 'image of God' as Adam could apprehend it; nor what was the 'image of God' as Christians can apprehend it, who see in Jesus the 'brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of His person,' but what was the 'image of God' as the Jew could apprehend it in the time of Moses.

And we should take into due consideration the fact, that as man's first knowledge is the apprehension of himself, he cannot help making himself the measure of all things, and even the measure of God. And so it comes to pass that the Divine declaration, 'God created man in his own image,' is rather a help to man to understand

God than an aid to man to understand himself. It is only after man has come to know God that he can come to the higher understanding of himself.

As we neither have any authorized representation of the person of God, nor are allowed to make any figure or likeness of Him, it is not possible for us to say that man's bodily form, arrangement of limbs, or even sense endowments and mental capacities, are the image of God. Some have, indeed, suggested that man is like God in his erectness. God is a spiritual being, and we must not limit Him to any material form; and man's likeness to Him must be man's likeness as a spiritual being—a character—not as a material form.

God is a Spirit. Man is a Spirit. The image of God in man is to be found in this common spiritual nature.

In 'The Age of the Great Patriarchs,' pp. 60-66, this point is fully presented. From it we take the principal suggestions. 'To understand what is the likeness of God on man we must plainly get some fitting idea of God, and of what may be regarded as essential to Him and characteristic of Him. Keeping our attention fixed on the great work of Creation, as recorded in Genesis i., we find that four conceptions of God are necessary: (1) We must think of Him as an Intelligent Being. Creation everywhere bears the marks of design, and shows the energy and the skilful adaptations of the designing mind. Modern knowledge is in great part the discovery of the various ends and purposes which the great intelligent Creator had from the first in view. A great Master-mind; and it is such a mind as we can in part apprehend; in its workings we can trace the powers of imagination, judgment, foresight, and reasoning. (2) We must conceive of God as a being having a free and independent will. The decisions of His intelligence become the choices of His will. There is not the faintest suggestion of any being at the back of God, by whose opinion He is for one moment influenced, or on whom He is in the least degree dependent. (3) We must conceive of God as a being of active power and authority. The story of the Creation is a record of the combinations and separations, and modifications of the elements, by One whose authority all natural forces obeyed. Clearly God is a spiritual Being, a Will, related to matter in a way of authority and control. (4) We should further think of God as a Moral Being, with a conception of good, of right, towards which He is ever working. Each day of the Creation we find Him looking upon His work and saying: "It is good." In saying only this much about God as a Moral Being, it should be remembered that we are only trying to find how much may be learned of God

from the Creation. Four things form our first conception of God: Intelligence, Free Will, Authority, and a Moral Nature. If these are God, and God has impressed the image of Himself on man, then we ought to be able to find clear traces of these four things on man.

'To see the likeness of God in man we must bring forth the representative man, the first Adam. Yet even in him we must not look for too much. We shall find only a faint image, a minute copy of the Divine, a small photograph. Man is an image in the sense in which we call a child the image of his father. It is but a little image. . . . None but God Himself can adequately represent His own fulness of glorious attribute and holy rectitude. That other thing must be a God with God who could take in and apprehend the full glories of His nature.

'Can we see any likeness of the Divine Intelligence in Man? Surely we can. Intelligence is one of the essentials of humanity, one of the things most evidently dividing man from all the lower forms of life. Adam was capable of receiving Divine communications; was able to select and pronounce names for all the creatures by which he was surrounded; had a mind with due powers of imagination, reasoning, and judgment. In that intelligence we find the first impress of the image of God. Can we see any image of the Divine Free-Will in man? In a sense man is complete, can stand alone, may guide his own course, has power over his own movements, goes forth in Creation in a sense a God, bearing the image of God. Can we see any image of the Divine Activity and Authority? Adam was set in the garden to *work;* not to be a passive figure, but to find out the exceeding joy of intelligent work. . . . The various powers of Nature are put within his control, the various living things are made subject to his authority. But, above all, can we see any image in Adam of God as a Moral Being? In this lies man's distinguishing peculiarity. Adam stands apart from all the lower animals in the possession of a Moral Sense. By virtue of this he comes out of the animal class of beings, and is reckoned in the God-class of beings. This is the same thing as to say he is a soul; he has the power of knowing right and wrong; he can be righteous. As a moral being he has yet something more of the Divine image, for he was started on his career in harmony with God; the very image of God's sublime idea of right, truth, and good was put upon him. "God made man upright." Good. Feeling the beauty of good. Loving good. Seeking good. Here, too, only an imperfect image of God. Man's goodness only a derived goodness, and so unstable; God's goodness absolute, eternal, unchangeable.'

Psalmist Hopes of Immortality.

PSALM xvi. 10 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.' *Marg.* 'the pit.'
PSALM xvii. 15 (*Rev. Ver.*): As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness.'

Question.—*Does David here represent the ideas of his age, or must we think of him as spiritually in advance of them?*

Answer.—It may reasonably be held that the religious and the poetical genius of David set him above his contemporaries, and made him a leader in religious thought; one of those men whom God raises up, again and again in the world's history, to lift up the entire plane of spiritual conceptions: and yet it must be seen that David could but lift thought one step, and could in no way anticipate the higher ideas of the later and Christian revelation. We may see the germ and beginning of the Christian conception of immortality in his Psalms, but we should look for no more than hints and hopes.

It is thought that the Mosaic system, being one of duties, punishments, and rewards, strictly limited to this life, tended to crush all notions of immortality, and it certainly is strange to find that the life to come is never used as an incentive to moral goodness under that system. But we should keep in mind that the Mosaic system is only understood as we see it to be an earthly and material picture of spiritual truths, relations, and duties. As *illustration* it is properly confined to the earthly sphere.

Confusion is often made by losing sight of the fact that God's education of the world proceeds by stages, and that no earlier stage anticipates a later. New Testament doctrines concerning the nature of man, and concerning the future for man, could not have been conceived by the religious mind in the lower stages: and when we put refined Christian ideas into the words of patriarch, or king, or prophet, we would do well to remember that they are *our* ideas, and cannot be conceived as the thoughts and notions of those who actually wrote the words. The 'genius' of each age anticipates the next age, but he does not anticipate a score of ages on. And the Divine inspiration given to each man is always relative to that precise work which he is called to do.

How much, then, can we think to have been in the Psalmist's mind when he penned these words? We are not now considering the Messianic or prophetic character of them, but their relation to the actual beliefs of David.

The keynote of the psalm is found in the first words of it—'Pre-

serve me, O God.' The Psalmist was exposed to some special peril which threatened his life. No hint is given concerning the causes of this peril, unless we find something in verse 4, which seems to be an utterance of strong feeling against active enemies. He rejoices in pleasant circumstances and surroundings, and yet fears that these enemies mean to compass his death. The situation of the psalm may be illustrated by that of a king who seems to be in happy circumstances, and yet he has reason to suspect that someone in the court is watching the opportunity to poison him. Conceive such a condition, and associate it with pious David, and the psalm becomes his turning to God for defence, and the expression of his confidence that God would preserve him, and not let these foes succeed in bringing him to the grave. God's presence would be to him a sure defence. To recognise this as the first association of the psalm, is in no sense to deny or underestimate its further and Messianic suggestions; but it does remove the strain, under which we seem to lie, of finding later notions of immortality in so early an age. *Jennings and Lowe* support this explanation of the psalm, when they say: 'To "see the pit" is the opposite of "seeing life," that is, experiencing and enjoying it; and thus really means to *succumb* to the state of the grave, *i.e.*, death. Thus all that is implied in this verse is, that the Psalmist, in that he has Jehovah at his right hand, is confident that he shall escape death, that is, probably, the violent death with which his adversaries menace him.'

Delitzsch takes the same general view of the psalm. 'The writer is in danger of death, as is to be inferred from the prayer expressed in verse 1 and the expectation in verse 10. But there is no trace of anything like bitter complaint, gloomy conflict, or hard struggle: the cry for help is immediately swallowed up by an overpowering and blessed consciousness and a bright hope.' 'It is the hope of "not dying" that is expressed by David in verse 10.' 'David, the anointed of God, looking upon himself as in Jahve, the God who has given the promise, becomes the prophet of Christ; but this is only indirectly, for he speaks of himself, and what he says has also been fulfilled in his own person. But this fulfilment is not limited to the condition that he did not succumb to any peril that threatened his life so long as the kingship would have perished with him, and that when he died the kingship nevertheless remained.'

A striking illustration of this psalm may be found in the story of Hezekiah's perilous illness, and the prayer of Hezekiah may be compared with this psalm.

On the general question of man's immortality, Professor Agar

Beet makes an unusually interesting and important suggestion: 'We have already found reason to believe that the intelligence and the moral sense of man were not produced by the operation of natural forces, but by the inbreathing of a higher life into a body closely related to the bodies of animals. Only thus can we account for the impassable line separating the lowest men from the highest animals. If so, we can well conceive the author of this higher life promising to His new-born creature, man, that if he were loyal to the guidance of this new and nobler life he should escape from the doom of death to which all lower animals were subject. Certainly, He who was able to breathe into bodily form this spiritual life was able to guard it, even in a body of flesh, from the stroke of death. And I may venture to suggest, in view of the close relation between men and animals, that, had man been faithful in his day of trial, his victory would possibly have reacted on the animal kingdom, and have rescued it from its ancient doom. Man obeyed the impulses he had in common with animals; and thus sank to their level of mortality.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* sees in this psalm the recognition of the tripartite division of human nature, on which alone the true idea of immortality can be made to rest. 'The heart, as the seat of the understanding; the soul, as the abode of spiritual instincts; and the flesh, or body.'

Sacrifices unto Devils.

LEVITICUS xvii. 7: 'And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring.' *Rev. Ver.* 'He-goats.'

Question.—*Does this refer to some specially offensive form of idolatry; or are idols generally called by this as a scornful name?*

Answer.—The Hebrew word which is here translated 'devils' (sēirim) precisely means 'hairy' or 'shaggy goats,' and then it may stand for goat-like deities, or demons. *Dr. Ginsburg* gives the association which probably explains the allusion in this text:

'The Egyptians, and other nations of antiquity, worshipped goats as gods. Not only was there a celebrated temple in Thmuis, the capital of the Mendesian Nomos in Lower Egypt, dedicated to the goat image Pan, whom they called Mendes, and worshipped as the oracle, and as the fertilizing principle in nature, but they erected statues of him everywhere. Hence the Pan, Silenus, Satyrs, Fauns, and the woodland gods among the Greeks and Romans; and hence, too, the goat-like form of the devil, with a tail, horns, and cloven feet, which obtain in mediæval Christianity, and which may still be seen in some European cities. The terror which the devil, appear-

ing in this Pan-like form, created among those who were thought to have seen him, has given rise to our expression *panic*. This is the form of idolatrous worship which the Jews brought with them from Egypt, and to which reference is continually made. (See Josh. xxiv. 14; Ezek. xx. 7; xxiii. 3, etc.; and especially 2 Chron. xi. 15.) The expression "and they shall *no more offer*" shows that the Israelites were hitherto in the habit of first dedicating their ordinary food to these deities; whilst the words "gone a whoring" indicate the orgies connected with this form of idol worship. . . . The ancient Israelites, like the modern Orientals, especially the nomadic tribes, ate very little flesh meat apart from the seasons of sacrifice, which were the occasions of feasting.'

It is suggested that the term 'devils' might be rendered 'to the evil spirits of the desert.' *Luther* translates, 'to field-devils.' Evidently the Israelites were at this time tempted to invest the taking of the life of animals for food with some kind of idolatrous associations.

Grave mistakes must be made if we persist in bringing our developed notions of a hierarchy of evil spirits to the Old Testament, and persist in fixing Christian associations and ideas to every case in which the word 'devil' is used. The proper help to understanding such Old Testament terms is to be found in the knowledge and sentiment of Old Testament times; and we must not forget how much mediæval superstition and Miltonic poetry have coloured our notions of a personal Diabolus. It is safest to understand the word 'devils,' as used scornfully in the Old Testament, as a figure of idolatry and its degrading rites. In the particular case now before us it is clear that a specially sensual form of goat-worship is referred to.

A Form like the Son of God.

DANIEL iii. 25: 'He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.'

Question.—*What idea of the 'Son of God' can we suppose Nebuchadnezzar to have had?*

Answer.—It is simply inconceivable that a Babylonian king could have attached the meaning to the term 'Son of God' which is familiar to us, who understand by it the Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Divine Trinity. The association of Christ with the visionary figure, seen by the king in the fire, could never have been made but for a lack of precision in the translation of the term.

Hengstenberg, Zöckler, Keil, Rose, Fuller, and others, propose to render it 'a son of the gods;' Hitzig and Ewald prefer 'a son of God,' in the sense of an 'angel.'

The early Patristic explanation was that the person whom the king saw was none other than Christ Himself. So Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Hilary, etc. But they were misled by not observing, that there is no definite article, and the phrase is '*a* Son of God,' and not 'the Son of God,' which could only be properly applied to Christ. 'A Son of God' is a figure of speech, meaning 'a noble or god-like person.'

A fresh, and very suggestive and interesting, explanation is given by *Archdeacon Rose.* 'It was the language of one educated in, and familiar with, the Babylonian belief in gods. From the union of Bel and Mylitta had sprung up a divine progeny of "sons," and one of those divine visitors had vouchsafed to appear now, an "angel" (lit. "messenger," verse 28) of deliverance to Shadrach and his fellows. The inscriptions offer numerous examples of kings calling a particular god and goddess their father and mother; Assurbanipal, for instance, calls himself the progeny of Assur and Beltis: the name Bar (son) is given to a god; and there was a "god of fire."'

'It is possible to identify this "son of the gods" more closely still. In the old Accadian books of magic, Fire is the god *Iz-Bar*, the god "who lifts up himself on high, the great chief who extends the supreme power of the god of heaven." Under those titles he is regarded as the fire of the Kosmos everywhere present in Nature, at once necessary to life, and exhibiting his brilliancy in the stars. The name *Iz-Bar* will recall to the student of the Babylonian deluge tablet the name of the hero, *Iz-dhu-bar* (mass of fire), who plays a principal part in that ancient epic. In an incantation of sixty versicles directed against the ravages of the "seven spirits of the abyss," the god Fire is described as approaching Silik-moulou-khi (the mediator with the supreme god Hea), and expressing to him the prayers of the petitioners. Silik-moulou-khi hears the prayer, and lays it before his father Hea. In a religious system which laid so much stress on the worship of the elements, it is not surprising to find Fire adored as a real material substance, superior as a god even to the sun itself. Hence he is invoked as the great disperser of witchcrafts, and the hero who puts evil spirits to flight. Universal peace, and especially freedom from the attacks of malignant demons, are considered ensured to a land under this god's protection. The sacrificial flame was adored as enshrining his presence, hence he bore the title of "the supreme high priest on the surface of the earth;" while the

trustful simple people recognised in the flame which burnt on the domestic hearth that tutelary power which protected house and home from harmful influences.

'*Bar*-Elohin, *i.e.*, Bar-Ili, is the name which Nebuchadnezzar gives him in this verse, and it would perhaps be a better translation to render his words either "the form of the fourth is like *Bar-Elohin*," or, "like Bar of the gods." The king saw in that flame fed by human sacrifice the greatest and most active of the gods with whom the priest had direct communication by sacred rites and magic incantations: and he recognised the intervention in favour of his victims.'

Robjohns, in 'Daniel, Statesman and Prophet,' argues for a real identification of this fourth figure with the 'Angel-Jehovah;' but he makes the following admission, which takes all the force out of his argument: 'The king's words do not necessarily refer to the Lord Jesus. Their natural, obvious meaning points in another direction. "Son of gods," or "Son of the gods," would be a phrase applicable to anyone supposed in character or mien to resemble those whose dwelling is not with flesh. There is no reason to believe that Nebuchadnezzar knew anything of an expected Messiah. Even if he had, he would scarcely have called him the Son of God; since, however familiar the name to us, there is no evidence that at that time the name was given to Messiah, even by the Jews. Whether this was or was not the Christ, it is clear that all that the king meant was to describe the fourth walking in the fire as like unto a son of the gods.'

Dr. W. T. Taylor says: 'When we give the words their literal translation, "the form of the fourth is like a son of the gods," we see that Nebuchadnezzar was speaking like a heathen, and meant only to describe the dignified and exalted deportment of him whom he thus characterized.'

David's Idea of Original Sin.

PSALM li. 5: 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.'

Difficulty.—*It does not easily appear how the wrong-doing of a man's mother can be charged, as guilt, to him.*

Explanation.—Two things require to be taken into consideration in fairly estimating this intense expression: (1) Easterns, in times of passion, are wont to inveigh against the mothers of those with whom they are angry; and are exceedingly foul in the references they make

to them. (2) There is much uncertainty as to who David's mother was, and the kind of relation in which she stood to Jesse.

Dean Stanley tells us that 'the name and origin of David's mother is wrapt in mystery. Zeruiah and Abigail, though called in 1 Chron. ii. 16 sisters of David, are not expressly called the daughters of Jesse; and Abigail, in 2 Sam. xvii. 25, is called the daughter of Nahash. It would almost seem as if David's mother had been the wife or concubine of Nahash (the later Rabbis represent David as born in adultery, the earlier Rabbis make Nahash to be another name for Jesse), and then married to Jesse. This would agree with the fact that her daughters, David's sisters, were older than the rest of the family, and also (if Nahash was the same as the King of Ammon) with the kindnesses which David received first from Nahash and then from Shobi his son.'

Jennings and Lowe notice that the words 'in iniquity' and 'in sin' are predicated of his parent, not of himself. They are, in fact, connected with the notion that the act of coition necessarily involves impurity. This verse therefore intimates that man has his very origin in sin, a view expressed nowhere else in the Old Testament so definitely.

Probably it is wrong to press unduly what is really a poetical and almost a passionate expression of strong feeling. David has been aroused to a sense of his sin, and was more especially affected by the revelation of his sensual disposition. He seems to have broken loose, in these ways, when Michal, the wife of his early love, was taken from him; and, gathering round him wife after wife, gave way to bodily passions until they gained the mastery of him, and made him helpless to resist when opportunity for wrong-doing, through self-indulgence, came in his way. In his penitent frame he was utterly ashamed of his moral weakness, and could only find the same sort of excuse that we still find, and say it was 'human nature.' He felt that the sensual inclination was a part of him, and, in Eastern fashion, shifts the responsibility of giving him this evil disposition upon his mother. This reference to her would have a special point if she had left one husband and taken up with another.

The sin of his mother could not be his sin; but the disposition which led his mother to sin might be passed on to him, and lead him to sin. There is hereditary passing of dispositions and tendencies, as we still have abundant proofs around us; but we need to be careful in using the term *sin* in relation to them. Whatever a man's hereditary bias may be, he is not chargeable with sin until he acts upon a decision of his own will.

The Cain and Abel Offerings.

GENESIS iv. 3, 4: 'And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof.'

Difficulty.—*On the face of the record there seems no reason why these offerings should have been so differently received.*

Explanation.—The fact may be fairly and fully recognised that, regarded as offerings, Cain's offering was every way as good as Abel's: and it bore precisely the same relation to his daily life and labour.

It may be, as is suggested by some writers, that Abel brought his offering in a better spirit than Cain did. It may be, as others suggest, that the expression used concerning Abel's offering, 'and of the fat thereof,' indicates a careful selection, in order to bring his *best* to God, and is intended to contrast with Cain's merely bringing what came first to hand, 'of the fruit of the ground.' But there is another explanation, to which due consideration should be given. In the bringing of these offerings by the two brothers we may have instances of *instinctive religion;* and in the method of the Divine treatment of these offerings, and in the results of that treatment, we have instinctive religion guided, lifted up on a higher plane, developed through a manifestation or revelation of the Divine Will. Then we see no sign of any divine ill-will towards Cain, but the assertion of the truth, that the acceptableness of an offering depends, not on the character or quality of the offering itself, but on the state of mind and heart towards God of the offerer. From this point of view it may be urged that, if Abel's *mind* and *feeling* had been in Cain's offering it would have been accepted, or rather he would have been accepted through it.

Many are able to find the ground for the approval of Abel's offering in his bringing a creature with blood or life in it; but the narrative gives no hint that Abel's lamb was slain as a sacrifice. We import that idea into the narrative from our later and higher knowledge.

We have found the treatment of this subject easily rouses strong party feeling, and have therefore offered our suggestion in the most tentative way; asking for it no more consideration than it may fairly demand. It may be the line on which a successful explanation of the origin of 'offerings,' and so of 'sacrifices,' may be made.

Dean Payne Smith says: 'We must be careful not to introduce here any of the later Levitical ideas about sacrifice. All that we know about this offering is that it was an act of worship, and apparently something unusual. Now, each brought of his own produce, and one was accepted and one rejected.'

A recent writer puts the matter in the following way: 'Cain and Abel, as fallen creatures, made an effort to construct a religion, or to find satisfactory and acceptable religious rites. They were born after Adam and Eve had sinned, lost their purity, their paradise, and the gracious communings of their God. These sons of Adam had no *direct* knowledge of God. All they knew of God, and the lost garden, they must have learned from their father, who was to them mediator and priest. Plainly they did know of God, and their dependent relations with Him. The knowledge of God has never been lost from the race, and so it has never been made the subject of a *book-revelation;* the Scriptures never attempt to prove that *God is*, they only declare what He is, and what He does.

In the two men, Cain and Abel, we have the models of the two classes into which the world has ever been divided. In Abel we have the soul struggling for restored harmony, seeking to gain its restored rights. In bringing his offering he conquered so far as to make his bodily gift express his soul's gratitude, dependence, and faith. As he stood before God with his offering, body and soul were in harmony. But in Cain this harmony is wholly wanting. His body and soul were not together. The bodily gift, indeed, was offered, but it spoke nothing in behalf of the soul.

Every man then wanting a religion, it is remarkable that the *first* idea men light upon is always the same. The first notion of religion is that which we find illustrated in Cain and Abel; they would bring an offering, a gift to propitiate the deity and secure His favour. Cain and Abel did not merely bring their offerings as expressions of their thankfulness for temporal prosperity; the story clearly indicates that they looked for the Divine acceptance of themselves, in some sense, for the sake of their gift. Cain was angry because he did not, by his offering, secure the Divine favour. . . . Abel's lamb was, in itself, no more acceptable than Cain's corn and fruits. Abel's humble, earnest, grateful, trusting heart can receive God's favour; from Cain's formalities, and unloving, untrustful soul, God's favour must be hidden.'

The Spirit of Man, and the Spirit of the Beast.

ECCLESIASTES iii. 21 (Rev. Ver.): 'Who knoweth the spirit of man whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast whether it goeth downward to the earth?'

Difficulty.—*This expression appears to assume some future state for the spirit of the beast.*

Explanation.—Our estimate of such a sentence depends on who uttered it, the mood of mind in which the man was when he

uttered it, and the purpose he had before him in making the utterance. This is the language of a disappointed, weary sensualist, who looked drearily at life, and found nothing cheerful or hopeful in it. He had not sought the chief end of life—to glorify God; he had striven but for the low ends of selfish pleasure and material good. So life seemed to him a failure, and the ending of it a hopeless mystery. We must not confuse the wailings and groanings of such a man with the Divine inspirations and leadings of Psalmist or Prophet. It really does not matter in the least what such a miserable self-seeker thought about life, or about death, about the spirit in man, or the spirit of the animals. We hear his despairings much as we hear the foul and foolish talk of the drunkard; and only say, 'Poor man! he evidently is not in his right mind.' He can never see life aright, who sees it only as a sphere in which to serve self-interests.

Even if we regard the Book of Ecclesiastes but as a review of the foolish and unworthy things the writer had done and thought, the same remarks will apply. We can only pity the man who, under any circumstances, could think such strange things.

But the inquiry which the sentence starts is an interesting one. There may be no difficulty in regarding death as closing the existence of the wild creatures, and of the animals that are used for man's food; but many feel difficulty respecting the possible future of the domestic animals, in whom intelligence is cultured by constant association with man. It is not a subject on which any dogmatism can be allowed; but it is one in which poetry and sentiment may influence us more than we know.

What is called the 'tripartite division of human nature' may help us. It was usual to speak of man as made up of body and soul. Then it was clear that the body of the animal was kin with the body of man; and it might easily be assumed that the soul of the animal was kin with the soul of the man; and then imagination could readily dream of a future state for beast as well as for man. But a more scientific division of human nature now prevails. Man *has* body and animal life in common with the beasts; but man *is* a soul. His body will corrupt as do the bodies of the beasts. His animal life will go out in death, as does the life of the beasts. *He himself* is untouched by the corruption of his body, and exists when the life that informed and inspired the body has ceased to be. It is not correct to say that man *has* immortality; the soul, which is the man, *is immortal;* and this truth, which has always been true, was 'brought to light by the Gospel.' The possibilities of the animal life, working through the organism of the beast, may produce surprising results of

what we may regard as intelligence and will, but the animal life has no law of permanence. It of necessity passes away, ends, in what we know as death. In the line of this suggestion may be found a satisfactory solution of the difficult question of man's natural right to immortality. Understand that man *is* a Soul, and *has* a body and animal life, to put him for a time into earthly relations, and it is easy to grasp the idea that he *is* immortal. We know of nothing that can stop the existence of a soul.

Considering the actual expression of the text heading this paragraph, it may first be remarked that the translation of it may be improved. *Weiss* gives more point to it—'The spirit of man that ascends, it belongeth to on high; but the spirit of the beast that descends, it belongeth to below, even to the earth.'

Zöckler says: 'All these passages (such as refer to "returning to dust"; *e.g.*, Gen. iii. 19; Ps. civ. 29; cvii. 4; Sirach xl. 11; xli. 10), like this one (Eccl. iii. 20) regard man *solely as a material being*, and, in so far, assert a perfect likeness in his death to that of the beasts. The question whether the spirit of man shares this fate is yet unanswered.' On verse 21 *Zöckler* says: 'The construction is not that of an affirmative question, but rather that of a doubtful one, expressing uncertainty. The words "who knoweth" point out that the matter is difficult of conception, not, at first view, clear and apparent, but rather eluding the direct observation of sense. This verse does not, therefore, assert an absolute ignorance (as *Knobel* supposes), but rather some knowledge regarding the fate of the spirit in the world beyond, though wanting certainty and external evidence. Concerning the return of the spirit of man to its Divine Giver, it maintains that no one, in this world, has ever seen or survived it. A denial of the immortality of the spirit of man, as an object of inward certainty of faith, is not to be found in this passage.'

Professor Tayler Lewis thinks the writer is scoffing at the idea of man's 'spirit ascending,' or of the permanence and immortality for man more than for beast. 'He sneers at it, as something which might be vainly held by a few, but was wholly contrary to sense and experience. No one knows anything about it. It would be something like the sneer that used to be heard from the coarser kind of infidels—who ever *saw* a soul?'

Bishop Wordsworth says: 'Solomon has been speaking before of that which is *visible*—the *corporeal* element of man; and with regard to *that* he has said, that it *goes down to the dust*, like the bodies of beasts. But man possesses something which the beasts have not—a spirit that goeth upward.' To this it may be objected, that the idea

of man *possessing a spirit* is confusing: a man *is* a spirit, and the spirit *possesses* a body, for present earthly relations.

It may therefore be firmly asserted that continuity of existence is the prerogative of no merely animal being. The future state of even domestic creatures is only a poetical dream, an imaginative sentiment. Immortality belongs to beings who are not 'of the earth earthy.'

The 'Hell' for Wicked Nations.

PSALM ix. 17: 'The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.'

Difficulty.—*Hell is properly conceived as the place of final punishment for individual sinners, not as the place of judgment for nations, on account of national sins.*

Explanation.—'Hell' in the Old Testament is not the 'Hell' which finds a place in Christian doctrine. 'Sheol,' in the Old Testament, and 'Hades,' in the New Testament, are terms that mean 'the abode of disembodied spirits.' No doubt there were various notions entertained concerning the occupations and interests of such spirits; but, so far as Bible references go, we can trace little more than the general idea of continuance of existence. It may, perhaps, suffice that we see, in the above passage, a vigorous poetical figure, of which the prosaic meaning is, that the wicked should be exposed to sudden death, and the national existence of those who 'forget God' should come to an end that may be represented by the death of the individual. National 'death' is the extinction of corporate, national life. The Jewish nation died, or, we may say, was 'turned into hell,' when Jerusalem was taken by the Romans, and the national organization finally broken up.

Our Lord used this figure in His denunciation of the cities of Galilee that had rejected Him: 'And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted into heaven, shalt be brought down to hell.' This was fulfilled in the destruction of the city *as a city*. The very site of it is now uncertain, so completely has it *died*.

Another rendering of Ps. ix. 17 is, 'The wicked must return to the Underworld (Sheol).' The 'Prayer-book Version' gives 'people' instead of 'nations.' *Dean Perowne* renders: 'The wicked must return to the unseen world, (even) all the nations that forget God.' And his note on the passage is satisfactory. 'The Biblical idea is that of returning to the dust, taken from the original passage in Gen. iii. 19. Compare Job xxx. 23, of a return to Sheol (*i.e.*, Hades, the unseen world), as here, and in Ps. xc. 3, "Thou makest man return

to destruction," expressions only to be explained by the dimness which then hung over the grave, and the life beyond it. The meaning is, that even now, before the eyes of men, God's righteousness shall be seen in cutting off the wicked by a sudden and premature end, and helping and exalting the righteous.' Comp. Ps. lxxiii. 17-19.

Dr. Alfred Barry says the expression means 'shall pass away in death to the unknown spiritual world, just as the body shall return to the dust. The idea is not the punishment of evil, but of its unsubstantiality, and transitoriness.'

The Christian idea of hell assumes that men are no longer in any corporate relations, but God can deal with them strictly as individuals. There are no *families* in hell, no *societies* in hell, no *classes* in hell, no *nations* in hell. An old divine was accustomed to say: 'God deals with nations only in this life, but He deals with individuals both in this life and the next.'

The Hebrew notions respecting Sheol were of the most vague description. Speaking generally, it may be said that they regarded the grave as the final end of all sentient and intelligent existence, 'the land where all things are forgotten'—a state of final oblivion; and this, as conceived for the wicked, seems to imply that the idea of continuity of life after death was hoped for, as the reward of the good.

Did God Command Sacrifices?

JEREMIAH vii. 22: 'For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices.'

Difficulty.—*It is not easy to reconcile this statement with the commission of Moses.*

Explanation.—The difficulty is removed when the precise point of the text is recognised. The word 'concerning' should be rendered 'with a view to the matter of sacrifices.' That is, they were not the end contemplated. They were but means for securing a higher end; and therefore those were altogether mistaken and wrong who limited their view to the formal sacrifice. It is a leading characteristic of prophetic teaching, that the merely formal ritual is undervalued, and the moral claim of God on love, obedience, and service is vigorously insisted on; as may be illustrated by Isaiah i., and even by Psalm l.

The first promulgation of the law, the basis of the covenant with Israel, contemplated a spiritual, ethical religion, of which the basis was found in the ten great words, or commandments, of Exodus xx.

The ritual in connection with sacrifice was prescribed partly as a concession to the feeling which showed itself, in its evil form, in the worship of the golden calf, partly as an education.

Lowth says: 'It is a way of speaking usual in Scripture, to express the preference that is due to one thing above another, in terms which express the rejection of that which is less worthy; and thus I conceive we are to understand the text here, in correspondence with the parallel place of Hosea (vi. 6), "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." The words in both places implying that God always laid a greater stress upon sincere obedience than on external observances, and designed the latter, as so many mounds and fences, to guard and preserve the former. But several of the fathers infer from this text that God never gave any command to the Jews about sacrifices, till after they had defiled themselves with idolatry, by offering sacrifices to the golden calf.' (So Justin Martyr and Irenæus.)

The point of the verse is given in *Henderson's* paraphrase: 'Ritual observances were regarded by God as matters of secondary importance, which, when substituted for the moral duties required by the law, and especially the first and great commandment, supreme love to Himself as the source and pattern of all excellence, He could not but treat with merited reprobation.'

Henderson remarks suggestively, that it is not infrequent in the Scriptures for a thing to be stated absolutely, which is true only relatively. Absolutely God did command sacrifices, but not such as they offered, nor as of final obligation. The moral law was promulgated *first*, and is therefore of primary importance; the ceremonial law was given only afterwards, as a temporary aid to the keeping of the primary law.

'The Blood is the Atonement.'

LEVITICUS xvii. 11: 'For the life of flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.'

Difficulty.—*It does not seem quite clear whether the 'blood,' or the 'life' which the blood represents, is the true atonement.*

Explanation.—What is clear is that the 'life' is regarded as the spiritual reality, and the 'blood' as the earthly sign or expression of it. If then the atonement is conceived of only as an outward and material adjustment of broken *earthly* relations, it may well be that the 'blood' is the 'atonement.' But if the atonement is conceived of as a spiritual adjustment of broken *spiritual* relations, then it must

be the 'life' that is the true atonement. 'Shedding of blood' can but be the figure. 'Yielding the life' must be the reality. Probably the failure to recognise this distinction between the spiritual reality and the earthly picture or figure of it, is the chief cause of the difficulty felt in apprehending the nature of our Lord's atonement. To this point attention may be further directed.

The two facts, the blood-shedding of Judaism and the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus, are presented to us as answering the one to the other, as do the type and the antitype. Those Jewish sacrifices were 'a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices for sin.' 'The *patterns* of things in the heavens (*i.e.*, spiritual things) were purified with these (*i.e.*, with the *blood* of animals, of bulls and goats); but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these' (*i.e.*, with the 'life,' the will, the surrender, the sacrifice, of a spiritual being). The Scriptures very carefully teach us that the *reality* could not be found in the Jewish sacrifices. They were only the picture of the reality. The spiritual reality might indeed, even in those days, be reached by the faith of the pious worshipper, who could look through his sacrifice, and believe that, in some spiritual mode, of which it was the type, God would accomplish human redemption. It was not possible that such sacrifices could atone for *sin*. 'They could not make him that did the service perfect *as pertaining* to the conscience.' It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away *sin*. The old service was 'a shadow of good things to come.'

From the picture painted by God for the Jews; by this shadow, flung on earth in Jewish days from the coming spiritual sacrifice of Christ; from the atonements of the 'blood,' we may learn the spiritual mystery of the atonement of the 'life.' Under the Old Testament economy, there was a figure, and an underlying reality. In the New Testament sacrifice there is a corresponding outward figure and underlying spiritual reality. If that sacrifice of the Lord Jesus had been *only* a spiritual sacrifice, if it had found no expression in bodily sufferings and a violent death—if no blood had been shed—we men, so enslaved by the senses, could never have grasped it, or apprehended it. Christ's bodily sufferings and blood-shedding are not, in themselves, His great sacrifice, they are the form it took for bodily eyes to see; the body it wore for this mortal sphere; the temple within which the real sacrifice of an obedient will was offered. The 'blood' represented the 'life.'

Angel-Charge.

PSALM xci. 11: 'For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.'

Question.—*Will such a passage support the generally received notions concerning guardian angels?*

Answer.—Poetry loves to personify. When the poet would set before us the care of the Divine Providence, it takes form, for him, as the watching and tending of angelic beings. Whatever other reasons we may find for believing in the existence of ministering angels, such a belief cannot properly be based on the figurative expressions of a poet. The figure is probably taken from the customs of an earthly sovereign, who is not supposed to do anything himself, anything directly, but everything through agents, the ministers, the officials, the servants of his court. The idea is transferred to God, who is conceived as declaring His good pleasure, and trusting its execution to the attendants on His court, the angels, the ministering spirits. But such a material conception of God's surroundings and relations, however helpful to us, must be regarded as accommodation to our capacity, and not as literal statement of fact. The abstract-minded man can grasp the idea of providential care; the concrete-minded man needs the help of poetical representations of angel-guards.

The *Speaker's Commentary* thinks that the words neither assert nor deny the appointment of specific guardian angels to individuals.

Ellicott's Commentary says: 'The idea of a special guardian angel for each individual has possibly been favoured by this verse, though it had its origin in heathen belief.' *Menander* has the following verse:

> 'By every man, as he is born, there stands
> A spirit good, a holy guide of life.'

'Here, however, it is not one particular individual, but all who have fulfilled the conditions of verses 9 and 10, who are the objects of angelic charge.'

Perowne thinks the 'angels' here are not 'guardian angels, but God's ministers in the government of the world.'

Ayre says: 'Some have chosen to doubt whether there be indeed such an order of intelligences (as angels), and whether the passages of Scripture which seem to describe them are not examples of Jewish figurative speech; just as the fancy of heathen nations personified powers and qualities, even dedicating temples to imaginary beings, as Fortune, etc. To this it may be replied that, as the Deity has not

peopled our world with one class of creatures only, so it is not unreasonable to believe that in His vast dominions there are other orders, of a nature different from ours, but intelligent, and capable of doing Him, their Creator, active service. And there is proof positive of this in Scripture.'

Rev. John Farrar, in his 'Biblical and Theological Dictionary,' says: 'As to each individual being under the care of a guardian angel, the Scriptures do not support the notion. Ps. xxxiv. 7; Matt. xviii. 10, are generally referred to as proof of this opinion; but they have certainly no such meaning. Many of the Christian fathers held that there are two angels, one good and the other bad, attendant on each individual. The heathens held it in a modified form; the Greeks had their tutelary *demon*, and the Latins their *genius*.'

The Institution of the Seventh Day Rest.

GENESIS ii. 2, 3: 'And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had made: and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it: because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made.'

Question.—*How may the idea of 'resting' be applied to God? And how can God's resting be a type, or model, of our mode of keeping the Sabbath?*

Answer.—It should be borne in mind that Moses presents this record as a basis on which to demand a seventh day resting from the ordinary labour of life. We may therefore see that *man's resting* is taken and applied to God, rather than that the inconceivable thing, *God's resting*, is taken and applied to man. Resting can only be applied to God in a figurative sense. He is the eternally active One; but He may be thought of as completing one portion of His work, finishing the fitting up of earth for the abode of man, and setting man upon it, and then 'ceasing from' His labours.

Lange remarks: 'It seems to us that the rest of God does not denote a remaining inactive merely, or a doing nothing. The perfecting of the work on the seventh is likewise something positive, namely, that God celebrated His work (kept a holy day of solemn triumph over it), and blessed the Sabbath. To *celebrate*, to *bless*, to *consecrate*, is the finishing Sabbath-work—a living, active, priestly doing, and not merely a laying aside of action. The doing of God in respect to the completed creation is of a festive kind (solemn, stately, holy), a directing of motion, and of an unfolding of things now governed by law, in contrast with that work of God which was

reflected in the pressure of a stormy development, and in the great revolutions and epochs of the earth's formation.'

St. Augustine says: 'God rested—not as if He were wearied. No, the "Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary," but He saw what He had made was good, and contemplated His own works, and rejoiced in them; and thus commended to us the state of contemplation as higher than that of labour, and as a state to be attained by labour.'

God put aside His relation to material things as their Creator, and occupied Himself in the world of spirit; and that was His resting. Our putting aside our relation to common life-work, and occupation of thought and heart with spirit-things, unseen and eternal things, would be our imitation of the Divine example.

Bishop Harold Browne says: 'The simple meaning of the text is therefore by far the most probable, viz., that God, having divided His own great work into six portions, assigned a special sacredness to the seventh, on which that work became complete, and that, having called man into being, He ordained him for labour, but yet in love and mercy appointed that one-seventh of his time should be given to rest, and to the religious service of his Maker.'

It should be observed that man's nightly rest, and his Sabbath rest, materially differ. The nightly rest is compulsory, and belongs to man as one of the animals. The Sabbath rest is voluntary; it belongs to man as a moral being; and becomes an agency for the expression and the culture of his moral nature. The morally educational purpose of the Sabbath does not appear to have been sufficiently considered.

The Holy Spirit of the Old and the New Testaments.

PSALM li. 11, 12: 'Take not thy holy spirit from me.' 'Uphold me with thy free spirit.'

Question.—*What is the essential oneness, and the apparent diversity, of the representations made in the two Testaments concerning the Holy Spirit?*

Answer.—It is quite certain that a worthy reception of God must include the idea that He always has been able to, and that He always has, wrought in the minds and hearts of His creatures, His Spirit witnessing with their spirit. We gain some light on an abstruse subject if we give up attempting to understand the absolute Being of God, and fix our attention on the revelations which He has been pleased to make of Himself to us. Then we may gain a view

of the Divine Trinity, which, if it is not doctrinally sufficient, is certainly practically helpful. The question we should ask is not What is God? but How is God related to me? And what apprehensions of His relations can I gain? Answering these questions is within the range of possibility. We find that we are able to *think* of God as distinct from all His works. We find that we can *see* God, or apprehend Him with our senses, if He is pleased to show Himself in the sense-sphere. And we find that we can recognise His working in the inner, unseen realms of our *thought* and of our *feeling*.

Then whenever we think God, as distinct from His creation, we are realizing the first person of the Sacred Trinity. Whenever we apprehend God by our senses, we realize the second person of the Trinity. And whenever we apprehend God in our feeling, we realize the third person of the Trinity.

God in our thought and feeling is God the Spirit, or God realized by us in His spiritual operations. And He must have been known through this relation from the earliest ages, for in connection with the sinners before the Flood, He is represented as saying, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with men.'

The Holy Ghost of the New Testament is the same Divine presence realized in a spiritual manner, which is common to all ages. The difference is simply made by the agency used in the Divine operations. In Old Testament times God wrought in men's hearts by a variety of agencies; anything and everything man thought about, or man felt, could be, and was, used by God the Spirit to work out His ends of grace. In the New Testament, God the Spirit uses as His special agency, the life, and words, and works of Jesus Christ. He 'takes of the things of Christ, and reveals them unto us.' The Holy Ghost—if we keep that term as distinctive—is God, working in the souls of men, and using, as His special and peculiar agency, His manifestation of Himself to the senses of men, as the *Son*, whom they could see, and hear, and touch.

It will, however, be recognised by careful students that the terms Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost, are used interchangeably in the New Testament, the term Holy Ghost being found before the Day of Pentecost, which is regarded as His formal coming. There is no essential difference between the Divine relation to men before and after the coming of Christ into the world. The difference lies in the addition of a new agency which God the Spirit may use. The Spirit works now as He has always worked, but He has new motive powers, new considerations, a new agency, in having the earthly manifestation of Christ.

But the passages placed at the head of this paragraph remind us that the references made in the Old Testament to the 'Spirit' need to be treated with care, and with an open mind. The writer of this Psalm—and we may safely take it to have been David—had no 'doctrine of the Holy Spirit; no idea of those distinctions in the Divine Being which are so familiar to us.' We require to be very careful, therefore, in putting our ideas into his mind, and reading our doctrinal ideas into his writings.

The 'Holy Spirit' of verse 11, and the 'free spirit' of verse 12, are not the third person of the Trinity, but the spirit of purity, as contrasted with the spirit of sensuality; and the spirit of liberty, as contrasted with the bondage to evil which had enslaved and degraded the Psalmist.

Dean Perowne says: 'We need not hesitate to admit that such a prayer in the lips of David could not mean all that it means now to a Christian. David could hardly have understood by the Holy Spirit a Divine Person, nor could he have been made partaker of the Spirit in the same sense that Christians are; for not until Jesus was glorified was the Spirit given in all His light and power, in all His quickening and sanctifying grace.' 'The expression "free spirit," or "willing spirit," like the "steadfast spirit" of verse 10, refers *immediately* to the spirit of man, but to that spirit as influenced and guided by the Spirit of God.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* suggests that by the 'Holy Spirit' is meant 'the spirit whereby David was consecrated to his kingly office, and endued with the gifts and graces requisite for discharging its duties. See 1 Sam. xvi. 13, where it is said that after he was anointed by Samuel, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." The Psalmist must also have remembered that at the same time the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and have felt that he had incurred the most imminent danger of a similar abandonment.'

A. S. Aglen says: 'Plainly, as the parallelism shows, the petition is equivalent to a prayer against rejection from the Divine favour, and is not to be pressed into any doctrinal discussion.'

Jennings and *Lowe* say: 'If the Psalm be interpreted as written in the name of David, this term may mean merely that spirit of office which came upon David after he was anointed king. But it is equally admissible to take "Holy Spirit" to mean (as in Isai. lxiii. 16) the Spirit of grace, *i.e.*, the Divine Nature as manifesting itself in influencing the moral nature of man.'

Dr. A. Barry writes in his 'Notes to the Prayer-book Version':

'Verses 9-12 describe the renewal, there hopefully prayed for, with singular vividness, in phrases rising to a glorious climax—from "cleanness of heart" to "rightness" (properly "constancy") of the renewed soul; then to consciousness of a Divine "spirit of holiness" still within us, and through it a royal "freedom of spirit" (the "princely heart of innocence"), defying the bondage both of sin and of fear.'

An Egyptian Appeal to God.

2 CHRONICLES xxxv. 21: 'But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I came not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste; forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.'

Question.—*Could the Egyptian King have been sincere in this reference to God; or must we only think that he used a persuasion which would be effective with Josiah?*

Answer.—There is no necessity for our assuming that Pharaoh spoke of Josiah's God, of Jehovah, the national God of Israel. The term *God* is one which any heathen might use of the deity he worshipped. Pharaoh was doubtless referring to *his own God*, the Egyptian God; and by his strong expression meant to convince Josiah that he was acting under special Divine direction. This would, however, be no effective persuasion to Josiah, who could not recognise the God of Pharaoh, and had persuaded himself that Jehovah, the only true God, willed the expedition which Pharaoh deprecated. Each man was true to his own deity, and Pharaoh had no intention of acknowledging the superiority of the Jehovah of Josiah. Confusion arises from our associating the term God—especially as printed with a capital G—with Jehovah only.

Careful commentators do, however, take the view that Pharaoh spoke from Josiah's standpoint, and claims the special direction of Josiah's God; and certainly, if this view can be maintained, it brings out more forcibly the self-willedness of Josiah. Thus *Bishop Wordsworth* says: 'The sacred writer does not hesitate to describe the words of Pharaoh-Necho as from the mouth of God.' *Jamieson* says: 'Commentators are not agreed whether it was really a Divine commission given him through Jeremiah, or whether he merely used the name of God as an authority that Josiah would not refuse to obey.'

Dr. Geikie thinks that Pharaoh uses the general name for God, without the article to refer it to the God of Judah, and expresses only his conviction that his enterprise is favoured by heaven, which is on his side—a belief any heathen might entertain.

Canon Rawlinson writes: 'These are remarkable words in the

mouth of a heathen; but they are not without parallel in the remains of ancient Egypt that have come down to us. Piankhi, for instance, King of Egypt about B.C. 750, says in an inscription which has been translated by the Rev. Canon Cook: "Didst thou not know that the Divine shade was over me? I have not acted without His knowledge; He commanded my acts." It would seem, therefore, that the Egyptian kings, in a certain sense, acknowledged a single supreme God, and considered their actions to be inspired by Him. Thus the explanations that Necho referred to a prophecy of Jeremiah, which he had heard, and used the word "Elohim" as the proper word for the God of the Jews, or that he alluded to some oracle which he had received—perhaps one from Branchidæ (see "Herod.," ii. 158)—are unnecessary. He merely expressed himself as Egyptian kings were in the habit of doing.'

God Creating Evil.

ISAIAH xlv. 7: 'I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.'

Difficulty.—*Some special meaning must attach to the word 'evil' if God can be said to 'create' it.*

Explanation.—It should be noticed that the term 'evil' here is contrasted with 'peace,' not with 'good'; and that the other contrast put with it is between 'light' and 'darkness.' It appears, therefore, that distressing circumstances, rather than moral evil, are referred to. And if that view may be taken the passage is relieved of its chief difficulty; for it is easy to understand that God may use, as agencies for effecting His moral purposes, things which man may call calamitous and distressing. It is a common-place of Christian sentiment that our afflictions and chastisements—the dark side as well as light side of life—are from the Lord.

Hewlett says: 'Among the pernicious doctrines which the advocates of idolatry taught, and which greatly prevailed in the days of Isaiah, was the doctrine "that light and darkness were the palpable forms of moral good and evil; that these were now in a state of perpetual antagonism; and that these were the causes of all human enjoyments and human woes." To show the absurdity of this doctrine, Jehovah exerts his creative and controlling power over the elements of light and darkness, and over all the joyous and all the *woeful events* that happen to men. The words "peace" and "evil" are to be understood as synonyms for "prosperity" and "calamity." But as the difficulty or apparent contradiction arises from the latter phrase, "I create evil,'

it is explained by its use in other portions of God's word, where his control of *all* events is asserted; and the word here translated "evil" is evidently used to express *calamity*, and not moral evil.'

Moral evil is not, in a philosophical sense, a positive thing, and so not a thing that can be said to be 'created.' Evil is failure from duty, or disobedience to command. It is a state of mind and feeling, a condition of the will, and so not at all the subject of creative power. It might be said that God created beings with the possibility of doing good or evil. But there seems little sense in saying that God *creates* either good or evil, which are states of mind and will, and not tangible and visible things belonging to the sphere of material creation.

'Saadias, followed by Vitringa, Lowth, J. D. Michaelis, Henderson, and Umbreit, supposes an allusion to the dualism or doctrine of two co-eternal principles as held by the ancient Persians. Gesenius objects that the terms are too indefinite, and their general sense too obvious, to admit of this specific application.

Cheyne paraphrases the passage thus: 'The alternation of day and night is Jehovah's ordinance; so also is the alternation of light and darkness in providence, of peace and war, of success and misfortune, of good and evil.' Referring to the idea of Saadias given above, he adds: 'If, however, dualism is referred to at all (which I doubt, the language of the prophet being so general), it is rather the primitive dualism of the Babylonian religion. As for the Persian religion, the inscriptions of the Achæmenidæ (*e.g.*, that of Darius at Nakshi Rustam) are as guiltless of dualism as the prophet himself. But the form of the prophecy is rather chosen with regard to its application to Israel. The "light" and the "welfare" are that happy state to which Israel was to be restored through (but not *by*) Cyrus; the "darkness" and the "calamity" were the misery and woe of the exile.' *Cheyne* translates the sentence, 'that form light and create darkness, that make welfare and create calamity.'

Canon Rawlinson says: 'Moral evil is certainly not "created" by God in the same direct way as physical evil. He has not necessitated it by the arrangements of His universe. He has but *allowed* it to come into existence. And this He seems to have done in consequence of a necessity in the nature of things. Either He must have limited His creation to objects that moved mechanically and were incapable of moral action, or, by creating moral agents, have allowed the possibility of moral evil coming into being. A free agent must be free to do right or to do wrong; if he is not free to do wrong, he is really not free when he does right. And when millions

of free agents were created, each with a power of doing wrong, that some of them would choose to do wrong was to be expected, and was of course foreseen by the Creator. From the fact that, though thus foreseeing the introduction of sin into His universe, God nevertheless determined to create moral beings, we may gather that it is better in God's sight, and therefore better absolutely, that the two classes of good and bad moral beings should co-exist, than that there should be no moral beings at all. Further, moral evil is certainly, like physical evil, a great means of developing higher forms of moral goodness. The virtue that resists contact with vice, the influence of bad example, the seductions of those who make all possible efforts to corrupt, is of a higher form than that untried virtue which has passed through no such ordeal.'

The writer of a homily in the 'Pulpit Commentary' has the following passage: 'It is an unworthy forcing of Scripture to set this passage in relation to the insoluble difficulty of the origin of moral evil. Two things are often confounded—evil as an unpleasant state of our circumstances, and evil as a wrong condition of our will. The latter is referable to God only in the sense that He gave to man a moral nature, and a capacity of choice. The former view of evil is that alluded to in the passage now before us. Perhaps Isaiah deals here with evil and good as they are regarded by *man*, not as they are estimated by *God*. The "good" here is that which is pleasant; the "evil" is that which is painful; and the assertion is, that both the pleasant and the painful are within the Divine controlling, and are forces used by God to secure certain high moral ends.'

Dean Plumptre says: 'The words have no bearing on the insoluble problem of what we call the origin of evil. "Evil," as opposed to "peace" or prosperity, is suffering, but not sin, normally, in the Divine counsels, at once the consequence and corrective of moral evil.' (Compare chap. xlvii. 11; lvii. 1.)

The Angels of the Book of Daniel.

DANIEL ix. 21: 'Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.'

Difficulty.—*In a book of this character we can hardly tell what is to be taken as vision and what as fact.*

Explanation.—It is safer to regard the prophecies as wholly belonging to the sphere of mental visions. No argument can wisely be drawn from the fact that persons in inspired and ecstatic moods *saw things*, to prove that the things *actually existed* which

they saw. The vision may have been but a material setting, a pictorial personifying of moral truth which could best be apprehended by the help of such forms. That a prophet saw angel-forms must not be forced to prove that therefore there are angel-forms. It should also be observed that the *machinery* of a prophetic vision must always be relative to the knowledge and sentiment of the age in which it is given, and consequently much importance attaches to the date assigned to this Book of Daniel. It may belong to a time when the notion of angel-aid was a common sentiment, amounting almost to a prevailing superstition, and then we can account for the angel-forms that appear in the book.

In this paragraph no attempt is made to discuss the general Scripture teaching concerning angels; the sphere of interest is strictly limited to the angel manifestations of this particular book.

From a very full 'excursus' on the 'angelology' of this book, given in the *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. vi., p. 348, some extracts may be given: 'The angelology, it is said, points to a time when Judaism had replaced Hebraism, and to sources decidedly Persian. Peculiar names are given to the angels, separate countries are put under their protection, and these "definite distinctions did not appear among the Israelites before the Persian period, when they came in contact with the adherents of Magianism."

'The antiquity of the belief in angels is not now disputed. The foundation of the doctrine is recognised as laid in times far anterior to the captivity of Babylon. The Hebrews had, from the earliest ages, been taught, and accustomed themselves to believe, in beings of a nature superior to man, messengers of the Most High, executors of His orders. Moses, it is true, gave no precise idea of their nature, nor of the rank they occupied in creation. It is not till later that a definiteness and precision are attained, unrecorded—though not perhaps unrecognised—by the legislator of Israel. In this development the Prophet Daniel stands conspicuous. In his pages may be discerned the rudiments of the angelological conceptions so extensively permeating the writings of later Judaism. To him may be traced a more distinct expression of the attributes of the heavenly messengers. They are no longer agents of the Deity generally, but are classed categorically. Each has his special department, each his special functions. The chiefs—those whose part is the most active—are designated by names. The Books of Tobit and the Fourth of Esdras carried these conceptions further. They developed angelology into a system, and the heavenly host became in their hands an organized militia. . . .

'A few words will sum up the angelological teaching of the Book of Daniel. Personal appellations are there first assigned to the "ministering spirits" of the Hebrew Church. Two, named by him Gabriel and Michael, are represented as among the chiefs of the celestial hierarchy and agents of God on behalf of man. They appear as guardians of nations. They espouse the cause of the people entrusted to them, and fight their battles. Daniel sees also in his vision "the watchers and holy ones come down from heaven"; the judgment passed upon Nebuchadnezzar is a "matter by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones" (iv. 13, 17, 23). In this can Daniel be, as regards the doctrine of the "watchers," a mere borrower from the Amshashpands of the "Zend-Avesta," and, as regards the doctrine of guardian angels, only the echo of a popular opinion? It is stipulated by criticism that the external features of Daniel's angelology must have been due to the times and scenes in which the writer actually lived, or pretended to have lived. There is ample proof that the Chaldæan mythology, and the Mazdeism of the age of the Captivity, could have supplied every distinctive feature of Daniel's framework. . . . But there are indications throughout Daniel's work of independence of origin and treatment, proving, when regarded collectively, the marked distinction recognised by the writer himself between the creed of the Hebrew and the Persian.'

It is singular that there should be such marked difference in the early Bible representations of angels and their missions. In Genesis we find angels interested in the family life and movements of the patriarchs. Later on, they are chiefly associated with the period of the Judges, when special Divine interventions were needed. When the prophetic office was established, angel help ceased, save so far as it was needed by the prophets themselves. 'During the prophetic and kingly period, angels are spoken of only as ministers of God in the operations of Nature. But in the Captivity, when the Jews were in the presence of foreign nations, each claiming its tutelary deity, then to the prophets Daniel and Zechariah angels are revealed in a fresh light as watching, not over Jerusalem only, but also over heathen kingdoms, under the Providence, and to work out the designs of, the Lord.'

God's Mercy is His Just Dealing.

PSALM lxii. 12: 'Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.'

Difficulty.—*This is not the usually accepted idea of 'mercy,' which is rather conceived as a dealing with men in ways that are not strictly right.*

Explanation.—The '*Prayer-book Version*' is as follows: 'God spake once, and twice I have also heard the same: that power belongeth unto God; and that Thou, Lord, art merciful: for Thou rewardest every man according to his work.'

It is easily seen that to deal with a man *unjustly* is not to deal with him mercifully. But it is not so readily apprehended that to deal with a man *justly* is really to deal with him mercifully. But when the union of justice and mercy are spoken of in relation to God, a special idea is brought in. God has personal interest in each one of us; He is concerned to secure our highest, our spiritual, interests; and so there is a *tone* on all the displays of His power in relation to us, a graciousness in all His just and right dealings with us. It is the apprehension of that *tone* which enables the good man to see God's 'doing right by him' as the truest 'mercy' towards him.

Mercy as a merely weak yielding to present pleasure; mercy that has in it no righteousness, no steadfastness to that which is just, is but a caricature of mercy. It may be favouritism, it may be moral weakness, it cannot be associated with God.

Delitzsch has a good note: 'Two great truths are divinely attested to the poet. (1) That God has the power over everything earthly, that consequently nothing takes place without Him, and that whatever is opposed to Him must sooner or latter succumb. (2) That of this very God, the Sovereign Lord, is mercy also, the energy of which is measured by His omnipotence, and which does not suffer him to succumb upon whom it is bestowed. . . . It shall be recompensed unto every man according to his conduct, which is the issue of his relationship to God. He who rises in opposition to the will and order of God, shall feel God's power as a power of punishment that dashes in pieces; and he who, anxious for salvation, resigns his own will to the will of God, receives from God's mercy or lovingkindness, as from an overflowing fulness, the promised reward ot faithfulness, his resignation becomes experience, and his hoping attainment.'

Dean Perowne says: 'And this is the substance of God's revelation, that He is both a God of power and a God of love. If we need

strength, let us find it not in man, who is but as a fleeting vapour, but in God, who is Almighty. If we covet a reward, let us seek it not in robbery or in riches, but from the loving hand of Him who rewardeth every man according to his work. This is the only truly worthy representation of God. Power without Love is brutality, and Love without Power is weakness. Power is the strong foundation of Love, and Love is the beauty and the crown of Power.'

Mercy is equity. It can never be that God can show any mercy that reveals His indifference to those eternal principles of righteousness which He has Himself established. 'A God all mercy were a God unkind.'

Early Conceptions of Death.

JOB x. 21, 22: 'Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death; a land of thick darkness, as darkness itself; a land of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.'

Question.—*Is this gloomy view to be taken as representing the common ideas of Job's days, or may we think it is only the depressed view taken by a sick and suffering man?*

Answer.—The miserable, painful, depressed condition of Job is to be taken into account, but it must be admitted that he does only speak of death as all the Old Testament writers do. Take away the poetical form, and you have the dreary, hopeless sentiment which was common to the age of Solomon, and finds expression in the prayer of Hezekiah. Death was conceived of as an irremediable woe; severance from every human interest; and entrance upon an unknown region which was feared because it was so little understood.

The *Speaker's Commentary* has a full note on this passage. 'Job accumulates epithets to express the sense of utter blackness and desolation of the state which he deliberately prefers to life in misery—each word has its peculiar horror: "darkness," such as was on the face of the waters before light was; "shadow of death," a word originally meaning "deep shade," but modified in form and signification so as to express the blackness of death; then, returning to the same thought, and bringing out its full significance, "a land gloomy as blackness itself, the blackness of the shadow of death;" then the "without order," the return, as it were, to chaotic disorder, the *tohu* and *bohu* preceding creation; last of all, the darkness which, as it were, radiates a hideous mockery of sunlight, no mere privation of light, but an aggressive and active power opposed to the abodes

lighted by God's presence and favour. Here, again, we feel how important it was that the utter blankness of a death without sensation, followed by no awakening, should be realized, in order that the mind might, in its recoil, grasp the hope of immortality, and that the instinct should be developed, which pointed to it even in the minds of heathens. It is important to note that this view of the state after death is altogether Hebrew, or, to speak more accurately, Semitic; it has nothing in it derived from or connected with, the opinions current in Egypt, it is wholly divested of the superstitious invention, but it is also without the moonlight of hope, which cheered the heathen with a shadowy Elysium; it is simply the realization of utter emptiness, a result in which it was impossible that the mind could rest, and which prepared it for the full disclosure of a "lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter i. 3).'

Delitzsch sees in these exclamations signs of a depressed mind. 'As he thinks of his present condition, he sees that God from the very beginning designed to vent His wrath upon him, to mark his infirmities, and to deprive him of all joy in the consciousness of his innocence.'

While, then, we may say that Job's idea of death belongs to the sentiments of his age, the colour that he puts on his expressions, and their intensity, are but the reflection of his condition of mental and bodily distress.

The Direct Agency of Satan.

1 CHRONICLES xxi. 1: 'And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.' *Rev. Ver.*, in marg., 'an adversary.'

Difficulty.—*To recognise direct agency of Satan, in inciting men to wrong-doing, must relieve men of responsibility.*

Explanation.—If we were thinking of a man's enticing a fellow-man to some wrong-doing, we certainly should regard the responsibility of the wrong as shared between him who enticed, and him who acted. And yet, even in this case, the punishment properly comes on the doer of the wrong, up to the measure of his responsibility. We cannot alter the conditions of our moral trial. We are in the midst of temptations; we are susceptible to temptations. Moral goodness is to be won in the conflict with temptation; and it does not make any difference whether the temptations come from things, from other persons, or from spiritual agencies.

In relation to this particular instance of the 'Census,' several considerations must be borne in mind. The genius of the Hebrew led

him to see spiritual forces in and behind everything. To a Jew nothing was accounted for unless he could see God's relation to it. And a Jew could not grasp the idea of an *influence;* he personified it, and saw it as a person acting. Moreover, in this case we have two persons giving their explanation of the same incident, and both have this genius for seeing the spiritual force behind it; the writer of the account in Samuel sees *God* inciting David; the writer of the account in Chronicles sees *Satan* to be the inciter. And when we come out into the light of the Christian teaching, we find the Apostle James stating the facts as we can apprehend them, and saying, 'Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.'

The 'Revised Version,' in rendering 'adversary' for 'Satan,' suggests a very prosaic explanation of the incident. The historical fact may have been, that a flatterer belonging to the court suggested the idea to David, and so proved himself to be a mischief-maker, an adversary.

Kirkpatrick, writing on the passage 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, says: 'The nation had sinned, and incurred Jehovah's anger, and He instigated David to an act which brought down a sharp punishment on the nation. The statement that God incited David to do what was afterwards condemned and punished as a heinous sin cannot, of course, mean that He *compelled* David to sin, but that, in order to test and prove his character, He allowed the temptation to assault him. . . . The older record (that in Samuel) speaks only of God's permissive action: the latter tells us of the malicious instrumentality of Satan.'

It should be noticed that it is said 'Satan stood up against *Israel*'; and his evil purpose was wrought by 'provoking David.' The case is usually treated as relating to David only, and the penalty that fell on the nation is regarded as a way in which David was punished, through the humiliation and distress of his people. But it would seem to be more correct to assume some occasion of Divine wrath against the people; then the Divine dealing with David in relation to a special sin at once illustrates, and finds an open occasion for, the Divine judgment.

It is not possible to rest on this English translation of a word as 'Satan'—which really means 'a hostile force,' or 'an adversary'—any theories concerning the existence of a supreme evil spirit. Those theories must be based on safer grounds than this incident can possibly afford.

The Old Testament Term 'For Ever.'

ECCLESIASTES iii. 14: 'I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever.'

Question.—*Can a theological meaning be properly attached to this term?*

Answer.—Certainly not that meaning which doctrinal Christianity has associated with the terms 'eternal' and 'everlasting,' as applied to the future state of good or evil men. The Old Testament horizon is limited to human history: we may make inferences of a more extended kind, but we must carefully distinguish between our inferences and the original references.

This point needs our careful consideration. The term 'for ever' is an English term, with a distinctly modern connotation. It used to represent a Hebrew term, which also has a precise connotation. It may very well be that though 'for ever' is the best suggestion for translating the Hebrew word, the two connotations do not altogether agree. The Hebrew may not have meant by his word what we mean when we use the term 'for ever.'

And this appears to be the fact. The Hebrew idea is that which we express by the word 'permanently.' It implies stability, staying power. It will not be subject to ordinary forces of decay. The term is constantly applied to purely earthly things, which bear no relation at all to the time after death. The general meaning of the Old Testament term is 'a long period of time, the beginning or end of which is uncertain, or at least undefined: though sometimes the period is not of great length, as when it is applied to the lifetime of a slave,' Exod. xxi. 6, etc.

A few instances of its use in the Old Testament may be given: The promise of Canaan to Abraham was, 'To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever' (Gen. xiii. 15). Possession of a country by a particular race has nothing to do with the *after life*. Judah pleading with his father to trust Benjamin to his care, uses the expression, 'Let me bear the blame for ever' (Gen. xliii. 9). Judah could only bear the blame as long as he lived: and his word is only the same as our 'always.' It is threatened (Num. xxiv. 20) that 'Amalek shall perish for ever.' But a nation only *perishes* when its national organization is destroyed. It perishes *for ever* when that corporate national life is not restored. Joshua is said to have 'burnt Ai, and made it a heap for ever' (Josh. viii. 28), which can only mean that Ai was not again rebuilt. Solomon built the Temple, as 'a settled place for God to abide in for ever'; but it has passed away long since.

The leprosy was to cleave to Naaman and his seed 'for ever,' which must mean 'permanently.' David declares he 'will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever,' and he must mean 'continuously,' 'persistently.' The promise to faithful Jonadab is, 'he shall not want a man to stand before Me for ever,' which simply means, through the long coming generations.

The passages are so numerous that space cannot be given to the lengthened list; which, however, can be studied with the aid of a Concordance. How far the limited Old Testament meanings of the term are carried over into the New Testament, and qualify the promises and threatenings under the Gospel, is a consideration too theological, and too controversial, for present treatment.

The Fatherhood of God in the Old Testament.

ISAIAH lxiii. 16: 'Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.'

Question.—*Is this only a figure of speech? Has it any doctrinal value?*

Answer.—It is part of a highly poetical passage, from which we cannot reasonably gather dogmatic teachings. The poetical figures are suggestive of important truths, but the truths taught through poetry belong rather to sentiment than to doctrine: they are the truths we feel, rather than the truths we shape into sentences. The figurative character of the passage is shown by the expression, 'Though Abraham be ignorant of us.' This is a strange expression from a Jew, in reference to Jews; but it is a figure expressing intense feeling, and really means, 'though we are in exile, strangers to the Holy Land, and to the polity founded by our fathers.'

The first clause of the verse, 'Doubtless thou art our father,' must be treated as a poetical figure. Whatever may be said about the doctrine of the fatherhood of God, it must not be assumed that it was in the mind of this writer, or that it was a Jewish idea of God at all. The term 'father,' and the relation involved in 'fatherhood,' were not at all the same to the Jew as they are to us. The Jew gloried in power and majesty: great, sublime things moved him; and he was not affected, as we are, by moral relations, and the subtler interests of character. To him God was 'a great God, and a great King above all gods.' He would not feel the infinite attractiveness of God, as we feel it when we call Him, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'

In this passage now before us, the term 'father' really means, originator, founder: and the reference is to God's relation to the Jews as a race, not to His relation to individuals. Father was constantly used for the founder of a family; and in this sense the first patriarch is called 'Father Abraham.'

In Isaiah lxiv. 8 we find the expression, 'But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our potter; and we all are the work of Thy hand.' But here there is no more meaning than 'originator.' The prophet is only thinking of the sovereign right a father has over the child he begets. 'Thy hands have made us, and fashioned us, both as individuals and as a nation. Thou hast lavished Thy labour and Thy skill upon us.'

Cheyne has the following note: '"Our father." Not in the wide, spiritual sense of the New Testament, but as the founder and preserver of the Israelitish nation (see Deut. xxxii. 6), which henceforth (carrying out primitive legal conceptions) is under the *patria potestas.* This is the constant meaning of the title "Father" as applied to Jehovah; see, *e.g.*, Exod. iv. 22; Hos. xi. 1; Isa. i. 2; Jer. iii. 4, 19; xxxi. 9, 20; Mal. i. 6; ii. 10. The first example of the individualizing use of the term is in Sirach xxiii. 1-4, "O Lord, Father and Governor of my whole life. . . . O Lord, Father and God of my life."'

J. A. Alexander says: 'This does not mean our natural creator, but our founder, our national progenitor.'

The Spirits in Prison.

1 PETER iii. 19: 'By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison,' etc.

Difficulty.—*This is surely based on some tradition, since the Old Testament gives no hint of the final place and condition of the old-world sinners.*

Explanation.—It is important at the outset that we should clearly see the fact, that Scripture nowhere makes the smallest allusion to the after-state of the old-world sinners, who were destroyed by the Flood; nor does Scripture teach anything at all concerning the moral condition, or opportunities, of those who are disembodied. If this passage does refer to the old-world sinners, existing still in a disembodied state, it stands absolutely alone; it is an altogether unique passage. This fact alone would lead us to suspect that an explanation of a much simpler character may be found.

That simpler explanation may be submitted for consideration, but

the arguments for and against it, and the theories that find most general favour in relation to the topic, will be found fully given in *Dean Plumptre's* volume on 'The Spirits in Prison.'

Augustine, among the Fathers, Aquinas, among the Schoolmen, and Bishop Pearson, among the Anglican divines, approve of this simpler suggestion: 'It starts with denying that there is any reference at all to the descent into Hades. Christ, it says, went in spirit, not in the flesh—that is, before His Incarnation, and preached to the spirits who are now in prison under condemnation, or were then in the prison-house of selfishness and unbelief, or simply in that of the body. He preached in Noah's preaching, and that preaching was without effect, except for the souls of Noah and his household.'

Writing on this passage, *Archbishop Leighton* says: 'This place is somewhat obscure in itself, but, as it usually happens, made more so by the various fancies and contests of interpreters, aiming or pretending to clear it. These I like never to make a noise of. They who dream of the descent of Christ's soul into hell, think this place sounds somewhat that way; but, being examined, it proves no way suitable, nor can, by the strongest wrestling, be drawn to fit their purpose. For (1) that it was to preach He went thither, they are not willing to avow, though the end they assign is as groundless and imaginary as this is. (2) They would have His business to be with the spirits of the faithful deceased before His coming; but here we see it is with the disobedient. (3) His Spirit here is the same with the sense of the foregoing words, which mean not His soul, but His eternal Deity. (4) Nor is it "the spirits that were in prison," as they read it, but "the spirits in prison," which, by the opposition of their former condition, "sometime," or "formerly disobedient," doth clearly speak of their present condition, as the just consequence and fruit of their disobedience. Other misinterpretations I mention not, taking it as agreeable to the whole strain of the Apostle's words, that Jesus Christ did, before His appearing in the flesh, speak by His Spirit in His servants to those of the foregoing ages, yea, the most ancient of them, declaring to them the way of life, though rejected by the unbelief of the most part. This is interjected in the mentioning of Christ's sufferings and exaltation after them.'

Leighton gives, in a footnote, a later idea which he entertained. He thought the reference might be to the mission of the Spirit, and preaching of the Gospel, *after Christ's resurrection.*

It is not usually recognised that, in this reference to the days of Noah, St. Peter is not stating facts, but using an illustration. It is not his subject, in any sense, to explain where Christ went when He

died, whom He met, or what He did and said. Such a merely curious inquiry an Apostle would have resented. St. Peter could not conceivably have been intending to teach the mysteries of Christ's occupation during the time of His death, about which St. Peter clearly knew nothing. No trace of any information, given by Christ Himself on the matter, can be found.

It should also be observed that the illustration was suggested to St. Peter by the remark he had made, 'but quickened by the Spirit,' or, as in the Revised Version, 'quickened in the spirit.' At once St. Peter goes off on a new line. It is as if he had said: 'By the by, it was "in the spirit" that Christ had gone and preached to the old-world sinners. Then He used the agency of Noah; but the message was rejected, and but eight persons were saved.' Out of this St. Peter finds a pointed application to those to whom he wrote: 'Christ has suffered for you. Christ is risen for you. Christ is preached to you. We plead with you to be baptized in the name of Jesus. Yet it may be with you, as with the old-world sinners: but few, even of you, may be saved.'

What needs to be seen is, that the case of the old-world sinners of Noah's time, and their wilful rejection of the Gospel preached to them—which Gospel is thought of as 'Christ preaching to them'—is used as a solemn warning lest those who had Christ crucified and risen preached to them, should reject the grace, and perish as the old-world sinners did.

Satan Resisting the High Priest.

ZECHARIAH iii. 1: 'And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.' *Rev. Ver.* 'to be his adversary.'

Difficulty.—*The marginal renderings seem to prevent our associating this Satan with the chief evil spirit.*

Explanation.—The marginal reading is, 'An adversary standing at his right hand to be his adversary.' Some renderings give 'accuser.'

This is a vision, and as a vision may be compared with that in the opening chapter of the Book of Job. 'Joshua is seen in vision preparing to offer an expiatory sacrifice on behalf of the people in discharge of his duty as high priest. But an adversary intervenes, who, as usual in the case of an accuser, stands at the right hand of the accused, and urges that he has incurred a ceremonial impurity which unfits him for his office of expiation. This charge is not expressly

stated by the accuser, but may be inferred from the decision of the angel of Jehovah, who appears as an arbiter or judge.'

No idea of a chief evil spirit, such as we call Satan, could have been in the mind of Zechariah. Indeed, the notion is quite a later Christian one, and the Old Testament use of the term 'Satan' is efficiently illustrated by our Lord's calling Peter a 'Satan.' Anyone who hinders from good work is an 'adversary,' a 'Satan.'

The writer in *Ellicott's Commentary* says that Sanballat and his companion cannot be meant; it must be ὁ διάβολος, the adversary of mankind. 'A belief in a personal devil was current among the Jews from, at any rate, the time of the composition of the Book of Job to Talmudic times.'

There are but four places in the Old Testament in which 'Satan' is mentioned, and no one of these four can be applied to the Personal Devil of Christian doctrine. The passages 1 Chron. xxi. 1; Zech. iii. 1, 2; and Psalm cix. 6, clearly bear no proper name; the word found should, in each case, be translated 'an adversary'; and any adversary may be meant. The passages Job i. 6, 12; ii. 1, do not suggest the chief of the devils, but one of the divine ministrants, specially employed in arranging for the calamities and afflictions which are God's testings, God's discipline, for His people. And even in these cases the rendering 'the adversary' is given in the margin.

'The whole Scripture doctrine of Satan, both as gathered from the partial and occasional intimations of the Old Testament, and as developed in the full revelation of the New Testament, is virtually included in the history of the Fall. It is true that the complete unmasking of the Tempter, the authoritative identification of the Serpent with the Devil, waited for Gospel times.'—*Archdeacon Perowne.*

Phinehas' Atonement.

NUMBERS XXV. 11: 'Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.'

Question.—*Was it the act of Phinehas, or the spirit which inspired the act, which constituted the atonement?*

Answer.—This instance is best understood by taking along with it the two other instances of special atonement-making recorded in the Pentateuch. A suggestive sketch of the three cases is given in the *Weekly Pulpit*, vol. vi., p. 51. 'The Mosaic idea of the word "atonement" is very clearly defined. It always means "*to cover.*"

An "atonement" is exactly this, "*a sin-cover;*" it is something that covers sin over; puts it out of sight; removes it from consideration; puts something before God in its place.'

The story connected with the Golden Calf is very familiar. (See Exod. xxxii.). We are told that God's eye was upon the apostasy of the people, and His indignation was aroused, and His overwhelming judgments threatened to fall. The sin of the people was full in God's sight. 'And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people; now, therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them.'

Moses was moved to make atonement, to find some *sin-cover* to hide the transgression, and occupy the Divine mind. It must be some splendid vindication of the outraged honour of God: and it must be some most acceptable act of devotion and obedience, done in the name of the people. See, then, what Moses made into a 'sin-cover.' First he called those who were on Jehovah's side to him—after destroying the idol-figure in the most humiliating way he could devise—and said to the Levites who ranged themselves on his side, 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.' So Moses covered the apostasy with a solemn and awful vindication of the honour of Jehovah as a God of judgment. But that was not enough. He must present to God, on the people's behalf, his own absolute and entire devotion, and submission, and obedience. He must put *this* right in God's sight; intercede with Him to look upon it, and let it *cover over*, and hide from His view the sin of the people.

The second instance of special atonement is recorded in Numb. xvi. 46, 47. 'The great religious revolution, which had substituted the priesthood of Aaron, and the services of the Levites, for those of the fathers and elder sons of the community, had not been effected without opposition, and this came to a head, at last, in a movement which might easily have been perilous.' Korah, Dathan, and Abiram claimed priestly rights for themselves and for their families. The whole company of the disaffected gathered in the presence of Moses and Aaron, and said, 'You two take too much upon you, seeing that all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and Jehovah is among them.'

This sin and rebellion was in the full sight of Jehovah, as the

present King of the people. It called aloud for prompt and severe judgments. These judgments began. Moses did not interfere with them while they fell only on the ringleaders of the conspiracy; but when the Divinely-sent plague broke out in the *camp*, and the *people* were called to suffer for the sins of their leaders, then Moses hastened to provide a *sin-cover;* something to thrust in, as it were, between God and the sin, upon which He might look favourably, and so be turned from the fierceness of His anger. By his order Aaron took a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and ran into the midst of the people, and stood between the living and the dead, and sent the smoke of incense up to God, as the expression of entire devotion and obedience, and so he covered and made atonement for the people.

The third instance occurred toward the close of the wanderings, when the Israelites were in the neighbourhood of Moab. Unable to win the right to curse Israel—as Balaam wished, and as it would have paid him well to do—Balaam persuaded the king to allow free intercourse between his people and them. 'Let the Israelites fall into immorality and sin, and then their God will destroy them, and your end will be accomplished.' The scheme succeeded. The vice and iniquity of Israel was full in God's sight, and the immediate execution of the Divine judgment was commanded. Some great public act of vindication was called for; such a manifest upholding of the Divine authority and holiness as would make a 'sin-cover,' occupy the Divine attention, and hide from view the iniquities. And Phinehas was the man to do it. A flagrant case of unlawful intercourse had occurred, and when he saw the wicked couple, he 'rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand, and he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.' Phinehas was jealous for the honour of his God; his splendid act of vindication made a cover; 'he made an atonement for the children of Israel.'

But manifestly it was the loyalty and holy jealousy of the *spirit* of Phinehas, rather than the particular form of his vindication, which was acceptable to God. It was what the act expressed, rather than the act itself.

Eternal Life.

1 JOHN ii. 25: 'And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.'

Difficulty.—*This term 'eternal' may be regarded either as descriptive or as figurative.*

Explanation.—It is certainly safer to treat it as figurative. Mere continuance is not the manifestly most desirable thing; and all time measures are unsuitable to the after-life, time being strictly one of the present earthly conditions of thought.

As a figure, the term 'eternal' represents what we mean by 'spiritual;' or perhaps it would be more precise to say that it stands for 'the highest conceivable,' 'the best that is attainable.' When applied to 'life,' it suggests full, unhindered life in God, life unto God. From the point of view of the tripartite division of human nature into body, animal soul, and spirit, what is meant by 'eternal life' can readily be apprehended. It is the Divine quickening, and consequently the holy activity, of the 'spirit' which man really *is*.

Much has been missed by the confounding of the 'eternal life' with the 'after-life.' It may be found in the after-spheres, but it may also be found in the present earthly spheres. A man may have the eternal life *now*. As soon as this is clearly seen, the figurative character of the word comes to view, and the impossibility of its being strictly descriptive is recognised.

There are many passages in which the 'time' figure is felt to be unsuitable; in them *quality* is prominent, and not mere physical length. As instances see Deut. xxxiii. 27: 'The eternal God is thy refuge,' which is evidently meant to suggest high and inspiring estimates of God, as the infinitely trustworthy one. Isa. lx. 15: the prophet is speaking in the name of God to Israel as a nation, and he says, 'I will make of thee an eternal excellency.' Continuity of existence cannot be predicated of any *nation*. A supreme excellency is evidently meant. St. Paul, in Rom. i. 20, refers to God's 'eternal power,' and would impress on us the supreme character of that power. And in 2 Cor. iv. 17 he writes of an 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Save as a figurative expression, 'an eternal weight' has no intelligible meaning.

The following suggestion has been made, and it certainly deserves a serious and unprejudiced consideration. One of our common notes of value is the length of time that a thing will last. Ephemeral things are regarded as worthless, enduring things are estimated as valuable.

The nettle is worthless, the oak is valuable. The gnat of a summer's evening is worthless, the elephant of a century is valuable. The coal that burns through in an hour is comparatively worthless, the diamond that outlasts all the generations is valuable.

God, then, would impress on us the very highest conceivable value, as attaching to His gift to us in Christ Jesus. So He meets us on our own level, fits His figure to our usual thoughts and estimates, bids us think what must be the value of a thing which can not only outlast all generations but even outlast all world-stories, and so apprehend the infinite value of that gift which He gives to us, 'eternal life.'

The 'eternal life' is, then, the life which cannot be measured by years or days, but is the enjoyment of the blessedness of virtue. This is a present fact, begun as soon as the believer begins to be in Christ, growing more and more unto the perfect day as he walks more and more closely with God, secured for ever when he enters into his rest, and perfected in the glory of heaven. That this life, depending on knowledge of God, is begun here, does not lessen the reasonableness of its being perfected hereafter, any more than its future completion prevents its present beginning.

T. Binney has the following passage in one of his striking sermons: 'A question has been started with respect to what we should understand by "eternal life." It is said that the term "eternal" should not be regarded as having any reference to duration. It is to be understood as expressive of the character or quality of a thing, not of its continuance. "Eternal life" is something distinct from, or opposed to, what is natural, earthly, carnal. It is out of the reach of all terms merely indicative of time. It does not mean "everlasting," as if what it refers to could be measured by hours, or years, or centuries, and so, by being drawn out without limit, become, or be characterized as eternal, on that ground. It stands for what is divine, spiritual, Godlike, and may be applied to what is possessed and enjoyed *now*—the life of God in the soul of man, which is "eternal life," because of its distinctive quality and nature. It is that at this moment wherever it exists, as much as it can ever be, as much as it will be myriads of ages hence, and when time itself shall be no more.' Mr. Binney goes on to argue that the word may involve the two ideas of 'nature' and of 'perpetuity.'

F. D. Maurice took a firm stand in resisting the association of the idea of 'duration' with the term 'eternal.' A striking passage from his 'Theological Essays' may be given: 'The word "eternal," if what I have said be true, is a key-word of the New Testament. To

draw our minds from the temporal, to fix them on the eternal, is the very aim of the Divine economy. How much ought we then to dread any confusion between thoughts which our Lord has taken such pains to keep distinct—which our consciences tell us ought to be kept distinct! How dangerous to introduce the notion of duration into a word from which He has deliberately excluded it! And yet this is precisely what we are in the habit of doing, and it is this which causes such infinite perplexity in our minds. "Try to conceive," the teachers say, "a thousand years. Multiply these by a thousand, by twenty thousand, by a hundred thousand, by a million. Still you are as far from eternity as ever." Certainly I am quite as far. Why, then, did you give me that sum to work out? What could be the use of it except to bewilder me, except to make me disbelieve in eternity altogether? Do you not see that this course must be utterly wrong and mischievous? If eternity is the great reality of all, and not a portentous fiction, how dare you impress such a notion of fictitiousness on my mind as your process of illustration conveys?" "But is it not the only one?" Quite the only one, so far as I see, if you will bring *time* into the question—if you will have years and centuries to prevent you from taking in the sublime truth, "This is life eternal, *to know God.*" And so further on, as explaining what is left when the idea of duration is excluded. "The eternal life is the perception of His love, the capacity of loving; no greater reward can be attained by any, no higher or greater security. The eternal punishment is the loss of that power of perceiving His love, the incapacity of loving; no greater damnation can befall any."'

Bishop Westcott, writing of the phrases used in St. John's Epistles, says: 'In considering these phrases it is necessary to premise that in spiritual things we must guard against all conclusions which rest upon the notion of succession and duration. "Eternal life" is that which St. Paul speaks of as ἡ ὄντως ζωή, "The life which is life indeed" (1 Tim. vi. 10), and ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ, "The life of God" (Eph. iv. 18). It is not an endless duration of being in time, but being of which time is not a measure. We have, indeed, no power to grasp the idea except through forms and images of sense. These must be used, but we must not transfer them as realities to another order.' 'The life which lies in fellowship with God and Christ is spoken of as "Eternal life," in order to distinguish it from the life of sense and time, under which true human life is veiled at present. Such a life of phenomena may be "death," but "eternal life" is beyond the limitations of time, it belongs to the being of God.'

Jealousy and Revenge applied to God.

NAHUM i. 2: 'God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth; the Lord revengeth, and is furious; the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.'

Difficulty.—*As these terms imply evil dispositions when applied to men, they cannot worthily be applied to God.*

Explanation.—The 'Revised Version' somewhat qualifies these strong terms. It renders, 'The Lord is a jealous God and avengeth; the Lord avengeth and is full of wrath.' The word *avenger* brings in associations of the *official* family avenger of tribal populations; the word *revenge* brings in ideas of *private* ill feeling. The strong feelings of an *official*—a king, a judge, or a father—may be applied to God; but the passionate feelings of the individual can never be safely used to represent Him. In the Old Testament (it needs to be borne in mind) God is almost always thought of as in *official* relations He is the King-God of the land and the people. A few psalms provide the principal exceptions.

To apply these strong terms to a *king*, and associate them with his *office of kingship* is at once to relieve the difficulty. Treating the subject theologically, we must take care that we do not associate these terms with God as a *personal Being*. They would wholly confuse our reading of the Divine dealings with men. His official relations with Israel were the illustration of His spiritual relations with us; and so we must find what such feelings in the King of Israel represent in the King of Souls.

Another thing requires to be borne in mind. Nahum's book is really a *vision*. And the law applies to visions with which we are familiar in relation to parables. Details must not be overpressed. The main point must be caught, and the rest regarded as drapery. This vision of God is the framework in which Nahum's message is set, and as a description of God must not be unduly pressed. If a man in a vision sees God in particular attitudes, we must remember that it is vision, not description. Nahum is not undertaking to teach who and what God is to the people. He deals only with a momentary apprehension of God as related to his message.

And another consideration of vital importance is, that Nahum is not dealing with the sins of Judah or Israel, and so he does not describe God in relation to God's own people; but God as from the point of view of heathen nations. 'It is the almost unique peculiarity of Nahum's prophecy that it is devoted to a single theme—the destruction of the bloody and rapacious city and empire of Nineveh, with

all its gods. Nineveh stood in the eyes of the Jews as the most brutal type of heathenish abomination.' Nahum does but transfer the feelings of the people to God, and intensify them. Nahum thinks God must have intense feelings concerning such a guilty, violent, and abominable nation as Nineveh was conceived to be.

On anthropomorphic representations of God we have written in other paragraphs.

The Necessity for Positive Commands.

GENESIS ii. 16, 17: 'And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.'

Difficulty.—*In making these conditions God made the possibility of sin. If man had received no commands he could not have disobeyed.*

Explanation.—A moral being stands altogether higher in the scale of being than any existent or conceivable animal. But we need to see clearly what it is that makes the difference between a moral being and an animal. A moral being can apprehend his dependence upon a supreme moral being; can feel obligation, and knows that his choice must lie, not, as with the animal, between what is pleasant and what is painful, but between what is known to be the will of God, and what is felt to be his own inclinations.

But a being—a moral being—set under earthly conditions, must have the will of God presented in some positive commands, relating to some physical matter. His moral sense is awakened and educated through positive commands. We call into exercise the moral nature of a child through positive commands. A child can have no sense of right and wrong until he is made aware that he may do this, and that he may not do that. The more simple the command the better. There should be nothing to confuse issues. It should be the plainest question—Will you please yourself, or will you obey the supreme will of your Creator? In the case of Adam, the test of the tree became a self-revelation of his moral nature, and that is figuratively presented as coming to 'Know good and evil.'

'Man was created a moral being, but dependent on Him who made him, and gave him all things richly to enjoy. He was over all things, but *under God.* And this was the possibility under which he was set. He might hold and enjoy all under God, and in obedience to His will; or he might hold and enjoy all according to his own mere sense of what was pleasant. And what he would do as a free being must, in some way, be put to the test. It would not

test him for God to tell him only what he might do, because he was so set in harmony with God's creation that the things he might do were exactly those which he would like to do, and so to do them would cost no questioning or conflict of will. A prohibition was necessary, and it must concern some outward thing which was every way pleasant and attractive to his senses and his affections, but was to be left alone distinctly on this ground,—God, who created us, and on whom we depend, commands us not to touch it.'

The command concerning the fruit of the tree, simple and childish as it may appear, was one exactly suited to the simplicity of Adam and Eve, and to their childlike state. If there was to be any trial of man's obedience in Paradise, some special test was almost necessary.

Positive commands were given in the child stages of the Jewish nation, and are essential to the moral testing of all child-conditions.

Judicial Deadness.

ISAIAH vi. 10: 'Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.'

Difficulty.—*If the power to receive impressions be removed from men, their responsibility is taken away, and they cannot be righteously punished.*

Explanation.—*Nägelsbach* has a note on this passage which requires, but will abundantly repay, careful attention. The difficulty suggested is satisfactorily explained by it, and one of the chief mysteries of the Divine dealing is wisely unfolded.

'In verses 9, 10 follows, out of the mouth of the Lord Himself, the commission that the prophet must discharge. The manner of imparting this commission is directly the opposite of what is usual among men in like circumstances. One seeks, usually, in giving a servant or messenger a hard commission, to represent it, at least at first, in the most advantageous light. This the Lord does not do. On the contrary, He plainly emphasizes just the hardest part. He acts as if the prophet were to have nothing joyous to announce, but only judgment and hopeless hardening. Isaiah is called the Evangelist of the Old Testament. But there is not a trace of it found here. It is not at once said even that he shall warn, exhort, threaten. But, overleaping all intermediate members, only the sorrowing effect is emphasized, and that with such pointedness, that what in truth can be only an unintended effect, appears as directly designed. It is as

if the Lord would give the intrepid man who had said, "Here am I, send me," to understand at once that he would require all his boldness in order to carry through the commission he undertook.

'Grammatically, the words offer almost no difficulty. The infinitive absolute in verse 9 cannot have an intensive meaning, as though the Lord had said, Hear and see *well*, with effort, zeal, and diligence. For then must they even attain to understanding. But the Lord would say, Spite of the much and ceaseless hearing, they shall still understanding nothing. This ceaseless but still fruitless hearing is only the correlative of that ceaseless but fruitless preaching of which Jeremiah so often speaks (Jer. vii. 13, 25; xi. 7, etc.). The prophet never spoke to the people such words as we read in verse 9. Therefore it could not be the meaning of the Lord that he should so speak. But the Lord would say, Whatever thou mayest say to this people, say it not in the hope of being understood and regarded, but say it with the consciousness that thy words shall remain not understood, and not regarded, although they might be understood and regarded; and that consequently they must serve to bring out the complete unfolding of that hardness of heart that exists in this people, and thereby be a testimony against this people, and a basis of judgment. Thus (verse 10) it is not meant that the prophet shall do what is the devil's affair, that is, positively and directly lead men off to badness and godlessness. Rather, the Lord can ever want only the reverse of this.

'If, then, it says—"harden the heart, deafen the ear, plaster up the eyes, that they may not see, nor hear, nor take notice, and be converted to their salvation," still this form of speech seems to me to be chosen for the sake of the prophet. There is a great comfort to him in it. For what is sadder for a man of God than to see day after day, and year after year, pass away without any fruit of his labour; in fact, with evidence that things grow worse rather than better? Is it not for such a case a mighty comfort to be able to say, That is precisely what the Lord predicted, yea, expressly indicated as His relative and previous intention? Thus one sees that he has not laboured in vain, but that he has performed his task.

'And inasmuch as that judgment is still only a transition point, and by the wonderful wisdom of the Lord shall become a forerunner of higher development of salvation, so the servant of God can say this for his comfort, that even out of the judgment of hardening, that it is his part to provoke, salvation shall grow.'

Henderson explains in a less involved way: 'The passage in effect contains nothing more than a prediction of the obduracy of the Jews,

and the consequences by which it would be followed: only it is expressed in a form which indicates strong feeling on the part of the speaker, and a persuasion that such would infallibly be their condition. This mode of speech is not uncommon even in modern languages, when a person in a state of excitement, wishing to intimate his conviction of the certainty of any action of which he disapproves, gives a peremptory order that it should be performed.'

Dean Plumptre says: 'The thought is the same as that of the "hardening" of Pharaoh's heart (Exod. viii. 19; ix. 34. etc.), and that of Sihon (Deut. ii. 30). It implies the reckless headstrong will which defies restraint and warnings. So the poets of Greece, in their thoughts as to the Divine government of the world, recognised the truth that there is a judicial blindness, and, as it were, insanity of will that comes as the consequence of sinful deeds (Æsch., *Agam.*, 370-386). The mediæval adage, "Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat" (whom the gods would destroy they first dement), expresses one aspect of the same law; but the "vult perdere" is excluded by the clearer revelation of the Divine purpose (Ezek. xviii. 23; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Peter ii. 9), as "not willing that any should perish."'

The *Speaker's Commentary* quotes the following striking sentences from Mr. Hutton's 'Essays': 'When civilization becomes corrupt, and men are living below their faith, I think it may often be in mercy that God *strikes the nations with blindness;* that the only remedy lies in thus taking away an influence which they resist, and leaving them to learn the stern lesson of self-dependence.'

Müller, the author of the 'Doctrine of Sin,' says: 'No one can withdraw himself from the range and influence of God's revelations without altering his moral status.'

What is a Soul-Sin?

LEVITICUS iv. 2: 'Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them.' *Rev. Ver.* reads thus, 'If anyone shall sin unwittingly,' marg., 'through error.'

Question.—*Can a reasonable distinction be made between body-sins and soul-sins?*

Answer.—Such a distinction need not be present in connection with this and the related passages. The term 'soul' here is only equivalent to 'person,' 'individual.' But our fuller and more scientific estimate of human sin enables us to make the distinction. A 'soul-sin' is properly one in which a man's will is active, and controls

the conduct. A 'body-sin' is one in which the will is dormant, or is mastered, and bodily appetite, or habit, or passion, controls the conduct. The penalties of wrong-doing—that is, the material penalties—come on *all* wrongdoers; but the particular Divine judgments —the spiritual penalties—come only on those who sin with their wills, whose *souls sin.*

Intimation of this distinction is found in our Lord's teaching of His disciples concerning 'sins of will' and 'sins of frailty.' 'He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet.' And St. John appears to have this in mind when he so carefully separates between the 'sin unto death' and the 'sin not unto death' (1 John v. 16).

The verse placed at the head of this article defines the kind of sin for which sin-offerings were accepted. There is a marked distinction to be made between sins of ignorance, which could be removed by the sin-offering, and sins of presumption, which cut off the perpetrator from among the people.

Rev. Samuel Clark, M.A., in *Speaker's Commentary*, says: 'The distinction is clearly recognised (Ps. xix. 12, 13, and Heb. x. 26, 27). It seems evident that the classification thus indicated refers immediately to the relation of the conscience to God, not to outward penalties, nor immediately to outward actions. The presumptuous sinner, literally, he who sinned 'with a high hand,' might or might not have committed such a crime as to incur punishment from the civil law; it was enough that he had, with deliberate purpose, rebelled against God (see Prov. ii. 13-15), and *ipso facto* was "cut off from among his people," and alienated from the Divine covenant. But the other kind of sin, that for which the sin-offering was appointed, was of a more complicated nature. It appears to have included the entire range of "sins, negligences, and ignorances" for which we are accustomed to ask forgiveness. It is what the Psalmist spoke of, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." When he examined his heart, he found his offences multiply to such an extent that he felt them to be beyond calculation, and so prayed to be cleansed from those which were concealed not only from others, but from himself.

'It was not the outward form of the offence which determined the class to which it belongs. It might have been merely the indulgence of sinful thought; or, on the other hand, it might have been a gross offence in its external aspect, but if it was *not clearly premeditated as a sin* . . . the man might bring the symbol of his repentance to the altar, and the priest was to make atonement for him.'

Angel Worship.

COLOSSIANS ii. 18 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels.'

Question.—*Can the custom which is here referred to be explained?*

Answer.—There is but little known concerning the Essenes, whose teachings and practices appear to be referred to by the apostle. *Bishop Lightfoot* gathers up all the information that is available in his invaluable introduction to his work on the Colossians. From this may be taken the points directly relating to this subject.

The oath of admission which gave a novice the full privileges of the order of the Essenes, pledges him to 'guard carefully the books of their sect, and the *names of the angels.* It may be reasonably supposed that more lurks under this last expression than meets the ear. This esoteric doctrine, relating to angelic beings, may have been another link which attached Essenism to the religion of Zoroaster. At all events we seem to be justified in connecting it with the self-imposed service and worshipping of angels at Colossæ, and we may well suspect that we have here a germ which was developed into the Gnostic doctrine of æons or emanations.'

'We cannot fail to observe that the apostle has in view the doctrine of intermediate agencies, regarded as instruments in the creation and government of the world. Though this tenet is not distinctly mentioned, it is tacitly assumed in the teaching which St. Paul opposes to it. Against the philosophy of successive evolutions from the Divine nature, angelic mediators forming the successive links in the chain which binds the finite to the infinite, he sets the doctrine of the one Eternal Son, the Word of God begotten before the worlds.'

Speculations on the nature of intermediate spiritual agencies—their names, their ranks, their offices—were rife in the schools of Judæo-Gnostic thought. 'Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers'—these formed part of the spiritual nomenclature which they had invented to describe different grades of angelic mediators. . . . Hence the worship of angels, which the false teachers inculcated, was utterly wrong in principle. The motive of this angelolatry is not difficult to imagine. There was a show of humility, for there was a confession of weakness in this subservience to inferior mediatorial agencies. It was held feasible to grasp at the lower links of the chain which bound earth to heaven, when heaven itself seemed far beyond the reach of man. The successive grades of intermediate

beings were as successive steps by which man might mount the ladder leading up to the throne of God.'

Ellicott says: 'The "voluntary humility" here is not proper Christian humility, but a false perverted lowliness, which deemed God was so inaccessible that He could only be approached through the mediation of inferior beings.' And he tells us that Theodoret notices the practice of worshipping angels as existing in Phrygia and Pisidia, and it seems that even in modern times the worship of the Archangel in that district has not become extinct.

Molech and his Rites.

LEVITICUS xx. 2: 'Again thou shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever he be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall surely be put to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones.'

Question.—*Can any satisfactory explanation be given of the extreme severity of the Divine injunctions concerning this particular form of idolatry?*

Answer.—The characteristic rite of the Molech worship was the offering of the first-born sons by fire. It has indeed been suggested that the children were only passed over a fire, as an act of consecration, but the references in Scripture to the customs of the Ammonites clearly indicate that the victims were sacrificed. Any form of human sacrifice was repulsive to Jehovah, but this form was in an especial manner repulsive, and peculiarly mischievous if introduced among the Israelites, because the primary claim of Jehovah upon His people was for the surrender of their first-born sons to Himself. To take what was specially His and give it to another was robbery; to give it to a rival deity was open insult. This sufficiently accounts for the severity of the injunction.

It does not quite appear why this particular form of idolatry should have been so attractive to the Israelites. The association of the injunctions respecting Molech, both here and in chap. xviii., suggest that strange forms of immorality and sensual license were connected with the Molech ceremonies.

'The rites of this God are derived by a very simple mental process from the most obvious aspects of the sun as the quickening and the consuming power in Nature. The child offered to Molech was offered to the god by whom he was generated, and as the most precious of all the fruits of the earth for which his genial aid was implored, and his destructive intensity deprecated.'

'The practices appear to have been essentially connected with

magical arts, probably also with unlawful lusts. . . . . The rite in the time of Moses belonged to the region rather of magic than of definite idolatrous worship; and it may have been practised as a lustral charm, or fire-baptism, for the children of incest and adultery. Its connection with the children of Ammon, the child of incest, may be worth noticing in reference to this suggestion.'

Dr. Ginsburg records the following graphic traditional account of this idol and its worship, but it belongs to the later time of Solomon rather than the earlier time of Moses: 'Our sages of blessed memory say that whilst all other idols had temples in Jerusalem, Molech had his temple outside Jerusalem, in a place by itself. It was a brass and hollow image, bull-headed, with arms stretched out like a human being who opens his hands to receive something from his neighbour. Its temple had seven compartments, into which the offerers went according to their respective gifts. If one offered a fowl, he went into the first compartment; if a sheep, into the second; if a lamb, into the third; if a ram, into the fourth; if a bullock, into the fifth; if an ox, into the sixth; and if he offered his son, he was conducted into the seventh compartment. He first kissed the image, as it is written, "let the sacrificers of men kiss the calf" (Hos. xii. 2). Whereupon a fire was kindled in Molech, until its arms became red hot; the child was then put into its hands, and drums were beaten to produce tremendous noises, so as to prevent the shrieks of the child from reaching the father's ears, lest he should be moved with pity towards his offspring.'

The Divine Election.

ROMANS ix. 11: 'For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of him that calleth.'

Question.—*Can we limit the Divine election to natural disposition and faculty, and to earthly position and work, or must we assume it to include character and destiny?*

Answer.—Probably the contentions which have arisen in connection with this subject are due to the fact that election has been thought of in its relation to *privilege*, rather than in its relation to *service*. The prominence of the idea of privilege has tended to separate and isolate men, giving a conscious superiority to those who imagined that the privilege was exclusively theirs.

The truth of the Divine election must be treated on the basis of the foundation fact, that God is the God of the whole earth; and 'all souls are His.' Every creature God makes is of supreme interest

to Him; and those notions of favouritism, preferences, and petting, which are so familiar to men, must never for one moment be allowed to affect our ideas of the just and holy God, who is the Father-God of the whole race.

What we can plainly see in the Divine dealings with races, nations, families, and individuals, is a Divine *selection* of some for special forms of service in relation to, and for the benefit of, the others. But the selection of a nation, or an individual, for some particular place of service, is no indication of the Divine favour to that nation or individual. The endowments, or the dispositions, of the nation or the individual fit them, in the Divine arrangement, for that particular place of service. If men are pleased to attach the idea of special privilege to certain positions and forms of work, they have no right to say that God designed to give those special persons that privilege. He designed to give them a certain duty. There is no such thing as election to privilege. There is only *selection for duty*. And *we* associate with God's selections our notions of privilege.

Thus Greece was just as truly the elect of God—selected by God—for the work of leading the world in art; Rome was just as truly the elect of God for the work of leading the world in government; as Israel was the elect of God for the work of leading the world in religion. The individual genius to-day is as truly the elect of God for His work in music, or poetry, or statesmanship, as for His work in pulpits. Through all the ages, the Divine selections have been made, and those who seem to be the world's leaders, are only those fitted for the higher trusts, and therefore having them committed to them.

From this point of view it becomes clear that God's election concerns disposition and endowment, and consequently position and service. But the Divine election should never be so presented as to assume that it relates to character, which every man makes for himself; or to destiny, which is the final recognition of the character which a man has moulded out of his life's story.

Jacob's Power over the Angel.

HOSEA xii. 3, 4 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'And in his manhood he had power with God; yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him.'

Question.—*Will this prophetic reference help to explain the most mysterious incidents in Jacob's life; or must we take it simply as an illustration of the power of prayer?*

Answer.—When a moral writer uses an historical, or traditional

event by way of illustration, we expect to find him indifferent to the details of the event, but deeply interested in the moral bearings of it, the moral lessons involved in it. And this we find is the case with Hosea, who keeps a distinctly moral end in view. He is even inexact in his quotation, adding to the Old Testament record that 'Jacob wept'; which has suggested that he may have had a different tradition of Jacob's conflict to that which has come down to us. We need, however, only see that, being supremely concerned about the application of his illustration, he gave the illustration in a general form, without showing any anxiety to repeat exactly the old record.

It is not reasonable to expect in a mere illustration, used for another and distinct purpose, explanations of that which forms the substance of the illustration. The general fact, which Hosea wanted for his purpose, was that in a time of extremity the second father of the race had shown what can be accomplished by earnest *waiting on God.* Hosea is seeking to convict the Israelites of looking for human help in their time of need, and not waiting on God as their race-father had done.

Hosea's argument has been thus stated: 'To see the relevancy of this reference which Hosea makes to Jacob's wrestling, we must bear in mind that the justly offended Esau had in the Divine Mind his counterpart — namely, the righteous displeasure with which Jehovah regarded those treacherous wiles, which His servant, beloved as he was, had been guilty of. It was only upon his repentance and earnest solicitation that Jacob was forgiven and became "Israel." Let "Jacob" (as in verse 2), who now likewise needed deliverance from most imminent danger, employ the same arts of repentance and prayer, and he, too, would be forgiven and owned as Israel.'

It is not possible to explain satisfactorily the *form* which the night-scene at Jabbok took. Everything in the record indicates the actual appearance of a man, and an actual bodily wrestling: and, recalling the manifestations of the Angel Jehovah in human form to Abraham, we need feel no difficulty in treating the scene as a real one, and the wrestling as that of two actual men. But some devout commentators prefer to regard the scene as a vision, similar to that of the ladder at Bethel. It may have been a dream accompanied, as dreams sometimes are, by convulsive muscular action, and this involved straining the sinew of the thigh. In this view we may more readily recognise the likeness of this conflict to the spiritual struggles which take place in the experience of men at the present day.

F. W. Robertson says 'that the most honest and simple way is to confess that we cannot understand the historical fact; but this need

not prevent our receiving the underlying spiritual truths—the truth of God's guidance and protection, the truth that the struggle to know and to feel after God is the conflict of our whole life.'

The Unpardonable Sin.

MATTHEW xii. 31 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.'

Question.—*Is it possible to find the reason for this particular sin being treated as unpardonable?*

Answer.—This subject is so familiar, and has been treated from so many points of view, that it is introduced here only for the sake of a suggestion which may show how unlikely it is that the conditions which Christ's words met can be repeated in these days. The truth seems to be, that our Lord addressed certain particular persons, and that *their state of mind* made their sin to be unpardonable. When we see who and what those persons were, we find they made a class by themselves, and our Lord's words express the Divine judgment on the class.

The sin was not so much an *act*, as a *state of mind*. There must be conditions of mind and feeling on which forgiveness must depend. It would not do a person any good to forgive him if he was in an impenitent, or in an unforgiving, or in a malicious state of mind. You cannot forgive such persons. You may feel forgiving towards them; but they cannot receive the forgiveness. Their sinful state of mind is unpardonable.

The remarks of our Lord are recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke; but from Mark's account we take the hint which seems specially suggestive and helpful (Mark iii. 22-30).

Mark carefully notices that the severe and searching words of our Lord followed upon the action of certain of His 'friends'—possibly 'relatives'—who had taken up the idea that he was mad, and must be restrained. But Mark even more directly connects the teaching with the presence of certain scribes from Jerusalem, who had come down in a spirit of enmity to Christ, and were fully resolved not to be persuaded to believe in Him by anything they might see or hear.

That is the state of mind which is hopeless and unpardonable sin. That is sinning against the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost works gracious persuasions in men's hearts, through the agency of Christ's life, and words, and deeds. But if a man fully resolves—sets his will up—against being persuaded, plainly it is not just Christ who is

resisted, it is the Holy Ghost who is resisted; and men in such a state of mind and will, simply cannot be pardoned: for pardoning is one of the gracious workings of that very Holy Ghost whom they are resisting.

This suggestion may be followed through by careful observation of the passages. The sin is only repeated now in those who determinedly resist the persuasions of the Holy Ghost, working through the records left of Christ, and the preachings of the servants of Christ.

Dispute Over the Body of Moses.

JUDE 9 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'But Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.'

Difficulty.—*It is impossible to conceive what occasion there could be for having any dispute about the 'body of Moses.'*

Explanation.—Accepting the authenticity of the epistle, we may say that various legends and traditions were in existence in the time of the apostles, and were matters of common Jewish knowledge. The apostles, naturally enough, used these *for purposes of illustration*, but their doing so in no way involves their affirmation of the *truth* of the legend or tradition. It needs to be quite clearly apprehended that the illustrative use of a thing in a speech or writing carries no guarantee of the truth of the thing. Several puzzling things in Holy Scripture would be explained if this were fully understood. An illustration *illustrates;* it is enough if it is effective to its end; the truth or otherwise of it is quite a secondary consideration.

Jude evidently refers to something that was familiar to his readers. Now the Bible preserves nothing that can conceivably be twisted into the support of such a legend as this. 'No tradition, precisely corresponding with this statement, is found in any Rabbinic or apocryphal book now extant, not even in the Book of Enoch, from which Jude has drawn so largely in other instances' (ver. 6, 14). *Œcumenius*, indeed, writing in the tenth century, reports a tradition that Michael was appointed to minister at the burial of Moses, and the devil urged that his murder of the Egyptian (Exod. ii. 12) had deprived him of the right of sepulture; and *Origen* states that the record of the dispute was found in a lost apocryphal book, known as 'The Assumption of Moses'; but in both these instances it is possible that the traditions have grown out of the words of St. Jude instead of being the foundation on which they rested. Rabbinic legends,

however, though they do not furnish the precise fact to which St. Jude refers, show that a whole cycle of fantastic stories had gathered round the brief, mysterious report of the death of Moses in Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6.

It should be carefully noticed that the name Michael, for an angel or archangel, does not appear until Daniel x. 21. And it is in the 'Book of Enoch' that he is prominent, as the 'merciful, the patient, the holy Michael.'

It has been wisely said that 'reverent, and therefore cautious, theories of inspiration, need not exclude the possibility of an unhistorical incident being cited as an illustration or a warning.'

Objectors have fastened upon this passage and treated it with ridicule. They say, 'To suppose that one immaterial being, called Michael the archangel, and another immaterial being called the devil, came, the first from heaven, the second from hell, to a valley in the land of Moab, to dispute about the body of Moses, about a material body, is passing strange. Why should these two supposed beings contend for such a body? What did they want to do with it?'

Perhaps we are wrong in seeing any reference to the *material body* of Moses. *John Bellamy* makes a novel suggestion, which may receive a consideration, as it is based on the examination of the original Greek. He says that the word 'archangel' is a compound word, and means 'the first messenger.' He thinks the reference is to John the Baptist, who was the 'first messenger' of the new dispensation. The word 'body' refers to the Messiah as foretold in the shadows, types, and figures of the books of Moses; these shadows, types, and figures being called the 'body of Moses,' the whole assemblage of all things that had respect to the manifestation of the Redeemer. The word 'devil' should be translated Satan, 'an adversary,' and really represents the rulers and Pharisees who resisted John's teaching and Christ's.

'Thus we find that there was no celestial being called by the term "archangel," sent down from heaven to dispute with the devil about the fleshly body of Moses—no devil from hell, according to the vulgar opinion hitherto understood, to dispute with an archangel; but that it was the 'arch-messenger,' *i.e.*, the first messenger; and that the word *diabolo*, rendered 'the devil,' was applied as a collective noun singular to the assembled body of the Pharisees, the *adversary* of the mission of the Baptist, the declared, interested enemy of the gracious Redeemer.'

'Let those who suppose the contention was about the material body of Moses recollect that the material body of Moses had been

buried in a valley in the land of Moab about 1,500 years, when it was said that Michael and the devil contended about it. A contention for the *material* body of Moses never took place between these two immaterial beings.'

Probably more sober-minded Bible students will regard this spiritualising explanation as extravagant and unreasonable, and will prefer the simpler suggestion of a familiar legend, used by way of illustration.

SECTION IV.

DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO ANCIENT USAGES OF LANGUAGE.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

PECULIARITIES OF HEBREW AND GREEK WRITINGS.

THOSE who have examined with care the 'Revised Version' will probably find left on their minds a deep impression of the uncertainty of Bible words as found in the 'Authorised Version.' And that impression is a valuable and useful one. Many still retain the notion that in some way the Divine inspiration extends to the particular translation with which they may be familiar, and then they are ready to prove particular aspects of doctrine by the *words* they find in their translation. The fact is that many of the so-called 'difficulties' of Holy Scripture belong to the misuse of terms put to represent the original, and all that is necessary for the removal of many 'difficulties' is a more adequate and precise rendering of the thought of the writer. And in this the 'Revised Version' is an invaluable helper.

How various may be the translations of any ancient author into modern language may be seen by closely examining the many English translations of Homer's 'Iliad.' The terms used by Homer can be expressed by various English words, but it is the work of cultured scholarship to decide which words most exactly present to the English reader the Homeric thought, and there may be cases in which no English word can be found that is a precise equivalent. The simple word 'make' is used in our 'Authorised Version' to represent as many as forty distinct Hebrew words. It cannot always be precisely suitable.

Persons often have singular notions about translating from one language into another. They imagine that we have only to find

answering words, to observe tenses, and to make the English sentence just match the foreign one. True translation is a much more serious and complex matter. It is seizing precisely the *thought* for which an author finds an adequate form of expression in *his* language, and finding for *that thought* an expression which shall be as adequate and precise for *our* language as his form of expression was for his language. It is in this higher idea of translation that the 'Revised Version' considerably fails. The revisers were so interested in recovering the precise text, and in finding exact English equivalents for terms and words, that they unfitted themselves for the partly imaginative work of finding English idioms to match those of the Hebrew and Greek; and perhaps doing this involved a larger liberty of treatment than they felt justified in taking.

This entire book might have been filled with instances of purely verbal difficulties found in Holy Scripture, but in the effort to represent all classes of Bible difficulties space has been left for only a few cases, and these have been selected so as to be as representative as possible.

The ordinary difficulties connected with translating apply to the Bible, but there are some special difficulties connected with it which require a careful attention. *Lightfoot* says: 'The greatest difficulties of the Scripture lie in the language; unlock the language and phrases and the difficulty is gone.' It is well to remember that all language, whether oral or written, is but an imperfect medium for conveying thoughts to the mind, or of communicating feelings to the heart. We can never be quite sure that our word will precisely convey what is in our mind to another mind. But the difficulties are greatly increased when we are dealing with an ancient and a dead language, and one which depended for its pronunciations, and so for its meanings, on the unwritten law of the customs of each age. It needs to be more generally known that the Hebrew of our modern Bibles is quite a later form of Hebrew, and that the vowel points, which now decide pronunciations, were provided only in the tenth century of our era. The early Hebrew was virtually without vowels, and only established custom decided the form in which a word should be pronounced; but that custom can now only be uncertainly guessed. Many perplexities are due to wrong guessing as to the pronunciation of terms; this has indeed sometimes actually introduced incorrect words, which create the difficulty in tracing the Bible meanings. As an illustration of this point, and as showing the variety of meanings which follow on the readjustment of vowels to the root consonants, the original letters ע ר ב may be taken. This is a Bible word, but

exactly what word depends on the way in which we put vowels to it. We may represent these Hebrew consonants by the English letters A R B (the first letter, ע, stands for a kind of guttural sound). Then we may read *ārob*, a gad-fly; *ărāb*, an Arabian; *ĕrĕb*, the woof; *ĕrĕb*, evening; or *orēb*, raven. And the perplexity of this word makes quite uncertain the way in which Elijah was fed at the brook Cherith.

What we observe in our own language we may presume is equally characteristic of other languages. The meanings of words vary in the course of years. The language of Chaucer is hardly comprehensible now, and many of Shakespeare's words are obsolete, and need explanation. 'Prevent' once meant 'go before.' 'Let' once meant 'hinder.' But we may fail to apply this to Old Testament Scriptures, though it must be the fact, that a writer in the age of Ezra would use some terms with meanings quite different to those which were familiar to Moses. And this reminds us of the difficulty of later editing, which efficiently explains the presence of later words, or words with later meaning, in earlier works.

It is too often assumed that Hebrew was an absolutely pure language, and then, if words belonging properly to other languages are found in connection with it, they are taken as proof that the work itself belongs to the age of the latest term used in it. But the Hebrew language could not have been thus pure. Abraham must have brought Chaldaisms; associations with Canaan and Egypt, and with the remnants of the Canaanites and the nations round Canaan, must have introduced colloquialisms, which would gradually gain place even in the literature. And the words which are only found in the later literature of Chaldea or Egypt, may nevertheless have been in the speech of the common people from Abrahamic times. In dealing with the date of composition of the Sacred Books, arguments from the presence in them of later forms of words, or of words with later meanings, must be very uncertain and untrustworthy. Not until all other possible suggestions have been tried can we accept them.

But there are certain characteristic features of Eastern composition to which attention should be directed, as the most prolific source of the difficulties which we feel, who have Western minds and methods. *Dr. Robert Vaughan* writes: 'The Oriental intellect is not logical. Its faculty is to a high degree intuitive; it reasons, but it rarely ever does so formally. It passes to its conclusions with a subtle celerity, resembling what we see in women, much more than by those scientific processes which are familiar to our Western habits of

thought. Hence its lessons come to us as they do, in fragments of history and biography, in poetry and proverbs, more than in regular discourse of any kind. The general manner of the sacred writers is positive, dogmatic; they assert, they do not often attempt to prove.'

Bishop Marsh says: 'All languages are more or less figurative; but they are most so in their earliest state. Before language is provided with a stock of words, sufficient in their literal sense to express what is wanted, men are under the necessity of extending the use of words beyond the literal sense. But the application when once begun is not to be limited by the bounds of necessity. The imagination, always occupied with resemblances, which are the foundation of figures, disposes men to seek for figurative terms, where they might express themselves in literal terms. Figurative language presents a kind of picture to the mind, and thus delights while it instructs; whence its use, though more necessary when a language is poor and uncultivated, is never wholly laid aside, especially in the writings of orators and poets.'

A Biblical writer points out that the 'language of the Scriptures is highly figurative, especially in the Old Testament. For this two reasons have been assigned; one is, that the inhabitants of the East, naturally possessing warm and vivid imaginations, and living in a warm and fertile climate, surrounded by objects equally beautiful and agreeable, delight in a figurative style of expression; and as these circumstances easily impel their power of conceiving images, they fancy similitudes which are often far-fetched, and which, to the chastised taste of European readers, do not always appear the most elegant. The other reason is, that many of the books of the Old Testament are *poetical;* now it is the privilege of a poet to illustrate the productions of his muse, and to render them more animated, by figures and images drawn from almost every subject that presents itself to his imagination. Hence David, Solomon, Isaiah, and other sacred poets, abound with figures, make rapid transitions from one to another, everywhere scattering flowers, and adorning their poems with metaphors, the real beauty of which, however, can only be appreciated by being acquainted with the country in which the sacred poets lived, its situation and peculiarities, and also with the manners of the inhabitants and the idioms of their language.' No part of the work of the 'revisers' is more valuable than their distinctly marking the poetical passages in all the sacred books. We cannot now make the mistake of using figurative and suggestive poetry as if it were logical and precise prose.'

Information on the peculiarities of Eastern style, the allegory, the trope, the metonymy, the symbol, the metaphor, the proverb, and the parable, is at the easy command of Bible students. To two points their attention may be directed. There is in the Bible writers a strong tendency to *personification.* They represent inanimate things as if alive, speaking, and acting; and this must be taken into account when we consider such difficulties as the representation of the serpent tempting Eve, and the ass reproving Balaam. The most familiar instance of personifying is the figure of *Wisdom* in the Book of Proverbs. The other peculiarity is known as *parallelism.* Bible writers seem to enjoy repeating a thought, and varying a little in the form of expressing it. If we fail to notice this habit, we may be led to put a *new* meaning into second sentences, which are, in fact, no more than repetitions of the thought already expressed. 'The grand and sole characteristic of Hebrew poetry is what Bishop Lowth entitles "parallelism," that is, a certain equality, resemblance, or relationship, between the members of each period; so that in two lines, or members of the same period, things shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a kind of rule or measure. Such is the general strain of the Hebrew poetry—instances of which occur in almost every part of the Old Testament, particularly in the ninety-sixth Psalm.'

Horne gives a rule, for explaining the figurative language of Scripture, which may be recalled because it is so often forgotten in our attempts to elucidate difficult passages: 'Care must be taken that we do not judge of the application of characters from *modern usage;* because the inhabitants of the East have very frequently attached a character to the idea expressed, widely different from that which usually presents itself to our views. The inhabitants of the East, from their lively imaginations, very often make use of far-fetched comparisons, and bring together things which, in our judgments, are the most dissimilar. Besides, since the Hebrew mode of living differed greatly from ours, and many things were in use and commended by the Israelites which to us are unknown, we ought not to be surprised if there be a very wide difference subsisting between the metaphorical expressions of the Hebrews and those which are familiar to us, and if they should sometimes appear harsh, and seem to convey a different meaning from that which we are accustomed to receive.'

The exceeding importance of the increased, and more precise, knowledge of Bible manners and customs, which is characteristic of our times, lies in the help we thus gain towards placing ourselves

at the standpoint of the Bible writers, and using their terms in the light of the associations and surroundings that were familiar to them. In this direction there is abundant scope for more and more useful work.

Little need be added in relation to difficulties arising from the translation of the Greek words of the New Testament into satisfactory English equivalents. Greek is a fully elaborated language, and thought can be expressed in it with such exactness and precision, that it can be fully caught and fittingly expressed in another language, especially in one like the English, which is equally developed, and equally competent to express all shades of meaning. It is only necessary to remark, that the Greek of the Apostles must have been materially influenced by the Syro-Chaldaic which was the language of their ordinary life; and as Christianity started new ideas, we should expect to find new meanings attaching to the classical Greek terms, so that a classical dictionary would be of but little use in translating the New Testament.

Writing of the value of the study of synonyms, *Trench* makes the following statement concerning the complexity of the Greek language: 'Instructive as in any language it must be, it must be eminently so in the Greek—a language spoken by a people of the finest and subtlest intellect; who saw distinctions where others saw none; who divided out to different words what others often were content to huddle confusedly under a common term; who were themselves singularly alive to its value, diligently cultivating the art of synonymous distinction, and sometimes even to an extravagant excess; who have bequeathed a multitude of fine and delicate observations on the right distinguishing of their own words to the after-world. And while thus, with reference to all Greek, the investigation of the likenesses and differences of words appears especially invited by the characteristic excellences of the language, in respect to the Greek of the New Testament, plainly there are reasons additional inviting us to this study. If by such investigations as these we become aware of delicate variations in an author's meaning, which otherwise we might have missed, where is it so desirable that we should miss nothing, that we should lose no finer intention of the writer, as in those words which are the vehicles of the very mind of God Himself?'

The Hart and the Water-brooks.

PSALM xlii. 1: 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks.'

Question.—*Does the historical association of this psalm help us to understand what is meant by the 'water-brooks'?*

Answer.—Though the authorship of the psalm is disputed, and its likeness to Ps. lxxxiv. suggests a later origin, the Davidic origin may be said to be generally maintained, and it certainly is the least difficult hypothesis. Granting it to be David's, the historical association is at once defined. It can only be a psalm written in connection with David's banishment beyond Jordan, at the time of Absalom's rebellion.

Delitzsch says: 'The composer finds himself, against his will, at a great distance from the sanctuary on Zion, the resting-place of the Divine presence and manifestation, surrounded by an ungodly people, who mock at him as one forsaken of God; and he comforts his sorrowful soul, looking longingly back upon that which it has lost, with the prospect of God's help which will soon appear. All the complaints and hopes that he expresses sound very much like those of David during the time of Absalom. David's yearning after the house of God in Ps. xxiii., xxvi., lv., lxiii., finds its echo here: the conduct and outlines of the enemies are also just the same; even the sojourn in the country east of Jordan agrees with David's settlement at that time at Mahanaim in the mountains of Gilead.'

Dean Perowne thinks the Davidic authorship doubtful. *Jennings and Lowe* argue strongly for it. *Canon Cook* writes doubtfully, but with bias towards David.

Dean Stanley says: 'Its date and authorship are uncertain; but the place is, beyond doubt, the Trans-Jordanic hills, which always behold, as they are always beheld from, Western Palestine. As before the eyes of the exile the "gazelle" of the forests of Gilead panted after the fresh streams of water which there descend to the Jordan, so his soul panted after God, from whose outward presence he was shut out. The river, with its winding rapids, "deep calling unto deep," lay between him and his home. All that he could now do was to remember the past, as he stood "in the land of Jordan," as he saw the peaks of "Hermon," as he found himself on the eastern heights of Mizar, which reminded him of his banishment and solitude.'

The word 'panteth' has been rendered 'brayeth' in the Syriac Version, as if a peculiar cry of the thirsty animal were intended,

which came to the psalmist's ears. 'Not merely a quiet languishing, but a strong audible thirsting or panting for water.'

The word translated 'water-brooks' is better read 'water-courses,' and the word precisely means the deep channels, or ravines, which are common on both sides of the Jordan, cutting down through the highlands, and forming beds of streams in the rainy seasons. In these ravines the water would lie long in pools, and so they could be rightly spoken of as water-courses or water-brooks.

The land east of Jordan may be spoken of as a land intersected by ravines, deep wâdys dry in summer, and filled suddenly, after storms, by torrents from neighbouring heights.

Wilton tells us that the gazelle is constantly found resorting to the rocky ravines (on both sides of the Jordan) in quest, doubtless, of the pools of water left here and there by the winter torrents.

James Neil, M.A., makes a very singular suggestion in relation to these 'water-courses,' which he proposes to read 'aqueducts.' The Hebrew term is 'apheek'; and in the original the clause now before us reads *'al apheekaiy-mayim*, which Neil translates 'over the aqueducts of water.'

'Aqueducts are, and always must have been, very common in Palestine, not only for bringing water to waterless towns, but also for the purpose of irrigating gardens. Ruined remains of these structures are to be found everywhere throughout the country.

'It seems certain that there must have been a familiar technical term for them in Hebrew, and that the writers of the Bible, who draw their imagery so largely from the features of garden culture, must have referred to these precious water-channels. One word in Hebrew, the sense of which seems to have been entirely overlooked, must plainly have borne this meaning, the word *apheek*, which occurs eighteen times in the Old Testament, and also in some names of places, as Aphaik, near Beth-horon. The translators of our Authorised Version have been able to make but little of it, rendering it by seven different English words, most frequently, by "river," which it cannot possibly mean. The word comes from *aphak*, "restrained" or "forced," and this is the main idea of an aqueduct, which is a structure formed for the purpose of constraining or forcing a stream of water to flow in a desired direction. So strongly were the Palestine aqueducts made, that their ruins, probably in some places two thousand years old, remain to this day. In rare instances (there is one at Jerusalem), they are fashioned of bored stones. Sometimes for a short distance they are cut as open grooves in the hard limestone of the hills, or as small channels bored through their

sides. Where the levels require it, they are built up stone structures above ground. But the aqueducts of Palestine mostly consist of earthenware pipes, laid on or under ground in a casing of strong cement. *Apheek*, I contend, in its technical sense, stands for an ordinary covered Palestine aqueduct, but it is also poetically applied to the natural underground channels, which supply springs, and to the gorge-like, rocky beds of some mountain streams, which appear like huge open aqueducts.

'What a depth of new meaning and beauty now clothes the pathetic and familiar, but hitherto little understood, words of David:

> "As the hind pants over the aqueducts of water,
> So pants my soul after Thee, O God!"

'In our Version the words read "panteth after the water-brooks." But the preposition *'al* here, in almost every case, means "upon," or "over," and surely no deer would "pant," or "bray," for water if it were standing over an open brook. The repetition involved in the expression "aqueducts of water," which may seem strange and unnatural to the English reader, is very characteristic in the case of Hebrew speech, where I have traced no less than some forty varieties of this essentially Oriental figure repetition. This forty-second Psalm appears to have been written in Gilead, when David had to fly there from Jerusalem, driven out by Absalom's rebellion. The thought that he is expressing is that of his painful inability to reach those spiritual privileges which he had formerly enjoyed in Zion. The whole force of his striking comparison is lost in our Bible. To use my own words in another place, David is "lamenting his banishment from Zion and all its spiritual privileges in the manifested presence of Jehovah." He thirsts after God, and longs to taste again the joy of His house, like the parched and weary hind who comes to a covered channel conveying the living waters of some far-off spring across the intervening desert. She scents the precious current in its bed of adamantine cement, or hears its rippling flow close beneath her feet, or, perchance, sees it deep down through one of the narrow air-holes; and as she agonizes for the inaccessible draught, she "pants over the aqueducts of water."'

Satan among the Sons of God.

JOB i. 6: 'Now, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.'

Difficulty.—*This association of Satan with God's servants is unlike any other references to Satan found in the Sacred Word.*

Explanation.—Probably the word should be translated, as in the margin, 'an adversary.' Satan, as the name of one recognised individual, is not found in the Old Testament. 'An adversary' is everywhere the proper translation of the term.

But if we rightly regard the Book of Job, we shall see it to be a work of imagination, and neither historical nor descriptive. It belongs to the age of Solomon, and embodies the religious sentiments and struggles of that age. We may reasonably think it was founded on an old legend of the 'Patriarch of Uz,' somewhat as Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King' are founded on the legend of 'King Arthur.' We need not therefore see in this verse description of historical fact, but only the fanciful form in which the writer was pleased to introduce the machinery of his book. If the expressions be taken literally, so many impossible questions can be asked in relation to them. And it is plain that the 'adversary' is no more than the servant of God, who carries out His gracious purpose of testing His people by calamities and afflictions; and that is certainly a totally different being to the 'devil' of mediæval plays, or of modern poetry and theology. As God may be thought to employ a minister, or angel, of *death*, so He may be thought of as employing an angel of *calamity* or an angel of *disease*. But *maliciousness* must never be associated with God's agents, who do His testing work; and this 'maliciousness' is essential to our idea of the 'devil.'

Dr. A. B. Davidson says: 'The narrative describes how the disinterestedness of Job's piety was called in question in the council of heaven by the Satan, or adversary, that one of God's ministers whose office is to try the sincerity of men, and oppose them in their pretensions to a right standing before God. This angel insinuated that Job's religion was insincere, and only the natural return for the unprecedented blessings showered on him by God; if these blessings were withdrawn he would disown God to His face. . . . Three opinions have been held concerning the composition of this book. 1. Some consider it to be strictly historical, both in the narrative and poetical portions. 2. Others have maintained a view directly opposed, regarding the work as wholly unhistorical, and in all its

parts a creation of the poet's mind, and written with a didactic purpose. 3. And a third class assumes a middle position between these two extremes, considering that, though mainly a creation of the author's own mind, the poem reposes on a historical tradition, which the writer adopted as suitable for his moral purpose, and the outline of which he has preserved.' *Davidson* says: 'The Satan represented here is neither a fallen nor evil spirit. Yet undoubtedly a step towards this is taken.'

God's Name—the 'I Am.'

EXODUS iii. 14: 'And God said unto Moses, I am that I am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you.'

Difficulty.—*This is only an assertion of existence; it cannot properly be called a name.*

Explanation.—A little thought will convince us that no *name* can possibly be found which can adequately represent an absolute and infinite Being, such as we should conceive God to be. A name of necessity limits the being to whom it is applied, confining our attention to some particular aspect of him, or relation in which he stands. And we are always exposed to the danger of making that one view of him stand for the whole of him. Idolatrous religions can find names for their gods, because no one of them is absolute; each does but represent a quality or a relationship. In response to Moses God virtually refuses to give a name. He purposely asserts that Moses will have to be satisfied with the declaration of His absolute, uncaused, and unrelated existence. 'I am.' 'There is no more than that can be said, if you would know My abstract nature.' God can be in measure known through the relations into which He comes with His creation, and with His creatures, but God can not be known *in essence.* None can find out the Almighty to perfection.

But the word which asserts His existence is full of interest to us; and it illustrates some of our most serious difficulties in dealing with the early Hebrew Scriptures. They were written without vowel-points, and there were unwritten laws of pronunciation, which have been entirely lost, so that absolute security as to the form of many old Hebrew terms cannot be assured. The meanings of words can at once be altered by changing the vowels applied to the root-consonants.

The actual letters of the word spoken by God to Moses were אהיה, which read AHVH. In the present Hebrew Bibles, the vowel *e* is twice applied to the consonants, making the word read (pronouncing the first letter as a kind of J) *Jeh-veh.* Ewald puts a

first vowel *a* and a second *e*; making the word sound *Jah-veh.* The Israelites, in order that they might never, even by inadvertence, pronounce the sacred name (as they called it), took the vowels of the commoner word for God, *Eloah*, *e*, *o*, *a*, and applied them to the consonants, thus making the familiar word *Jehovah.*

Bishop Harold Browne regards the word as a *name*, 'as clearly a proper name as Jupiter or Vishnu.' On the question whether it was first given on this occasion to Moses, he takes a decided view, believing that there is sufficient evidence of its being a recognised name long before. His note is as follows: 'It is now generally admitted by competent Semitic scholars, that the word signifies "the existent," or something nearly akin to this. The true pronunciation, of course, is lost; but there can be no reasonable doubt that, as the name of God declared to Moses in Ex. iii. 14, "I am," is the first person present of the substantive verb, so the name *Jehovah* is part of the same, but probably the third person present, or, as others think, the same tense of a causative (Hiphil) form. But if so, there can be no question that the name must have been *pre-Mosaic.* In Hebrew the verb is always *hayah*, though in Syriac and Chaldee it is always *havah.* A name, therefore, derived from *havah*, and existing in ancient Hebrew, must have come down from a time prior to the separation of the Hebrews from their kindred Aramæans, *i.e.*, not later than the time of Abraham. In fact the name IHVH could not have been found among the Hebrews at any period of history from the descent into Egypt to the captivity of Babylon; and as it undoubtedly exists in Hebrew writings prior to the Captivity, so it must have originated before the time of Joseph.'

Dean Stanley says of this word: 'It was the rending asunder of the veil which overhung the temple of the Egyptian Sais. "I am that which has been, and which is, and which is to be; and My veil no mortal hath yet drawn aside." It was the declaration of the simplicity, the unity, the self-existence of the Divine nature, the exact opposite to all the multiplied forms of idolatry, human, animal, and celestial, that prevailed, as far as we know, everywhere else.'

Canon Rawlinson supports the view that we have an assertion of a fact rather than a name. 'It is generally assumed that this is given to Moses as the full name of God. But perhaps it is rather a deep and mysterious statement of His nature. "I am that which I am." My nature, *i.e.*, cannot be declared in words, cannot be conceived by human thought. I exist in such sort that My whole inscrutable nature is implied in My existence. I exist, as nothing else does—necessarily, eternally, really. If I am to give Myself a

name expressive of My nature, so far as language can be, let Me be called, "I am."'

It implies (1) an existence different from all other existence; (2) an existence out of time, with which time has nothing to do; (3) an existence that is real, all other being shadowy; (4) an independent and unconditioned existence, from which all other is derived, and on which it is dependent.

Some have thought that the word could be made into a future, and so made to express, 'He who is to be,' and give an anticipatory hint of the manifestation of God in the person of Jesus Christ. But in this case the 'wish is probably father to the thought.'

'Unto thee shall be his Desire.'

GENESIS iv. 7: 'And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.'

Difficulty.—*As Abel is not mentioned in this verse, it seems unnecessary to bring him into it.*

Explanation.—Certainly the grammatical reading of the verse, which is immediately suggested to the reader, is this: 'Sin lieth at the door, and its desire is to master thee; but if thou doest well, thou shalt overcome and rule over it.' No question of losing his position and rights, as the eldest son, is brought into the conversation. It is a Divine warning of the danger of going further into sin, if he cherished his present bad state of mind and feeling.

Some think by 'sin' a 'sin-offering' is meant; but such a later idea cannot reasonably be associated with the text.

The difficulty really lies in the pronouns, which are masculine, while 'sin' is a feminine form. This leads many writers to feel that Abel must be brought in somewhere.

'The LXX. Version clearly refers it to Abel, which interpretation is adopted by Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, and most of the fathers, by Grotius, Vossius, Heidegger, by our own translators, and by a majority of English commentators. The sense will then be, that Cain, whose jealousy had been excited by God's acceptance of Abel, need not, if he behaved well, fear that Abel should be preferred before him: his pre-eminence of birth should be preserved to him.

The expression 'unto thee shall be his desire' is an idiomatic expression, specially noting the longing of one who looks up to another as the object of reverence; and so it notes dependence, as of a younger brother on an elder, or of a wife on her husband: see Gen. iii. 16.

The German writers, for the most part, prefer the other translation and explanation. 'Sin lieth crouching like a wild beast at the door of the soul; its desire is toward thee, yet thou art not given over into its power; but if thou wilt, thou shalt be able to keep it in subjection.'

Dean Payne Smith points out the difficulty of the pronouns, and proposes to translate: 'If thou doest not well, sin croucheth at the door—that is, lies dangerously near thee, and puts thee in peril. Beware, therefore, and stand on thy guard; and then *his* desire shall be unto thee, and thou shalt rule over *him*. At present thou art vexed and envious because thy younger brother is rich and prosperous, while thy tillage yields thee but scanty returns. Do well, and the Divine blessing will rest on thee, and thou wilt recover thy rights of primogeniture, and thy brother will look up to thee in loving obedience.'

He thinks we have in this verse proof of a struggle in Cain's conscience. Abel was evidently outstripping him in wealth . . . this led to envy and malice on the part of Cain, increased, doubtless, by the favour of God shown to Abel's sacrifice; but he seems to have resisted these evil feelings. Jehovah would not have remonstrated thus kindly with him had he been altogether reprobate. Possibly, too, for a time he prevailed over his evil tempers. It is a gratuitous assumption that the murder followed immediately on the sacrifice.

This is very interesting, but purely imaginative. There is not the faintest hint of any such explanation in the record.

The Gleaning better than the Vintage.

JUDGES viii. 2, 3: 'And he said unto them, What have I now done in comparison of you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? God hath delivered into your hand the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.'

Difficulty.—*The basis of a comparison between the 'gleaning' and the 'vintage' is not easy for us to recognise.*

Explanation.—'Gleaning' is a term which we confine to the cornfields; but there is no reason why it should not also be applied to the fruit-crops. Even when apple-trees or vines are thought to be picked single apples and small bunches of grapes will be found left; and the gleaning which was the right of the poor in Canaan applied to the fruit-trees as well as the cornfields. The law of Moses, and the usage founded on it, gave the poor people of Israel the

right of gleaning in the harvest-fields. As the owners of land were not required to pay what we call *poor's rates*, or taxes for the support of the poor, they allowed very freely the privilege of gleaning. It was, however, only too likely that the poor would take undue advantage of this right, and subject the harvesting operations to serious inconvenience, and therefore the proprietor retained the power of nominating the persons who were to glean after his reapers. The poor had to apply to the proprietors for permission to glean in their fields.

But the passage Deut. xxiv. 19-21 extends the right of gleaning to the olive-tree and the vine. 'When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterwards; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.'

Gideon, in the passage now before us, speaks in the figurative style of the East: 'By the overthrow of the national enemy, the Ephraimites were benefited as largely as any of the other neighbouring tribes. But, piqued at not having been sharers in the glory of the victory, their leading men could not repress their wounded pride; and the occasion only served to bring out an old and deep-seated feeling of jealous rivalry that subsisted between the tribes.' We must remember that Gideon had to deal with an unreasonable state of temper, and his concession was put in the strongest form possible, in the hope of soothing irritated feeling. We have here an illustration of the 'soft answer that turneth away wrath.' 'A civil war with the tribe of Ephraim would soon have turned Israel's victory into mourning. Gideon therefore soothes their wounded pride by confessing that Ephraim had done more—in securing the heads of the princes, Oreb and Zeeb—though they had joined him so late in the day, than he had been able to effect in the whole campaign.' In Eastern warfare a victory is not thought to be complete unless the death of the leader is secured.

The point of Gideon's figure may be thus expressed: the two princely heads, which were the 'gleaning' of Ephraim, were more important, to the satisfactory issue of the war, than the 'vintage' of obscure hundreds of mere soldiers. The Chaldee renders the verse: 'Are not the weak of the house of Ephraim better than the strong of the house of Abiezer?' *Bishop Hall* says: 'Gideon's good words were as victorious as his sword.'

The Command to 'Kiss the Son.'

PSALM ii. 12 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, for his wrath will soon be kindled.'

Question.—*Are there indications of a custom of kissing as a token of submission?*

Answer.—The warm and emotional Easterns are in every way more demonstrative than we colder people of the West; but kissing customs are retained even to our day. Those whom our Queen favours are graciously permitted to kiss her hand; and doing so is still regarded as a testimony of loyalty and obedience.

We need not consider those Scriptural instances in which kissing is the sign and expression of personal affection, because that is the common and ordinary relation of the custom all the world over, and all the ages through. Some of the cases of kissing, in what may be called 'official relations,' will help to explain the allusion in the above text.

In Gen. xli. 40 Pharaoh says to Joseph: 'Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled.' The Hebrew of the last clause reads, 'shall all my people kiss,' implying that even thus early kissing was a recognised sign of homage.

When Samuel anointed Saul, as chosen by God to be the first King of Israel, it is said, 'Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it on his head, and kissed him,' by this act expressing his own allegiance and homage (1 Sam. x. 1).

Absalom was restored to the king's favour on the intercession of Joab; and on his coming into the royal presence, and 'bowing himself on his face to the ground,' as a sign of submission and obedience, the king kissed him, as a public sign of reconciliation (2 Sam. xiv. 33).

God says to Elijah, in 1 Kings xix. 18, 'Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him,' from which it seems that kissing the idol was one of the signs of devotion to its service. 'Idolaters sometimes kissed the hand to the object of their worship (Job xxxi. 26, 27); at other times they kissed the actual image (Hosea xiii. 2). Cicero speaks of having seen at Agrigentum an image of Hercules the mouth and beard of which were worn away by the kisses of worshippers.' Sometimes the image was kissed, sometimes the altar, and sometimes the threshold of the temple.

The traitorous kiss of Judas Iscariot implies that the kiss was, in the time of our Lord, the sign of submission, obedience, and service.

As a token of submission the custom prevails in the East to this day. Among the Persians inferiors kiss the hands and feet of superiors. Among the Arabs the women and children kiss the beards of their husbands and fathers. In Egypt the slaves and servants of a grandee kiss their lord's sleeve or the skirt of his clothing. To testify abject submission the feet are often kissed. To kiss the footprint of a prince evinced the deepest reverence and subjection.

Possibly the expression 'kiss the son' refers to a custom observed at the coronation of princes. After the crown had been placed on the head, and the king had taken the usual oaths or covenants, the nobles pledged their allegiance with the 'kiss of majesty.'

Zipporah's Exclamation.

EXODUS iv. 24-26 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'And it came to pass, on the way at the lodging-place, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a flint, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said, Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me. So he let him alone. Then she said, A bridegroom of blood art thou, because of the circumcision.'

Difficulty.—*It seems impossible to trace the connection of this incident with the narrative, or to discover what Zipporah intended by her exclamation.*

Explanation.—There are few more difficult passages than this in the Scriptures, and few more striking instances of the abruptness, and what we incline to call extravagance, of Eastern language. We know so little of Zipporah. We understand so little of the circumstances of Moses' return to Egypt. We see so little reason for such a desperate outburst of temper. And explanation that can be offered necessarily depends on our skill in imaginatively filling in the episode.

So much as this seems plain: Moses, while in the Sinaitic district, had neglected the rite of circumcision, which was the divinely-appointed seal of the Abrahamic covenant. How he came to neglect it we can well understand. He had married a wife who was not a Hebrew, who would not recognise Hebrew obligations, and would object to what she would regard as the bodily injury and degradation of her son. Moses may have wished to perform the rite, but Zipporah had steadfastly and successfully resisted.

But the man who could not fully obey the Divine will, as he knew it, was not the fit man to undertake Jehovah's mission to Pharaoh.

Moses, therefore, must be brought to feel the sin of his neglect in this matter. So on the road he was seized with sudden and perilous illness. In the way of Eastern people, he began at once to think what sin he had committed which had brought on him this judgment. What came to mind was his neglect to circumcise his son. He probably told this to Zipporah, and it, naturally enough, aroused her anger, because *she* was the guilty one rather than Moses. In a desperate spirit she did the act herself which should have been done long before by her husband. She did not like to be mastered, and compelled to do, to save her husband's life, what she had refused to have done so long. And in the same desperate spirit she exclaims to her husband, 'A bridegroom of blood art thou,' as if she were ashamed of a husband who compelled her to take the blood of her child.

This general idea is presented in more detail by Bible writers. *Geikie* is more considerate for Zipporah, and gives another turn to her expression: 'The incident of the circumcision of Gershom, the son of Moses, at the caravanserai, on the way to Egypt, is striking. Moses had neglected to perform the rite, and was suddenly struck by severe illness, which he traced to this oversight of his duty. Zipporah, learning the fact, forthwith circumcises the child, and Moses presently recovers, on which Zipporah tells him that she has won him again for her bridegroom by the child's blood, that his life is spared on account of it, and she has him, as it were, given to her anew now this duty is fulfilled.'

The *Targum Onkelos* paraphrases the exclamation thus: 'Had it not been for the blood of circumcision my husband had been condemned to death.'

The restoration of Moses from this sickness Zipporah regarded as having her husband given to her a second time; and his becoming again a bridegroom was due to her fulfilling the neglected act of obedience, which caused her agony, and her son blood.

The *Speaker's Commentary* thinks the neglect was due to Zipporah's 'not unnatural repugnance to a rite which, though practised by the Egyptians under the nineteenth dynasty, and perhaps earlier, was not adopted generally in the East, even by the descendants of Abraham and Keturah.'

By the later Jews, a newly-circumcised child is called a 'spouse' or 'bridegroom.' This has led some to think that Zipporah's exclamation was addressed to her son. But that does not appear natural; it seems far-fetched: and there is no evidence at all showing that such a name was applied to a newly-born child in Zipporah's days. *Bishop Wordsworth* thinks she regarded the 'blood' as the

dowry by which she obtained Moses—recovered, as it were, from the dead—as a bridegroom to herself.

Dr. J. Macgregor is severe on Zipporah: 'The deadly peril made it necessary to circumcise. If, however, she have saved her husband's life, it is at the cost of her child's blood. And she bores her husband by throwing that as a reproach at him. Of the *religion*, she does not appear to have any thought or feeling. If after all she was good, then she was "better than she was bonnie."'

The following note is by *Ewald:* 'When Moses turned back to Egypt to effect Israel's deliverance, but was overtaken on his way by a dreadful sickness, and it seemed as though Jahveh required his life, Zipporah, his first wife,* seized a sharp stone, with it cut her son's foreskin off, threw this before the feet of the father, her husband, and upbraided him as a bloody bridegroom (*i.e.*, as a husband whom she now saw she had married under the grievous condition of shedding her child's blood, unless she were to lose the husband himself). But just at that very juncture Jahveh released Moses; and the wife, full of joy for the restoration of her husband, broke out into the altered exclamation, "A bloody husband for circumcision" (*i.e.*, I see now that the blood shall involve no one's death, but only circumcision). More clearly than is done in this brief typical narrative, the original essence of circumcision according to its most ancient significance cannot be described. It is a rite which cannot be performed without loss of blood, and there is, no doubt, a possibility that the patient may die of the wound; it is, therefore, essentially a bloody sacrifice of one's own body, difficult to render, such as man may regard with shuddering fear. But he who has offered up to his God this flesh of his own body and this blood, and bears circumcision on his person as a permanent token of this hardest sacrifice, becomes thereby for the first time a man well pleasing to his God, and may even become the saviour of his father. Thus the tender mother's horror at such an offering of her son's blood turns into peace and joy.'

Satan's Proverb.

JOB ii. 4: 'And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.'

Difficulty.—*The general meaning of this proverb is plain enough, but the expression 'skin for skin' is very perplexing.*

Explanation.—As it stands in our Bible, it certainly does not convey any intelligent meaning to us; and as the *Revised Version*

* It is thought by many that Moses' so-called second wife was Zipporah restored to him.

gives no alteration, we may assume that the words adequately express the sense of the Hebrew. We must, therefore, treat it as an idiomatic expression, and endeavour to find what is intended to be suggested by it.

Olshausen would read the verse: 'So long as Thou leavest his skin untouched, he will also leave Thee untouched.'

Hupfeld understands by the skin that skin which is here given for the other—the skin of his cattle, of his servants and children, which Job had gladly given up, that for such a price he might get off with his own skin sound.

Ewald would translate 'skin for skin' by 'like for like,' which he bases on the strange assertion that one skin is like another, as one dead piece is like another.

Delitzsch gives the meaning thus: 'One gives up one's skin to preserve one's skin; one endures pain on a sickly part of the skin for the sake of saving the whole skin; one holds up the arm, as Raschi suggests, to avert the fatal blow from the head. The second clause is climacteric—a man gives skin for skin; but for his life, his highest good, he willingly gives up everything, without exception, that can be given up, and life itself still retained. This principle derived from experience, applied to Job, may be expressed thus: Just so, Job has gladly given up everything, and is content to have escaped with his life.'

Dr. Mason Good suggests an explanation which is too easy. He says: 'The skins or spoils of beasts, in the rude and early ages of man, were the most valuable property he could acquire, and that for which he most frequently combated. Skins hence became the chief representation of property, and in many parts of the world continue so to the present hour.' Skin after skin, until all his property is gone, will a man give for his life.

The *Targum* translates: 'Member for member, one member of the body in behalf of, or to cover, another member, as the arm the head.'

The general idea seems to be this: 'So long as a man's own person is untouched, he may bear any loss with comparative firmness, give up the skin, or life of others, even of his children, so that his own be safe.' A wholly selfish sentiment.

There is a Turkish proverb which may help to explain it: 'We must give up our beards to save our heads.'

Dr. Stanley Leathes says: 'He means Job takes care to have his *quid pro quo;* and if the worst come to the worst, a man will give up everything to save his life. If, therefore, Job can save his life at the

price of subservience to God, he will willingly pay that price rather than die; but his service is worth no more than that selfish object implies.'

Self-love and self-preservation are very powerful commanding principles in the hearts of men (*Matthew Henry*).

The Listening of Stones.

JOSHUA xxiv. 27: 'And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness against you, lest ye deny your God.'

Question.—*Would this appeal fit to the sentiments and associations of the people?*

Answer.—We may find here an illustration of that personifying disposition which is so characteristic of the Eastern mind. Joshua represents the stone as a living thing, able to hear, and able to give forth a testimony. No more is really meant than that the monument, which would be sacredly preserved through the generations, would be a memorial of their having thus solemnly renewed their covenant with Jehovah, and would remind them, whenever they looked on it, of the events of that day. The stone would have the power to recall memories and suggest thought, and this may, poetically, be spoken of as 'making its witness.'

With the act of Joshua may be compared the act of Jacob on making his vow after the great night-vision at Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 18, 22): 'And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. . . . And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.'

How thoroughly the act of Joshua fitted to the sentiments of his time may be further illustrated by the monuments raised at Gilgal, and the monument placed at Ed by the two and a half tribes on their return to the east of Jordan. The sentiment still prevails in the East, and may be illustrated by Mr. Morier's account of what he observed when ascending the rock of Istakhar, in Persia: 'We ascended on the north-west side, winding round the foot of the rock, and making our way through narrow and intricate paths. I remarked that our old guide every here and there placed a stone on a conspicuous bit of rock, or two stones one upon the other, at the same time uttering some words, which I learnt were a prayer for our safe return. This explained to me what I had frequently seen before in the East, and particularly on a high-road leading to a great town,

whence the town is first seen, and where the Eastern traveller sets up his stone, accompanied by a devout exclamation, as it were, in token of his safe arrival. A stone on the road placed in this position, one stone upon another, implies that some traveller has there made a vow or a thanksgiving.'

The particular interest of the above passage lies in its illustrating the unreasonableness of any hard and fast lines of literal interpretation. The poetical element in Scripture, and the personifying tendency of the Eastern mind, must be fully recognised, and duly allowed for; and if this seems quite plain to everyone in a passage like the above, it is well to remember that the principle thus established will help us in the explanation of many doubtful and difficult passages. The ordinary principles of literary construction apply to Holy Scripture, and will help us in its elucidation.

Opening the Ears.

PSALM xl. 6 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in; mine ears hast thou opened.' Heb., 'Ears hast thou digged' (or pierced) 'for me.'

Question.—*Can the allusion in this verse be satisfactorily accounted for and explained by Eastern customs?*

Answer.—The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in quoting this verse (Heb. x. 5), gives it a kind of translation: 'Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body didst Thou prepare for me.'

The Hebrew כָּרִיתָ means, primarily, to dig, or hollow out, *e.g.*, a well, Gen. xxvi. 25; a pit, Psalm vii. 16; or pitfall, Psalm lvii. 7; a sepulchre or grave, Gen. l. 5; 2 Chron. xvi. 14. But the verb has also the meaning of *procuring* or *purchasing*. We may therefore render either 'Mine ears hast Thou opened, or dug out,' or 'Ears hast Thou provided for me.' The former is more in accordance with the Hebrew idiom. For the Hebrews speak of 'opening the ears,' and of 'uncovering them,' in order to designate the idea of *prompt obedience*, of attentive listening to the commands of any one (Isai. l. 4, 5). To *uncover*, to *disclose* the ear, means 'to communicate anything, or reveal it to another': see 1 Sam. xx. 2, 12, 13; xxii. 17. The expression in Psalm xl. 6 may be taken as a figure for 'Thou hast made me obedient': or 'I am entirely devoted to Thy service.'

Some have suggested the translation, 'Mine ears hast Thou bored through,' which seems to point to the Hebrew custom of boring through, with an awl, the ear of a person who became the voluntary servant of another, as described in Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17. The sentence would then mean, 'I am, through life, Thy voluntary servant.' But this association cannot be maintained.

(The passage in Hebrews is specially important as showing what liberal ideas in relation to quotation from the older Scriptures must have prevailed in New Testament times. If the thought, or the point, was preserved, writers showed no anxiety about securing the precise original language. We have elsewhere shown that they adopted as satisfactory, and generally used, the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew, which is full of variations in matters of detail.)

Some views taken by good Bible writers may be given :

Delitzsch thus explains, after comparing 1 Sam. xv. 22 : 'God—says David—desires not outward sacrifices, but obedience ; ears hath He digged for me—*i.e.*, formed the sense of hearing, bestowed the faculty of hearing, and given therewith the instruction to obey. There is a similar expression in the Tamul Kural (Graul's translation), "An ear, that was not hollowed out by hearing, has, even if hearing, the manner of not hearing." The "hollowing out" meaning, in this passage, an opening of the inward sense of hearing by instruction. The idea is not that God has given him ears in order to hear that disclosure concerning the true will of God, but, in general, to hear the word of God, and to obey that which is heard. God desires not sacrifice, but hearing ears, and consequently the submission of the person himself in willing obedience.'

Dean Perowne says : 'There is certainly no allusion to the custom of nailing the ear of the slave to the door-post, as a symbol of perpetual servitude and obedience (Exod. xxi. 6). For this a technical word would have been used ; only *one* ear was thus pierced ; and the allusion would be far-fetched and quite out of place here.' The following interpretations are offered by Perowne : 'Thou hast so constructed my ears that they have an open passage through which Thy instructions can reach me.' '"Thou hast dug (or constructed) ears for me," would be equivalent to saying, "Thou hast given me ears to hear ;" that which is literally true of the structure of the bodily ear being here transferred in a figure to the *spiritual* ear, as is evident from the context.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* says : 'The hearing ear, the legal equivalent to evangelical faith, is the first condition of inner communion with God, and as such presents a perfect antithesis to the outward form, which merely represents the condition. The very remarkable rendering by the LXX. quoted in Heb. x. 5, "A body hast Thou prepared me," or "fitted me," may be explained by supposing that the opening of the ear was regarded as equivalent to the consecration of all bodily faculties to God's service.'

'Who is their Father?'

1 SAMUEL x. 12: 'And one of the same place answered and said, But who is their father? Therefore it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?'

Question.—*Can this very obscure and difficult exclamation be explained?*

Answer.—*Bishop Wordsworth* reads: 'Who is the father of the prophets? Not man, but God. And God can make even Saul, whom ye despise, to be a prophet also.'

W. J. Deane, M.A., thus describes what took place: 'Now, when Saul met this company (of prophets), and saw their enthusiasm, and heard their stirring music, his heart was strangely moved, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he, untrained as he was, joined with all his powers in the ecstatic songs and praises which issued from the prophet's lips. This was, indeed, a new thing in the life of Saul, and astonished his fellow-townsmen, and those who had known him all his life. "What is it?" they cried, "that hath happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" They were utterly amazed that one of no cultivation, a rustic with a mind hitherto occupied only in petty concerns, should vie with these highly-educated youths, and take a ready part in their exercises. They did not recognise the Divine influence which had effected this sudden change. But one inhabitant, wiser than the rest, saw deeper into the matter. "Ye are surprised," said he, "that the son of Kish should be thus endowed. But what has parentage to do with prophetic gifts? Who is the father (in the sense of originator) of the other scholars? Is prophecy an hereditary gift? If they received their ability from God, why may it not be so also with Saul?"'

Canon Spence says: 'As an instance of the extreme surprise with which the association of Saul with the sons of the prophets was witnessed by the inhabitants of Gibeah—an association apparently very foreign to his old habits, and to the manner of life of his family—a short dialogue between two of the citizens of Gibeah is here related: a conversation important, owing to the words uttered by the second citizen in reply to the amazed question, "What is this that has come to the son of Kish?" The reply gives us some insight into the deep conviction entertained by the ordinary Israelite of the days of Samuel, that the invisible God was ever present, *working* in the midst of His chosen people.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* gives both the possible explanations: 'This is an obscure phrase. Some understand by *father* the head or

leader of the prophets, as *e.g.*, 1 Chron. xxv. 6; 2 Kings ii. 12, and think the question, *Who is their father?* means, What kind of leader can they have to admit such a person as Saul into the company? Others take the words as an answer or reproof to the objectors, in this sense, *Who is their father?* Is not God the giver of their spiritual life, and cannot He give the same gift to Saul if He pleases? But the *Sept.*, *Vulg.* (according to some copies), *Syr.*, and *Arab.* Versions all read (with greater probability), *Who is his father?* as a further enchancement of the wonder. *And who is his father?* Cod. Vat. The Cod. Alexand. adds: "Is it not Kish?" One printed edition of the Vulgate (Lyons, 1542) has "Et Cis Pater ejus?" Who would have expected Kish to have a son among the prophets? Just as Matt. xiii. 54, 55, the wonder at the works of Jesus is cumulated by reference to his parents and brethren, and as Amos says (chap. vii. 14): "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son." The questions may have run, "Who is Saul, and who is his father Kish?" somewhat after the analogy of 1 Sam. xxv. 10; 2 Sam. xx. 1.'

The Expression 'Unto this Day.'

DEUTERONOMY iii. 14: 'Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of Argob unto the coasts of Geshuri and Maachathi; and called them after his own name, Bashan-havoth-jair, unto this day.'

Question.—*What limitation must be put on the time indicated by this frequent expression in the historical Scriptures?*

Answer.—If the term had not been so strangely misused, we should not have needed to say that it cannot possibly be equivalent to 'modern times.' The natural limit is the date on which the chapter was written; and then some difficulty is created by the uncertainty of the age of Deuteronomy—at least, in the form in which it has come to us.

But probably the term is idiomatic, and means what we mean by our familiar term 'until now,' which merely expresses 'unexpected continuance.' *Bishop Wordsworth* says it is 'a phrase used to describe a fact which happened recently, and had continued under circumstances that might have been expected to produce an interruption in a period even of short duration. The interval here specified is from the time mentioned in Numb. xxi. to the eleventh month of the fortieth year (Deut. i. 3); and it was certainly a noteworthy thing, and one which might well be mentioned as a motive to thankfulness and faith, that God had subdued so many cities of this mighty

king by the arm of an Israelite, and should have retained them under his power even for a short time.'

Some writers think that this expression must have been introduced by Ezra, or some of the pious men who arranged and collected the books of Moses; but this is too large an explanation for a mere phrase, a colloquialism of the age.

Waller notices that the words 'unto this day' are characteristically common in the Book of Joshua, and traces the presence of the words in the passage heading this paragraph to the writing or editing of Joshua.

It may be observed that the phrase is frequent in Genesis, but is not found in Exodus, Leviticus, or Numbers. The sense in which it is used may be discovered by comparing instances. Take Joshua xxii. 3. There it plainly denotes the few months during which the two tribes and a half had assisted their brethren in the conquest of the land west of Jordan. Take Josh. xxiii. 9. There the reference is to the period that had passed from the beginning of the victories of the Israelites to the close of Joshua's life.

There is probably no more in Deut. iii. 14 than the assertion that 'Jair had so thoroughly made himself master of the cities of the district as that they were now currently known by his name.' It is not well to resort to the assumption of a gloss, or late editorial addition, to explain a difficulty, until every simple, common-sense, and reasonable suggestion has been fairly tried.

Thunder Clothing the Horse's Neck.

JOB xxxix. 19: 'Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?'

Difficulty.—*This seems to be a singularly extravagant and unsuitable figure.*

Explanation.—It is evidently an imperfect representation of the original term. And this is brought to view by the *Revised Version*, which reads: 'Hast thou given the horse his might? Hast thou clothed his neck with the quivering (marg. *shaking*) mane?'

Some have proposed to read 'a voice of thunder,' and see a reference to the *neighing* of the horse. But this cannot be properly associated with his *neck*.

Canon Cook says: 'This translation "thunder" is generally abandoned. The word, however, denotes convulsive trembling, not of fear, but of rage; or, as a secondary meaning, "thunder." The point which struck those who saw for the first time the mighty war-horse in battle must have been the terror of the neck with its quiver-

ing muscles and tossing mane, and the word here used denotes most probably that impression. Clothed with terror may be the best rendering; it includes the idea of a vehement and terrific movement. But "thunder," if understood metaphorically, is an apter translation than "mane," a rendering which has no authority in Hebrew, or any cognate dialect, and is dry hard prose.'

It is clear that the poet has in mind the war-horse under all the excitement of approaching battle. See the following verses. With this description may be compared that of *Virgil* (Sotheby's translation):

> 'But at the clash of arms, his ear afar
> Drinks the deep sound, and vibrates to the war;
> Flames from each nostril roll in gathered stream;
> His quivering limbs with restless motion gleam;
> O'er his right shoulder, floating full and fair,
> Sweeps his thick mane, and spreads his pomp of hair:
> Swift works his double spine; and earth around
> Rings to the solid hoof that wears the ground.'

Dr. Davidson proposes: 'Dost thou clothe his neck with *trembling?*' And he adds: 'The word "trembling" hardly refers to the mane alone, but rather describes the quivering of the neck, when the animal is roused, which erects the mane.'

Delitzsch says: 'The neck, properly the *twister*, has nothing to do with the voice of neighing, and the reference is to the quivering, trembling, shaking of the mane.'

The Senses of the Word 'Create.'

GENESIS i. 1: 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.'

Question.—*Can the early Hebrew applications of this word be ascertained?*

Answer.—The philosophical conceptions 'forming out of nothing,' 'bringing into being,' are not absolutely essential to a proper apprehension of the term. It will fully meet the Mosaic idea if we limit the meaning to this—'fashion,' 'form,' 'set in order,' 'arrange.'

But it requires to be noticed that the English word 'create' is made to represent the shades of meaning in more than one Hebrew term. Four different verbs are used to express the creative work of God, viz.: (1) to create, (2) to make, (3) to form, (4) to build. The original idea in the word seems to have been 'to hew stone' or 'to fell timber.' But 'almost all abstract or spiritual thoughts are expressed by words which were originally concrete and sensuous.'

We need to keep in mind the object which Moses held before him in preserving these early records. His purpose was *religious;* it was neither *philosophical* nor *scientific.* The question of the eternity of

matter is a purely philosophical question, and could not have entered the mind of the early Hebrew. What Moses asserts is, the absolutely indisputable association of God only with all forms of existence. God is first: whatever exists comes after Him, and takes its shapings from His action. This is his point—whatever state of things you find, associate the thought of God with it: He shaped and fashioned it. This is the fact which provides adequate foundation for the universal religion of humanity. One only God. Everything from Him. Man His.

The idea of 'God's making all things out of nothing' is first found in 2 Mac. vii. 28: 'I beseech thee, my son, look up to the heaven and the earth, and all things that are seen in them, and know that *from things that are not* (ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων) God made them, and the race of men thus came into being.'

If we think closely, we shall find that we have no associations which enable us to realize the absolute idea of creation. In the sense of 'making out of nothing' man never 'creates' anything, or can create. Yet we do use the word of man's works, and we understand it to mean 'give shape and order to things.' That idea we may properly attach to the term, as it is used by Moses concerning God. The absolute origination of material existence is something about which philosophers may dream, but no ordinary mind ever can attach any meaning to the idea.

Among grammarians there is marked difference of opinion concerning the meanings of the word 'bara,' *create.* They may be represented by *Gesenius* and *Delitzsch.* *Gesenius* says: 'The use of this verb in Kal (the conjugation here employed) is entirely different from the primary signification (to cut, to shape, to fashion), and is used rather of the new production of a thing than of the shaping or elaboration of existing material. That the first verse of Genesis teaches that the original creation of the world in its rude and chaotic state was from nothing, while in the remainder of the chapter the elaboration and distribution of the matter thus created is taught, the connection of the whole section shows sufficiently clearly.'

Delitzsch says: 'The word *bara,* in its etymology, does not exclude a previous material. It has, as the use of the conjugation Piel shows, the fundamental idea of cutting or hewing. But as in other languages words which define creation by God have the same etymological idea at their root, so "bara" has acquired the idiomatic meaning of a Divine creating, which, whether in the kingdom of nature, or of history, or of spirit, calls into being that which hitherto had no existence. "Bara" never appears as the word for human

creations, differing in this from the synonyms "asak," "yatzar," "yalad," which are used both of men and of God—it is never used with an accusative of the material, and even from this it follows that it defines the Divine creative act as one without any limitations, and its result, as to its proper material, as entirely new; and as to its first cause, entirely the creation of Divine power.'

Lange, giving the opinions of Rabbi Aben Ezra and Rabbi Schelomo, says: 'These learned Jewish commentators, although of all theists the most free from any tinge of pantheism, or belief in the eternity of matter, interpret this account as setting forth simply the creation of our world and heaven, regarded, too, as commencing with them in a certain unformed condition. So that by these writers the Mosaic creation is regarded as *formation* rather than as primal *origination* of matter.' Great importance should be attached to this opinion, as probably representing the views taken by those to whom the Mosaic account was first given.

Lange decidedly favours the limitation of the term 'create.' 'The word "bara," it is maintained, denotes primal origination, and some would even contend, in defiance of etymology, that such is its primary and radical idea. It is certain, however, that everywhere else in this account it must mean something quite different. It is constantly afterwards used of Divine acts or works which could only have been the giving form to matter that already is. In all the dividings, the gatherings, the evolutions of the plants and animals, the ordaining and disposing of the heavenly lights, the firmament, and even the making of the human body, there is no new matter. . . . All these are constructions, formations, dispositions of matter; and this is certainly creation, whilst there is no evidence, except an assumption (not exegetical, but rationalizing) of its meaning something else quite different in the first verse. . . . Since, then, it is very difficult to make the fair verbal exegesis speak decidedly either way, may we not infer from this that we over-rate the importance of one aspect of the question as compared with the other? Besides the clear implication aforesaid, which would make the recognition of a structural creation at some particular time inseparable from the recognition of an absolute first origination of matter in its own time or times, there may be a question as to which is really the greater work, or more worthy of revelation, or which ought to have the greatest place in our minds—this bare origination of the first *matter*, or the giving *form* to that matter.'

We have only dealt with this subject as far as the first meaning of the word is concerned.

Rahab, the Mystical Name of Egypt.

PSALM lxxxix. 10: 'Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.'

Question—*Can the reason for associating this name with Egypt be recovered?*

Answer.—'Originally the word denotes "pride," "ferocity." So in Job ix. 13, "The helpers of pride (Rahab) do stoop under him" Possibly even there, but certainly in Job xxvi. 12, it is the name of some fierce monster of the deep, probably the crocodile: "He divideth the sea by His power, and by His understanding He smiteth the proud monster (Rahab)," where the LXX. have κῆτος, whale. In Psalm lxxxix. 10 (11), there can be no doubt of the reference to Egypt: "Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces," the crocodile of the Nile being there taken as the symbol of that kingdom. So, too, in Isai. li. 9, "Art thou not it that hast cut Rahab" (*i.e.* smitten Egypt) "and wounded the dragon?" and xxx. 9, "The Egyptians shall help in vain. . . . They are Rahab (proud, mighty," etc.). The name, then, is applied to Egypt as a vast and formidable power, of which the crocodile might naturally be regarded as the symbol. *Ewald* supposes it to be connected with the Egyptian name Rîf, and refers to Burckhardt's *Nubia*, p. 457' (*Dean Perowne*).

Aglen says: 'Rahab undoubtedly stands for Egypt, but the exact origin of the term and of its connection with Egypt is much disputed. Most probably it is a term (possibly Coptic) for some large sea or river monster symbolic of Egypt.' In the verse above, Psalm lxxxix. 10, 'The mention of the sea has carried the poet's thoughts to the Red Sea and the deliverance from Egypt, which is represented as some huge monster conquered and crushed.'

Watering with the Foot.

DEUTERONOMY xi. 10: 'For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs.'

Question.—*What method of irrigation is indicated by this expression?*

Answer.—*Neil* tells us that 'the burning rainless heat for six months running, from the end of April to the end of October, makes it impossible to have a garden of any value in Palestine unless it is thoroughly irrigated once a week; and possible, when thus supplied

with "the water of life," to have one that is green and fruitful all the year round, yielding no less than four crops, and the varied products of almost all temperate and tropical climes! In these "watered gardens," the labourers, all of whose limbs are naked, work almost as much with their *feet* as with their hands. The ground is divided into little plots about twelve feet square, surrounded by tiny trenches, and, when turning the rills from the main stream into each of these, the gardener kicks a hole with his foot into the trench through the lightly turned-up soil, and after sufficient water has run past, he stops up the breach in the same easy fashion.'

Van Lennep describes a more mechanical contrivance. 'The chief current, conducted through a garden, is made to flow along rows of such fruit-trees as most need its moisture, as the pomegranate, apricot, quince, orange, lemon, and mulberry, which are thus secured against the possibility of drought. The ground is levelled and laid out in beds, each of which is bordered by a rim of soil wide enough for the gardener to walk upon. As each bed in turn is watered, a little heap of mud closes up the opening previously made, and the current runs on to the next bed. The instrument employed in doing this has the form of a hoe, but the handle is only two feet long, while the iron portion of it is much larger than that of our hoe, and is in shape somewhat concave. It takes up at once the requisite amount of mud, which is laid across the opening, and pressed by the bare foot of the gardener so as completely to arrest the farther ingress of the water; much of the watering, however, is done simply with the feet, and this is particularly the case in Egypt. The process is alluded to in this passage, which indicates that gardening was a common employment of the Israelites while in Egypt, where nothing grew without irrigation; whereas Palestine, whither they were going, was watered by the rains and dews of heaven, so that a resort to irrigation would be the exception. *Philo*, however, describes a process of watering which existed in Egypt in his day, to which some have thought that Moses referred in this passage. "A wheel is turned by a man with the motion of his feet by ascending the several steps that are within it. But as, while he is thus continually turning, he cannot keep himself up, he holds a stay in his hands, and this supports him; so that in this work the hands do the office of the feet, and the feet that of the hands; since the hands, which should act, are at rest, and the feet, which should be at rest, are in action, and give motion to the wheel." In modern times *Niebuhr* saw a similar machine in Cairo, which he terms *sakieh te-dur bir-regel* (a watering-machine that turns by the foot).'

Geikie says of the gardener who 'waters with his foot:' 'The poor gardener has a miserable task, paddling bare-legged in the mud hour after hour.'

Rahab's Scarlet Line.

JOSHUA ii. 21: 'And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window.'

Question.—*Can a simple and satisfactory explanation of this act be suggested?*

Answer.—Attention is directed to this passage as presenting one of the most striking illustrations of the mistake of *over-spiritualizing* Bible language. Anything we please can be made out of the Bible, and proved from the Bible, if we go upon the principle of bringing our own ideas to the Bible, and expecting to find them there. The most rabid sectarianism, and the most extravagant sentiment, can in this way be made to rest on Bible language. It is the corrective of this serious mistake to insist that, in every instance, the *first meaning* of a passage, as it stands in its connection, shall be discovered. This 'scarlet line' has been made to represent the 'blood of Christ,' by this strange tendency to over-spiritualize.

This tendency is manifest in the comments of the early Fathers of the Christian Church, and has been found, in a section, in every age down to our own times. A few of the notes on this verse by early commentators will illustrate the mistake, and enable us to set in strong contrast the common-sense explanation which is at hand.

St. Clement says: 'On account of her faith and hospitality, Rahab, the harlot, was saved . . . and the spies commanded her to bring all her kindred into her house; and they also dictated to her this sign—namely, that she should hang from her house the *scarlet line*, thus declaring that through the blood of the Lord there is redemption to all who believe and trust in God.'

St. Irenæus says: 'Rahab, the harlot, received the spies; and when at the sound of the seven trumpets the city of Jericho fell where she dwelt, she was saved with her whole house through faith in the *scarlet sign;* as the Lord afterwards said to the Pharisees who did not receive Him, and who nullify the sign of the scarlet thread, which was no other than the type of redemption and deliverance of the people by the True Passover, "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before you."'

St. Justin Martyr says: 'Thus was presignified that mankind would be saved by the blood of Christ; and the token of the scarlet thread, which was prescribed by Joshua's messengers to Rahab, who

was commanded by them to hang it from her window, by which they had been let down, in like manner exhibited a sign of the blood of Christ, by means of which they of all nations, who were formerly fornicators and unrighteous, are saved, receiving remission of their sins, and no longer continuing in sin.'

Origen says: 'The sign which Rahab was required to use was of scarlet, the colour of blood, for there is salvation to none but through the blood of Christ. Blood is the sign prescribed, for by blood we are cleansed. Perhaps the window was chosen as the place for the suspension of the scarlet line, for the window was the means of light to the house; and by means of the Incarnation of Christ we behold as through a window, the light of the Godhead, as far as we are able to behold it. . . . In order that she might be saved, when Jericho was destroyed, she received a significant token of salvation, the scarlet line; for by the blood of Christ the whole Church is saved.'

Matthew Henry may represent modern commentators, but he writes on the matter with much caution, as if the idea was not altogether acceptable to himself. He says: 'This was like the blood sprinkled upon the door-post, which secured the first-born from the destroying angel, and, being of the same colour, some allude to this also to represent the safety of believers, under the protection of the blood of Christ sprinkled on the conscience.'

Unfortunately for this mode of commenting, it has, in this instance, no basis whatever, for in the original language the word for the 'scarlet cord' is not the same word as that for the *rope*, with which the spies were let down.

Lange's Commentary points out the distinction between קָוּ, line, and חֶבֶל, rope; and *Waller*, in *Ellicott's Commentary*, says: 'It seems almost needless to observe that the scarlet line and the cord by which the men were lowered are not the same thing, but described by different words in the original. It would have been preposterous to require Rahab to display in her window the means by which the spies had escaped. It would at once have declared the tale to all beholders—the very thing Rahab was pledged not to do. The "line of scarlet thread" and the "stalks of flax" on the roof were probably parts of the same business, and thus there would be nothing unusual in what was exhibited at the window, although it would be a sufficient token, to those who were in the secret, to enable them to identify the house.'

Roberts gives an association of Eastern thought with scarlet threads which goes far towards explaining the selection of this sign: 'The scarlet thread, in this instance, might be nothing more than a sign;

it is, however, sacred among the Hindoos. When the devotees hear the history of the god Pulliar, which takes up twenty-one days, a scarlet thread is tied round the right arm, which shows that they are engaged in a sacred duty, and that during that period "they will not commit sin." When the priest whispers the *ubatheasam* in the ear of a youth, the thread is tied in the same way, to denote the same thing. On the day of marriage the scarlet is bound round the right wrist, but is taken off on the fourth day. When a person learns to fence or goes into battle, the thread is fixed round the right arm or right ankle. The priest also sometimes binds it round the wrist of a person in the article of death. It is called *haapu*, which signifies "guard or protector;" and is applied also, in the same sense, to bracelets, armlets, or anklets. A person having on a scarlet thread will not be interrupted; and during the period he will neither shave nor bathe, and will endeavour to be very moral. See Gen. xxxviii. 28.'

Lamech's Boasting.

GENESIS iv. 23, 24: 'And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.'

Difficulty.—*Neither the meaning of Lamech's saying, nor the reason for its being preserved in the Scripture records, is easy to find.*

Explanation.—The passage is given in poetical form, and we may therefore assume that it is a poetical setting of Lamech's boast, and not the precise words he used. The poetical form helped to secure its preservation. It is a remarkable illustration of the extravagance, and what we should call unnaturalness, of the early ancient poetical figures. We can only guess, more or less hopefully, what Lamech could have meant.

The Revised Version materially helps us towards an understanding of the passage, by giving more precise equivalents for the Hebrew terms:

'And Lamech said unto his wives:
Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech:
For I have slain a man for wounding me,
And a young man for bruising me:
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.'

As alternative readings are given, 'I will slay,' for 'I have slain'; and 'to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt,' in place of 'for wounding me,' etc.

Three explanations have been suggested:

Geddes says: 'The act of Lamech, in taking to himself two wives, had probably excited the jealousy of some young man, who, under the impulse of this passion, had attacked and wounded Lamech, and whom Lamech in his own defence had slain. To allay the fears of his wives, therefore, he argues, and justly, that if Cain had wilfully and maliciously killed his brother, and was nevertheless protected from the blood-avenger by the special providence of God, he might confidently expect the same protection, since the person whom he had slain had sought and endangered his life, and that a still heavier punishment than that which was threatened to the avenger of Abel's death would fall upon the man who should attempt to molest him.'

Bishop Harold Browne notices the obscure and enigmatical character of the passage, and adds: 'The apparent meaning of the words is this: Amid the violence of the times, especially among the descendants of Cain, Lamech comforts his wives with the assurance that, with the aid of the bronze and iron instruments now in his hands, he could kill anyone who injured him ("I slay, or would slay, a man for wounding me"); and that, if it had been promised to Cain that he should be avenged sevenfold, there was power in the hands of Lamech's family to avenge seventy and sevenfold. The speech is one of confident boasting. Lamech trusts in his weapons of brass and steel to maintain his cause, even when referring to words used by God to his forefather Cain.' The merit of this suggestion is that it gives a connection of the passage with preceding verses, and a reason for its retention in the Scripture record.

Inglis gives another explanation, which, he says, is not more conjectural, but seems better to fit the circumstances and the language of the poem. 'The poem has a connection with Lamech's daughter Naamah. It will be observed that the poem begins abruptly after the mention of her name, that the names of daughters are seldom given in Scripture history, and that we can generally discover in the context a reason for it, as in the case of Rachel, Dinah, Tamar, and that we should expect some reason for the place given here to Naamah in this brief history. Now, Naamah signifies "The Lovely"; it was a *young man* that her father slew; he protests that he is guiltless in this act, for if the death of a murderer was to be avenged sevenfold, his death, as an innocent man, should anyone slay him, would be avenged seventyfold. And it is to his *wives* he tells all this. What so probable as that he had slain this youth in defending his daughter, or in avenging her? There may even be a darker tale behind, a sad contrast to the outward glory of this family of inventors.

The special address to *both* his wives, and the reference to Cain, who shed a brother's blood, may suggest that this is the first product of polygamy—*a family tragedy.*'

Geikie supports *Bishop Browne's* suggestion: 'It is in keeping with the first mention of deadly weapons that their worst use is presently boasted. Armed by his son's invention, Lamech, "the wild man," the picture of a violent and darkening age, and the pitiless hero of the revengeful of after-days, in his joy at his new weapons, cries aloud to his wives in words which have come down to us as a fragment of ancient song.'

Panting after the Dust.

AMOS ii. 7: 'That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor.'

Difficulty.—*We have no associations which help to explain this strange figure.*

Explanation.—*Lowth* thinks the Latin gives the best sense of this sentence: 'Qui conterunt super pulverem terræ capita pauperum' —'Who tread down the heads of the poor into the dust of the earth;' that is, they throw them into the dust, and then trample upon them. The Chaldee paraphrase understands the verb *shaaph* in the sense of despising, which comes near the sense of trampling upon: the LXX. render it by καταπατέω, to tread upon, both here and in Psalm lvi. 1, 2; lvii. 3. The verb *shoph*, which is near akin to *shaaph*, plainly signifies to 'tread upon,' to 'bruise' (Gen. iii. 15).

The Revised Version suggests no alteration; and the Variorum Reference Bible indicates no alternative renderings. It may be an extravagant way of stating the grasping, avaricious spirit that will take everything the poor man has, and covet the very dust on his head. They utterly and shamelessly oppress the poor.

Roberts suggests an explanation from Indian customs. 'I believe the expression "dust of the earth" alludes to the lands of the poor, of which they had been deprived by the princes and judges. Nothing is more common in Eastern language than for a man to call his fields and gardens his *man*, that is, his dust, his earth. "That man has gnawed away my dust or sand." "Ah, the fellow! by degrees he has taken away all that poor man's earth." "The cruel wretch! He is ever trying to take away the dust of the earth." In consequence of there not being fences in the East, landowners often encroach on each other's possessions.'

Some interpret the verse as expressing the eager desire of the rich to see the head of the poor laid low and rolled in the dust. Others

think the verse rebukes that greediness after land which, in the prophet's sarcastic language, made men covet the very dust which the oppressed sprinkled on his head in token of mourning (Neh. ix. 1; Lam. ii. 10).

Ewald and Keil interpret thus: 'They long to see the poor reduced to such distress that dust is thrown on their heads in token of grief.'

'Water out of His Buckets.'

NUMBERS xxiv. 7: 'He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his kingdom shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.'

Difficulty.—*There is a mixture of metaphors in this verse which is altogether confusing.*

Explanation.—This is an illustration of the limitation of poetical figures to the associations, observations, and knowledge of the poet. Only a man living in a country dependent on *artificial irrigation* would have lighted on such a figure. The land of Egypt was watered by buckets, and the idea is presented of a land which would not be dependent on man's artificial watering, but would be duly supplied with rain from heaven, which is conceived of as 'water out of God's buckets.'

Literally, the clause should be rendered, 'He shall stream with water from his two buckets.' 'Balaam's native soil was ordinarily irrigated by water fetched from the neighbouring Euphrates, and carried in buckets suspended from the two ends of a pole. Water in the East is the first essential of all fertility. Thus the metaphor would import that Israel should have his own exuberant and unfailing channels of blessing and plenty.'

Geikie gives some interesting descriptions of the kind of watering by buckets from which Balaam may have obtained his figure; the precise point of his *application* of the figure is disputed, but the hint given above is so simple as to be on the whole satisfactory. Writing of the neighbourhood of Joppa, *Geikie* says: 'The harvest is everywhere immense, the abundance of water being the secret of this fertility. Wherever a well is sunk in the orchards, it is sure to tap a spring at a very moderate depth. It seems, in fact, as if a great subterranean stream runs continually from the hills towards the sea, under the whole of the lowlands, from above Joppa to Beersheba in the far south; for water can be had everywhere if a well be dug. The rains which fall on the porous strata of the mountains, or on the soft bosom of the plains, filter downwards till stopped, not far below

the surface, by a bed of hard limestone, which turns them off in a vast perennial stream, down its slope, towards the west. Every orchard has thus ample means of irrigation, effected by countless clumsy water-wheels, the creaking of which never ceases. These ingenious contrivances, though rudely enough put together, are at once simple and efficient. An ox, a mule, or an ass, yoked to a long pole projecting from the side of a thick upright post, and driven slowly round, turns this beam, which carries on its top a large horizontal wheel, with numerous wooden teeth, working into another wheel set up and down, and joined by a long wooden axle to a third, revolving, mill-fashion, into and out of the well. This lets down and draws up in turn, as it goes round, a series of pottery jars, or *wooden buckets*, fastened to it at short intervals by two thick, endless ropes of palm-fibre or myrtle-twigs, the roughness of which keeps them from slipping. As the jars or buckets pass over the top of the wheel, full of water, they empty themselves into a large trough, from which the life-giving stream runs into a little canal leading it through the orchard. This is tapped every here and there on its way, and thus furnishes numberless brooklets to moisten the roots of each tree; so that all, in effect, are planted "by the streams of waters." Modifications of the water-wheel are naturally met with in different parts of Palestine and Syria. Thus, on the Orontes, huge wheels, varying in diameter from fifteen to ninety feet, are set up between strong walls at the edge of the river, so that in revolving, by the force of the current, the rim, armed with a series of wooden *buckets*, dips into the water and fills each in succession, carrying the whole round with it till, as they begin to descend, after passing the top of the circle, the contents are discharged into a trough leading to a raised tank, from which little canals run off through the neighbouring gardens. . . . In many places, however, very simple wheels are sufficient, when the water is near the surface. Thus, at the Virgin's Tree, near Cairo, and in many parts of the sea-plain of Palestine, a horizontal cog-wheel, fixed on an upright shaft, from which a long pole projects at one side, works directly into an upright wheel, hung with wooden *buckets*, or earthenware jars, which, in turn, dip under the water, and duly empty their contents, as the wheel revolves, into a trough. A blindfolded ox at the outer end of the pole keeps the whole in motion as it paces round and round.'

A poet familiar with this watering of the land by *buckets* would, in a very simple and natural way, represent the rain as 'water out of God's buckets,' or 'out of the buckets provided by God.'

Water from the Ass's Jaw.

JUDGES xv. 19: 'But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.'

Difficulty.—*Water out of an ass's jaw implies so extraordinary, and so unnecessary, a miracle, that there surely must be some mistake in the language.*

Explanation.—This subject is carefully treated by *Dr. Abbott*, in his book, 'The Kernel and the Husk;' and as in his case there is full competency of knowledge and ability to deal with such a difficulty, the entire passage from his book may be given.

'You must recollect, and I think you ought to have been perplexed by, the astounding incident in the life of Samson connected with the "ass's jawbone." The hero is said first to have slain some hundreds of men with the jawbone of an ass, and then to have thrown away the jawbone in the anguish of a parching thirst. Upon this the Lord is said (in the Old Version of the Bible) to have opened a fountain of water in the hollow of the jawbone in answer to his cry: and the fountain was henceforth named *En-hakkore*, *i.e.*, the "fountain of him that calleth," because Samson "called upon the Lord." Moreover, when he cast away the jawbone, he is said to have called the place *Ramath-lehi*, which the margin (not of the New Version, but of the Old) interprets, "the lifting up of the jawbone," or "the casting away of the jawbone." Without pausing to dwell on the extreme improbability of the details of the story, I will merely state the probable explanation. It is probable that the valley containing the "hollow" in which the fountain lay, was called, from the configuration of the place, "the Ass's Jawbone," before the occurrence of any exploit of Samson in it. Indeed, we find it actually called "Lehi," or "Jawbone," in the narrative now under discussion, just before the supposed incident of the jawbone took place: "The Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in *Lehi* (Jawbone)," Judges xv. 9. This latter fact, indeed, is not conclusive (as the narrator, living long after the event, might possibly use the name of the place handed down to him, even in writing of a time when he believed the name to have been not yet given); but the probability of a natural explanation of the origin of the name receives strong confirmation from a passage in Strabo (303), who actually mentions some other place (I think in Peloponnesus), called the "Ass's Jawbone." I need not say that Strabo narrates no such Samsonian

incident to explain the name, and that it was probably derived (like Dog's Head, Hog's Back, and many other such names) from some similarity between the shape of an ass's jawbone, and the shape of the valley. Moreover, the word translated "hollow," though it might represent the cavity in an ass's jawbone, might also represent the hollow in a valley, as in Zephaniah (i. 11) "Howl, ye inhabitants of the *hollow*." Again, the name *Ramath-lehi* cannot mean "casting away of the jawbone;" it means "lifting up," or "*hill*" of Lehi; and accordingly the Revised Version translates, "that place was called Ramath-lehi;" and the margin represents the name thus, "*The hill* of the jawbone." I should add also that the Revisers—instead of the Old Version, "clave an hollow place *that was in the jaw*"—give us now, "clave the hollow place that *is* in *Lehi*." You must see now, surely, how on every side the old miraculous interpretation breaks down and makes way for a natural and non-miraculous explanation of the legend. But we have still to explain the name of the fountain, said to have been given from the "calling" of Samson. This is easily done. It appears that the phrase "him that calleth," or "the Caller," is a Hebrew name for the Partridge, so named from its "call" or "cry." The "Fountain of the Caller," therefore, in the "hollow-place" of the "Ass's Jawbone," was simply, as we might say, "Partridge Well in Jawbone Valley, which lay below Jawbone Hill."'

But now, many years after the champion of Israel had passed away, comes the legendary poet or historian, who has to tell of some great exploit of deliverance wrought by the hero Samson in this Valley of the Jawbone of the Ass by the side of the Fountain of the Caller. Straightway, every local name must be connected with the incident that fills his mind and the minds of all his countrymen who live in the neighbourhood. And so 'Jawbone Valley' became so called because it was there that Samson smote the Philistines with the 'Jawbone of an ass;' and 'Jawbone Heights' are so called because on this spot Samson 'lifted up' the jawbone against his foes, or 'threw it away' after he had destroyed them; and 'the Well of the Caller' derives not only its name, but even its miraculous existence from '*the calling* of Samson upon Jehovah.'

Farrar partly supports this view: 'The notion that God made a miraculous fountain in one of the tooth-sockets of the jawbone of an ass is one of the childish misinterpretations with which Scripture exegesis is constantly defaced. Lehi is here the name of the place, and if the fountain is said to have sprung up in *Hammaktesh*, "*the* tooth-socket" (Vulg. *molarem*), that is only due to the play on words

which characterizes the narrative. When the cliff had got the name of "Jawbone," the spring would naturally be called "a tooth-socket." The word "maktesh" probably means "a mortar" (Greek, *holmiskos;* Lat., *mortariolum*) (Prov. xxvii. 22); and this name was transferred to the sockets of teeth.'

Conder thinks he has identified the place: 'A little way north-west of Zoreah, seven miles from Beit Atab, is a low hill, on the slope of which are springs, called 'Ayûn Abu Mehârib, or the "fountains of the place of battles." Close by is a little Moslem chapel, dedicated to Sheikh Nedhîr, or "the Nazarite chief;" and higher up, a ruin with the extraordinary title "Isma 'Allah"—"the name of God." The Nazarite chief is probably Samson, whose memory is so well preserved in this small district, and the place is perhaps connected with one of his exploits. The "Ism Allah" is possibly a corruption of "Esm 'a Allah"—"God heard," in which case the incident intended will be the battle of Ramath-lehi. Finally, we were informed by a native of the place that the springs were sometimes called "'Ayûn Kâra," in which name we should recognise easily the En hakkore, or "fountain of the crier."'

Iron and Brass Shoes.

DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 25: 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.'

Difficulty.—*The figure of metal shoes is a strange one. Perhaps 'shoes' does not fittingly represent the Hebrew term.*

Explanation.—The Revised Version gives 'Thy *bars* shall be iron and brass': but it is not easy to see what can be meant by *bars*, as applied to the locality of a tribe. Possibly metals, more especially iron and copper, were found in this territory; but there is no evidence of Asher's being occupied in mining operations. It is better to see in this expression a striking, almost an extravagant, Eastern figure of speech. Put in simple form, it means that the strength and firmness of Asher should be as if he were shod with iron and brass. The Chaldee paraphrasts understand the sentence figuratively, 'Thou shalt be strong and bright as iron and brass.'

Bishop Wordsworth examines the figures carefully: 'Or thy bars and strongholds shall be iron and brass. The word rendered shoe (*mineal*) occurs only here. It has been supposed by some to mean a *bar*, or *bolt*. (So Arabic, Onkelos, Kimchi, R. Solomon, Gesenius, and Keil.) The root is *naal*, to fasten with a bolt; hence *naal*, a shoe, fastened by a latchet. But there does not seem to be sufficient

reason for abandoning the translation *shoes*, which is authorized by Sept., Vulg., Syriac: and there is something expressive in this figure, as indicating the force with which Asher would tread down his enemies. Besides, Asher had (it is probable) mines of iron and copper, and Misrephoth Maim, which seems to be in Asher, is said by the Rabbis to have been famous for its smelting furnaces, and to have derived its name from them.'

Dean Stanley says: 'Asher was to be "blessed with children," "acceptable to his brethren," dipping his foot in the "oil" of his olive-groves, shod with "the iron and brass" (copper) of Lebanon.' And he observes that iron is found in Lebanon; copper is not now found, but its frequent mention in connection with the Tyrians justifies the allusion.

Geikie intimates that Asher failed to reach, or to maintain, the destiny prophesied for it. With Naphtali Asher occupied the high lands stretching from the Jordan to the Phœnician plain. The portion of Asher reaching from Carmel northwards. But Asher could not, any more than Ephraim, hold his own against the chariots of the Canaanites, and was soon contented to live among them, rejoicing in the possession of some of the richest land in Palestine. . . . Sinking into purveyors for the Phœnician cities, they soon lost their high tone until national spirit had so faded away, that when Zebulon and Naphtali 'jeoparded their lives to the death,' in the struggle against Sisera, Asher cravenly sought its own interests in the havens and villages of its heathen allies.

The Undying Worm and Unquenched Fire.

ISAIAH lxvi. 24: 'For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhoring unto all flesh.'

Question.—*Can the associations on which this poetical figure is based be explained?*

Answer.—*Canon Rawlinson* says: 'It cannot be by chance that the Evangelical prophet concludes his glorious prophecy with this terrible note of warning. Either he was divinely directed thus to terminate his teaching, or he felt the need that there was of his emphasizing all the many warnings dispersed through his book, by a final, never-to-be-forgotten picture. The undying worm, and the quenchless fire—images introduced by him—became appropriated thenceforth to the final condition of impenitent sinners (Judith xvi. 17; Ecclus. vii. 17), and were even adopted by our Lord Himself in the same connection (Mark ix.). The incongruity of the two images shows

that they are not to be understood literally; but both alike imply everlasting continuance, and are incompatible with either of the two modern heresies of universalism or annihilationism.'

In criticism of this last remark it may be said that both the worm and the fire can only continue so long as they have suitable matter to *feed upon*. Without food neither worm nor flame can endure.

Cheyne, in his work on 'Isaiah,' discusses this sentence: 'By the inconsistency of the description, the prophet clearly warns us not to understand it literally. The Egyptian authors of the "Book of the Dead" would have equally deprecated a literal interpretation of the torments of the condemned. The eschatology of the Bible is symbolic; the prophet, like the other men of God, speaks in figures. His symbols are borrowed partly from the valley of Hinnom, which had formerly been the scene of the burnt sacrifices to Moloch, and afterwards became the receptacle of the filth of Jerusalem, and partly from the popular imaginations respecting the soul. We must be on our guard, however, against supposing that the kernel of his symbols is a mere abstraction. This would be high treason against his Semitic origin and his prophetical calling. There is no reasonable doubt that material torments form a very definite part of his eschatology. In one essential point, however, our prophet is distinguished from non-prophetical writers, viz.: his self-restraint in referring to the unseen world. . . . Did the prophet merely mean "that nothing should put the fire out, while any portion of the carcases remained to be devoured—that it should be unquenchable *until* it had done its work, and all was entirely consumed?" And, in the application of the figure to the soul, that pangs of conscience should continue to afflict the guilty ones until they were purified thereby? This, at any rate, does not seem to have been the interpretation of the early readers of the prophecy. The proverbial use of the fire and the worm in Sirach vii. 17; Judith xvi. 17, would hardly have arisen if the Jewish people had given the phrases so mild a meaning. But the theory mentioned may, I think, be refuted out of the Book of Isaiah itself, where we read (xxxiv. 10) respecting the fire with which guilty Edom is threatened, that it shall be quenchless, and that its smoke shall go up for ever, so that "none shall pass through" Edom "for ever and ever." There is no *arrière pensée* here; the everlastingness spoken of is absolute, and without qualification. The phrase "perpetual burnings" (xxxiii. 14) has quite another reference.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* gives the following note: 'Ordinarily, the "worm" feeds on the disorganized body, and then dies; the "fire" consumes its fuel, and goes out. But here is a strange

mystery of suffering—a worm not dying, a fire not becoming extinct —a remorseful memory of past guilt, an all-penetrating sense of Divine justice.'

Dean Plumptre has a valuable note on the passage as used by our Lord (Mark ix. 44): 'The words are taken almost *literatim* from the closing verse of Isaiah, where they appear as part of the description of the triumph of Jehovah. The true worshippers should serve in His Temple continually, and they should go forth and see the carcases of the transgressors, "for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." The scenery is, like that of Isa. lxiii. 1-6, drawn from the slaughter of earthly battles, and the prophet exults in vision over the putrid carcases and the blazing fires that consume them, and thinks of that scene as perpetuated throughout eternity. The imagery was thus already familiar, and it coalesced naturally with the ideas of Gehenna. Possibly the valley of Hinnom, as the great *cloaca* of Jerusalem, receiving its solid as well as its fluid sewage, with putrid offal and blazing fires consuming them, had become in this way a visible type of the unseen Gehenna; but the authorities are hardly definite enough to warrant the positive statement that it presented such a scene. The interpretation of the symbols (for a literal acceptance of the words is obviously out of the question) is not far to seek. Well-nigh all Christian thinkers have seen in the gnawing worm the anguish of an endless remorse, the memory of past sins. Fire retains its wonted force as the expression of the righteousness of God (Heb. xii. 29) manifesting itself to the consciousness of the sinner in all its awfulness, purifying where there is any desire, and therefore capacity, for purification, but never altering its essential character, even as the fire "never can be quenched." So much the words declare distinctly, as the law of righteous retribution. They do not absolutely exclude the thought that the fire may consume or destroy that which it cannot purify; still less do they affirm that it will.'

The 'Days' of Creation.

GENESIS i. 5: 'And the evening and the morning were the first day.'

Question.—*Is the term 'day' to be taken in a poetical, or in a natural, sense?*

Answer.—*Mr. W. E. Gladstone* can neither be regarded as a trained exegete nor as a trained theologian, but in dealing with the first chapter of Genesis he has skilfully expressed the conclusions which most reasonable and fair-minded men are prepared to accept.

The following passage from his article in *Good Words* bears relation to the 'days' into which the Creative action is divided.

'I submit that the days of creation are neither the solar days of twenty-four hours, nor are they the geological periods which the geologist himself is compelled popularly, and in a manner utterly remote from precision, to describe as millions upon millions of years. To use such language as this is simply to tell us that we have no means of forming a determinate idea upon the subject of the geologic periods. I set aside both these interpretations, as I do not think the Mosaist intended to convey an idea like the first, which was false, or like the second, which would have been barren and unmeaning. Unmeaning, and even confusing in the highest degree; for large statements in figures are well known to be utterly beyond comprehension for man at an early intellectual stage; and I have myself, I think, shown that, even among the Achaian or Homeric Greeks, the limits of numerical comprehension were extremely narrow, and all large numbers were used, so to speak, at a venture. It seems to me that the days of the Mosaist are more properly to be described as CHAPTERS IN THE HISTORY OF THE CREATION. That is to say, the purpose of the writer in speaking of the days was the same as the purpose of the historian is when he divides his work into chapters. His object is to give clear and sound instruction. So that he can do this, and in order that he may do it, the periods of time assigned to each chapter are longer or shorter according as the one or the other may minister to better comprehension of his subject by his readers. Further, in point of chronology, his chapters often overlap. He finds it needful, always keeping his end in view, to pursue some narrative to its close, and then, stepping backwards, to take up some other series of facts, although their exordium dated at a period of time which he has already traversed. The resources of the literary art, aided for the last four centuries by printing, enable the modern writer to confront more easily these difficulties of arrangement, and so to present the material to his reader's eye, in text or margin, as to place the texture of his chronology in harmony with the texture of the action he has to relate. The Mosaist, in his endeavour to expound the orderly development of the visible world, had no such resources. His expedient was to lay hold on that which to the mind of his time was the best example of complete and orderly division. This was the day, an idea at once simple, definite, and familiar. As one day is divided from another not by any change visible to the eye at a given moment, yet effectually by the broad chasm of the intervening night, so were the stages of the creative work several and distinct,

even if, like the lapse of time, they were without breach of continuity. Each had its work, each had the beginning and the completion of that work, even as the day is begun by its morning, and completed and concluded by its evening.

'And now to sum up. In order that the narrative might be intelligible, it was useful to subdivide the work. This could most effectively be done by subdividing it into periods of time. And further, it was well to choose that circumscription or period of time which is the most definite. Of these the day is clearly the best, as compared with the month or the year: first, because of its small and familiar compass; and, secondly, because of the strong and marked division which separates one day from another.

'Hence, we may reasonably argue, it is that not here only, but throughout the Scripture, and even down to the present time in familiar human speech, the day is figuratively used to describe periods of time, perfectly undefined as such, but defined, for practical purposes, by the lives or events to which reference is made. And if it be said there was a danger of its being misunderstood in this particular case, the answer is that such danger of misapprehension attaches in various degrees to all use of figurative language; but figurative language is still used. And with reason, because the mischiefs arising from such danger are rare and trivial, in comparison with the force and clearness which it lends to truth on its passage through a clouded atmosphere of folly, indifference, and prejudice, into the mind of man. In this particular case the danger and inconvenience are at their minimum, the benefit at its zenith; for no moral mischief ensues because some have supposed the days of the creation to be pure solar days of twenty-four hours, while the benefit has been that the grand conception of orderly development, and ascent from chaos to man, became among the Hebrew people a universal and familiar truth, of which other races appear to have lost sight.'

Dean Payne Smith describes a creative day as not a period of twenty-four hours, but an *æon*, or period of indefinite duration; and he tells us that among the Chaldæans a cosmic day was a period of 43,200 years, being the equivalent of the cycle of the procession of the equinoxes.

Kurtz suggests that the revelation of the manner of creation was made in a succession of representations or pictures, displayed before the mental vision of the tranced seer.

The explanations offered may be briefly summarized. There is the *literal interpretation*, which sees in the 'days' twenty-four hours. Some regard the 'days' as *periods*. Some treat the account of the

creation as a series of dramatic scenes presented in vision, each scene answering to a 'day.' And the strange notion has been suggested that the work of the six days only refers to the fitting up of that particular portion of the earth, which was the first abode of man.

The Fire of God.

JOB i. 16: 'While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped to tell thee.'

Question.—*May we identify this poetical description as referring to the lightning?*

Answer.—Probably we may. Lightning has done all that this 'fire of God' is represented as doing. It strikes dead. It sets buildings alight. And yet the reading of Holy Scripture leaves on us the impression of something unusual in these manifestations of the 'fire of God.' This report of the servant of Job can hardly be explained by the consequences of lightning-flash: it better suits a blast of the hot scorching wind. But if we regard the Book of Job as a poetical creation, we are relieved of the necessity for finding facts of history precisely answering its descriptions.

A simple explanation has been offered. The term 'Fire of God' may be only a figure for a 'great destructive fire,' according to the Hebrew idiom, which calls great trees 'trees of God,' and great mountains 'hills of God.' Then we can suppose that some calamity of an ordinary character is referred to. It would not be difficult for those who are familiar with prairie fires to imagine the disaster which had overtaken the sheep.

Other suggestions have been made. Some think the sultry, poisonous wind of the desert, the *Samoom* (Samûm), may be meant. It suddenly destroys man and beast. It is indicated by certain atmospheric phenomena, appearing first of a yellow colour, which changes to a leaden hue, and spreads through the atmosphere, so that the sun when at the brightest becomes a dark red.

Delitzsch thinks a rain of fire or brimstone such as fell on Sodom and Gomorrah may be meant; but we have no historical records of such rains, nor any experiences to help us in conceiving such. Most writers prefer to identify the term as poetical for 'lightning.' The *Speaker's Commentary* says, 'This is a new and more terrible calamity. Incursions of robbers must have entered into the calculations of a rich chieftain in the Hauran, but a storm extending over the vast tracts occupied by seven thousand sheep, and destroying them,

together with their guards, would scarcely be attributed to merely natural causes, certainly not in that age by God-fearing men.'

The particular expression is also found in connection with Elijah. (See 1 Kings xviii. 24; 2 Kings i. 12.)

'None shut up, or left.'

2 KINGS xiv. 26: 'For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel.'

Question.—*What could have been the condition of the people which is thus described?*

Answer.—We must get the precise turn of the expression from the Revised Version. 'For there was none shut up, nor left at large, neither was there any helper for Israel.' From 1 Kings xiv. 10 we gather that the words 'shut up and left' were an alliterative phrase, meaning 'men of all sorts.' It may mean, 'whether a man be young, and so under wardship, or older, and free to go about as he pleases. Hence the expression amounts to "young and old."' There was no one, great or small, young or old, to whom they could look for aid.

In a special note on Deut. xxxii. 36, where this expression first appears, the *Speaker's Commentary* says: 'The phrase is proverbial, and based upon a paronomasia (עצור ועזוב). Its general sense is clear. It means, 'all men of all sorts'; and its literal force is correctly given in the Authorised Version, though the word translated 'left' might perhaps as well be rendered 'set free.' Its original and proper significance has, however, been uncertain from very early times. The best explanation of it is probably that of De Dieu, which has analogies in the Arabic, and is followed by Dathe, Baumgarten, Delitzsch, Keil, Knobel, etc., who regard it as originally meaning "married and single" (*cf.* the German *ledig*). Others (Rosenmüller, Gesenius, De Wette, etc.) suggest "bond and free," or "confined and at large"; others (Kimchi and some Jewish authorities) 'precious' (and so "shut up and guarded"), and "vile" (and so neglected); others (Fürst, etc.), "He who is restrained and he who is his own Master," which is substantially identical with "he who is not of full age, and he who is so, and therefore is independent."'

This passage provides a striking illustration of a large number of Bible expressions which are exceedingly difficult for us to understand, because they are colloquial sayings, people's proverbs, which depend for their point on the precision with which they are repro-

duced in another language, and the degree in which we can recover the associations which once made them effective. These people's proverbs turn, oftentimes, on the double meaning attached to words, and that double meaning may be quite beyond our reach, because one of the meanings may be a local and temporary, and not a dictionary meaning. Great confusion may be made by missing the particular connotation given to a term in a proverb at some definite period of a nation's history, or in some limited part of a country. The familiar saying in Isaiah, 'Precept must be upon precept; line upon line,' is an effective illustration. It really is an imitation of the thickened speech of drunken revellers in the days of Isaiah; but this does not appear in our English translation, and consequently we fix new ideas of our own to Isaiah's words.

Sin with a Cart-Rope.

ISAIAH v. 18: 'Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope.'

Question.—*What characteristic feature of sin does this figure indicate?*

Answer.—There are no associations of modern life that help to make this figure intelligible; and one is tempted to think that the precise force of the original word can hardly have been caught; but the Revised Version suggests no alteration, and there are no various renderings; so we are left to discover what explanations have been given by Bible writers.

Henderson criticises other explanations, and gives his own. 'The idea of drawing out or continuing in the practice of sin, and thereby accumulating it, like a rope-maker, who continually adds to his materials, first suggested by Houbigant, and approved by Lowth, is quite forced; having no other ground than the simple occurrence of the terms *cords* and *ropes;* which are manifestly spoken of as implements, by the use of which the action was performed, and not themselves the subjects of the operation. Besides, it is at variance with the following context. The meaning is, that the persons described were not satisfied with ordinary modes of provoking the Deity, and the consequent ordinary approach of His vengeance, but, as it were, yoked themselves in the harness of iniquity, and putting forth all their strength, drew down upon themselves with accelerated speed the load of punishment which their sins deserved. The verse would better read, "Woe to them that draw calamity with cords of inquity, and punishment as with the ropes of a cart."' Drawing *punishment*

down as with a cart-rope is altogether more intelligible than drawing *sin*.

Dean Plumptre suggests other associations. 'This phrase is boldly figurative. Evil-doers are thought of as harnessing themselves to the chariot of sin. The "cords of vanity"—*i.e.*, of *emptiness*, or ungodliness—are the habits by which they are thus bound. The "cart-ropes," thicker and stronger than the "cords," represent the extreme stage, when such habits become irresistibly dominant. Probably the words may point to some idolatrous procession, in which the chariot of Baal or Ashtaroth was thus drawn by their worshippers like that of Demêter or Cybele in Greece, or Juggernâth in India.'

As showing how difficult it is to be satisfied with any explanation of striking and unusual Eastern figures, the criticism of *J. A. Alexander* may be given: 'This verse contains the third woe, having reference to presumptuous sinners who defy God's judgments. They are here represented not as drawn away by sin (Jas. i. 14), but as laboriously drawing it to them by soliciting temptation, drawing it out by obstinate persistency in evil and contempt of divine theatenings. *Woe to the drawers of iniquity* (those drawing, those who draw it) with cords of vanity and sin (a parallel expression to iniquity) as (or as with) a cart-rope, *i.e.*, a strong rope, implying difficulty and exertion. The interpretation which supposes *iniquity* and *sin* to mean *calamity* and *punishment* (*Menochius*, *Gesenius*, *Ewald*, *Hendewerk*, *Henderson*), although it seems to make the sentence clearer, impairs its strength, and takes the words in an unusual and doubtful sense. *Knobel* objects that men cannot be said to draw sin with cords of sin. But even this figure is perfectly consistent both with reason and experience. Or *vanity* may be taken in the sense of falsehood or sophistical reasoning by which men persuade themselves to sin (Calv. Vitr. Cler.). The Targum, followed by *Jarchi*, supposes an antithesis between the beginnings of sin and its later stages, slight cords and cart-ropes. But this confounds the sin itself with the instrument by which they draw it; and the same objection lies against the Syriac and Vulgate Versions, which make *drawing out*, or protracting, the primary idea, and also against Houbigant's and Lowth's interpretation, which supposes an allusion to the process of rope-making. Luther's idea that the verse relates to combination among wicked men, "who bind themselves together" to do mischief, is at variance with the usage of the Hebrew verb. The true interpretation of the verse, which supposes the act described to be that of laboriously drawing sin to one's self, perhaps with the accessory idea

of drawing it out by perseverance, is substantially given by Kimchi, Vitringa, J. D. Michaelis, Hitzig, Maurer, and Umbreit.'

Cheyne explains thus: 'In their "emptiness" of true religion, these men allow themselves to be yoked to sin like beasts of burden. The same figure is found in the Rig Veda (Max Müller's translation) —"Undo the rope of sin."'

The *Speaker's Commentary* reads, 'As if they had yoked themselves, like bullocks, to drag onward their piles of ungodliness.'

God Pressed as a Loaded Cart.

AMOS ii. 13: 'Behold I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.'

Question.—*What idea of God is thus presented?*

Answer.—*Van Lennep* tells us that in many portions of Asia Minor, the sheaves are piled into a rude cart, upon which they are kept from falling by a wicker-work about four feet high. These carts, or *arabas*, are probably similar to those used by the Hebrews, and drawn by a pair of oxen.

Describing harvesting operations, *Geikie* says: 'The bundles of cut grain are carried on asses, or sometimes on camels, to the open-air threshing-floor, near the village; one of the huge bundles, nearly as large as the camel itself, being hung on each side of the patient beast, in a rough netting of rope, as he kneels to receive them. Rising and bearing them off, he once more kneels at the threshing-floor, to have them removed, returning forthwith to the reapers to repeat the same round.' According to *Geikie*, there are no wheeled vehicles now in Palestine, though there were in antiquity. And *Ayre* says, that 'at present wheel-carriages are all but unknown in Syria; the only carts known in Western Asia have two wheels of solid wood, such as may be seen in Spain.'

The passage is a difficult one, because the grammatical form obscures the point. *Bishop Wordsworth* gives a suggestive explanation: 'The propriety of the simile of the cart, pressed down and groaning with its load of ripe sheaves, consists further in this, that the cart bears them to the threshing-floor, and shoots them down there to be threshed. In like manner, Israel, wearying God with the weight of their sins, will be cast down by Him on the threshing-floor, to be crushed like sheaves by the sharp threshing instruments of Divine judgment.' *St. Jerome* says: 'As a cart loaded heavily with corn or hay, creaks and groans with the weight, so I, overburdened by your

sins, utter my voice and say, "The flight shall perish from the swift."'

Some take the passage as correctly rendered in the Authorised Version: 'The difficulty of the passage consists chiefly in the form of the verb here employed by the prophet, which cannot be adequately rendered by the passive, "I am pressed." Its meaning may be conveyed by "I feel pressed or straitened": "Behold I, even I, feel the pressure of your sins, as the cart that is full of sheaves (full as it can hold, is the meaning of the idiom) feels its heavy load."'

The marginal rendering suggests a different idea: 'I will press your place, as a cart full of sheaves presseth.' But this is open to 'more than one objection. It violates the Hebrew idiom, and gives a turn to the passage which ill-agrees with the image employed. The pressure of a heavily-laden *cart* on the *ground* can hardly represent the *crushing* of a people. The punishment, too, seems to be described in the words that follow.'

Job's Perfectness.

JOB i. 8: 'And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?'

Difficulty.—*The term 'perfect,' as we understand it, cannot properly be applied to any human being.*

Explanation.—Much confusion has been caused by our failing to see that the word 'perfect' as used in the Scripture is a figurative and poetical term, and not strictly descriptive and logical. A doctrine of 'perfectionism' would never have been created if the suggestive character of this word had been properly estimated. As used in the Old Testament, it represents the simple, single-hearted man, who has but one ruling purpose; who means to do right, whenever he can see what is right. The perfect man is the man who does not wilfully or consciously commit sin: but the idea of an absolute and entire freedom from all taint or peril of sin never enters into the Old Testament term. In such a sense no individual is presented to us in the ancient histories.

In the New Testament the word 'perfect' sometimes is the same as 'complete,' 'entire,' with no part or faculty lacking, or undeveloped. But as our Lord used the word, it retains its Old Testament idea of 'simple, sincere, single-willed, resolutely set on the good, and the right.'

In the description of Job four characteristics are mentioned: '*Perfect*,' as opposed to 'perverse,' 'self-willed.' '*Upright*,' fair, honour-

able, straightforward, in all his dealings with men. '*One that feareth God*,' and therefore offers Him the worship, and the service, that are His due. '*Escheweth evil*,' finds everything wilful and disobedient actually distasteful to him. He had such an inward-abiding sense of God's holiness, that all evil—and the essence of evil is *wilfulness*—was abhorrent to him.

The precise use of the term in this Book of Job is indicated by *Dr. A. B. Davidson*: 'The term "perfect" means properly "complete," without defect. It does not imply that the man was sinless, for Job never puts forward any such pretension' (and we should not believe him if he did), 'but that he was a righteous man, and free from specific sins such as were held to bring down the chastisement of heaven. That he was so is the very foundation of his trial and the first principle of the book. Job's "perfection" is affirmed in heaven (ch. i. 8; ii. 3); it is understood by his wife: "Dost thou still hold fast thy perfection?" (ii. 9); and it is persistently claimed for himself by Job, not only in moments of excitement when stung by the insinuations of his friends: "I *am* perfect" (ix. 21), but also when the heat of the conflict is over, and under the most solemn oaths: "As God liveth, who hath taken away my right . . . I will not remove my perfection from me; my righteousness I hold fast" (xxvii. 2, 5, 6). The word occurs again, xxxi. 6, and in another form (xii. 4), "The just, perfect man is laughed to scorn." Even the three friends admit Job's perfectness in general, although they are under the impression that he must have been guilty of some serious offences to account for his calamities, and they urge it upon Job as a ground of confidence for his ultimate recovery: "Is not thy hope the perfectness of thy ways?" (iv. 6); and again: "God will not cast away a perfect man" (viii. 20). One of the objects the writer of the book had in view was to teach that sufferings may fall on men for reasons unconnected with any sin on their own part; and using the history of Job for this purpose, it was necessary that he should lay emphasis in all parts of the book upon Job's perfection. The term "perfect" is used of Noah in the same sense: Noah, a just man, was perfect in his generation; that is, he was righteous and exempt from the sins of his contemporaries' (Gen. vi. 9).

It is a sufficient proof that the Hebrew word here used for 'perfect' (tam) cannot mean 'without any human failings' that it is applied to Jacob (Gen. xxv. 27), who was certainly not without his frailties.

'Perfect' may be said to include *completeness* in all the parts of moral character: *sincerity*, which is rather a matter of purpose than of performance, but is the foundation of a gracious character; and

blamelessness, or moral integrity. A man may be blameless though not sinless; he may be blameless as judged by a human standard, not sinless when judged by the Divine standard. In a sense carefully limited, perfection may be said to belong to saints both of the Old and New Testaments; but the holiness of believers on earth can only be partial and progressive. Christ is the only absolutely righteous and perfect One.

The Picture of Old Age.

ECCLESIASTES xii. 1: 'While the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them,' etc.

Question.—*Should this picture be regarded as suitable only to the miserable old age of a worn-out sensualist?*

Answer.—The old age that follows on a sober and healthy life is not fitly described in this passage. The point of the passage is the misery of the old man who has nourished sensual desires and passions, until they have become masterful, and yet has no longer any bodily power to indulge them: and there is no misery to be compared with that which such an old man knows. Set a fair description of an old Christian's experience over against this description of the sensualist's old age, and the contrast will be seen to be most striking.

Dr. James Hamilton takes this view of the passage: 'A dissipated youth is sure to be followed by a cross and joyless old age. During the years of his ungodliness, Solomon had been a fast liver, and, most likely, he now felt creeping over him the jejune and dreary feelings which foretell a premature decline. No dew of youth survived to create a green old age, and having forestalled the reserve of strength and spirits, he had failed withal to lay up against this time a good foundation of faithful friends and pleasant memories. The portrait is general; but an old worldling seems to have supplied the original.'

Dean Plumptre says of this chapter: 'The description which follows forms in some respects the most difficult of all the enigmas of the book. That it represents the decay of old age, or of disease anticipating age, ending at last in death, lies beyond the shadow of a doubt; but the figurative language in which that decay is represented abounds in allusive references which were at the time full of meaning for those that had ears to hear, but which now present riddles which it is not easy to solve. Briefly, the two chief lines on which commentators have travelled have been (1) that which starts, as in the comment of Gregory Thaumaturgus, from the idea of the

approach of death as the on-coming of a storm; (2) that which assumes that we have, as it were, a diagnosis of the physical phenomena of old age and its infirmities, and loses itself in discussions as to what bodily organ, heart, brain, liver, gall-duct, or the like, is specially in the author's mind. It will be seen, as the imagery comes before us in detail, how far either solution is satisfactory, how far they admit of being combined, or what other, if any, presents itself with stronger claims on our attention. The "evil days" are those which are painted in the verses that follow, not necessarily the special forms of evil that come as a punishment of sensual sins, but the inevitable accompaniment of declining years, or disease. There is the implied warning that unless a man has remembered his Creator in his youth, it will not then be easy to remember Him as for the first time in the "evil days" of age or infirmity. In those days it will be emphatically true that there will be no pleasure in them.'

Francis Jacox has the following passage: 'Graphic, after the manner of the man, is Dr. South's picture of the old age that comes to wait upon what he calls a "great and worshipful sinner," who for many years together has had the reputation of eating well and doing ill. "It comes (as it ought to do to a person of such quality) attended with a long train and retinue of rheums, coughs, catarrhs, and dropsies, together with many painful girds and achings, which are at least called the gout. How does such a one go about, or is carried rather, with his body bending inward, his head shaking, and his eyes always watering (instead of weeping) for the sins of his ill-spent youth. In a word, old age seizes upon such a person like fire upon a rotten house; it was rotten before, and must have fallen of itself, so that it is no more but one ruin preventing another." Virtue, we are admonished, is a friend and a help to Nature, but it is vice and luxury that destroy it, and the diseases of intemperance are the natural products of the sins of intemperance. "Chastity makes no work for a chirurgeon, nor ever ends in rottenness of bones." Whereas, sin is the fruitful parent of distempers, and ill lives occasion good physicians.'

'You must become an old man betimes, if you would be an old man long,' runs the Latin adage, implying that you must put an early stop on the irregularities of young blood if you care to attain length of days.

According to *Lowth*, 'by the "keepers of the house" the sacred penman describes the hands and the arms, which in old age "tremble"; and by the "strong men" he represents the "legs" which "bow themselves." "The grinders" are the teeth, which

"fail because they are few," whilst "those that look out at the windows" mean the eyes, which are "darkened." "The doors shut in the street" indicate the lips, necessarily closed by the loss of the teeth, which causes "the sound of the grinding to be low." The hoary head is depicted by the "flourishing of the almond-tree," whose blossoms are white and very abundant. "The silver cord" is generally thought to figure the spinal marrow, "the golden bowl" the skull, which contains the brain; "the pitcher broken at the fountain" indicates that the functions of the heart have ceased; and "the wheel broken at the cistern" the action of the lungs being at an end.'

For the scheme by which the figures are explained as the on-coming of a storm, see *S. Cox's 'Quest of the Chief Good.'*

Jotham's Parable.

JUDGES ix. 7: 'And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.'

Question.—*What differences can be observed between this parable and the parables of the New Testament?*

Answer.—*Dr. Douglas* says: 'Though this (parable) is the name so long applied (to Jotham's speech) that it may be difficult now to effect a change, it is manifestly incorrect. A parable has to do with the kingdom of God and the workings of grace; and though it uses natural objects for illustration, it never transgresses the limits of actual occurrences. But this is a fable, in which there is no hesitation about making trees and animals speak, and which has for its purpose only moral lessons in the sphere of natural life. Yet it is true that a fable in the mouth of a godly Israelite would present some points of contact with a parable, especially as Abimelech's ambition invaded the province of the true though invisible king of Israel. This is the most ancient fable known: and its beauty and completeness have made it very familiar to all readers of the Bible, for which reason there is little need of comment, if we recollect the fundamental truth, that Israel had as little need of a king as had the trees.'

Dean Stanley says: 'In the parable of Jotham—the earliest known fable—we fall upon the first instance of that peculiar kind of composition, in which the Eastern and Western imagination coincide. The fables of Æsop are alike Grecian and Indian. The fable of Jotham might, as far as its spirit goes, have been spoken in the market-place of Athens or of Rome as appropriately as on the heights of Gerizim.'

Farrar tells us that 'fables are extremely popular in the East, where they are often current, under the name of the slave-philosopher Lokman, the counterpart of the Greek Æsop. But though there are many apologues and parables in Scripture, there is only one other fable, and that is one closely akin to this (2 Kings xiv. 9). St. Paul, however, in 1 Cor. xii. 14-19, evidently refers to the ancient fable of Menenius Agrippa, about the belly and the members (Livy, ii. 30). A fable is a fanciful story, to inculcate prudential morality. In the Bible "trees" seem to be more favourite *dramatis personæ* than the talking birds and beasts of other nations.'

Dr. Paulus Cassel, in a note in 'Lange's Commentary,' brings out some fresh and interesting points: 'Fable and so-called apologue are of Oriental, non-Israelitish, as also non-Grecian, origin. They spring from a pantheism in which trees and animals furnished symbols for expressing the popular ideas. Although rooted in the religious vivification of nature, their employment was, nevertheless, brought to maturity by the pressure of social necessities. In the East fable and tale were always the weapons of mind against violence and tyranny. They furnished the people with individual consolation against general misery. In their original appearance among the Greeks also, they fail not to exhibit this character. In the same way, Jotham speaks to the tyrants of Shechem in this popular language, which all understand. He does not speak like a prophet, for he is none, and Baal has stopped the ears of his auditors. He does not even speak of the power and mighty deeds of Jehovah, from whom his own name is derived. He speaks of Elohim, and His retributions—of the Deity in the general sense in which the heathen also acknowledge him. He speaks altogether in their language, popularly, with popular wisdom. But what a difference between the moral strength which justifies Jotham to put forth his parable, and (for instance) the motives of the Greek Archilochus. There we hear the wounded vanity of a rejected suitor; here, one solitary voice of indignation and truth against the tyrant and murderer. By this moral motive, Jotham elevates the parable to the level of the Divine word, and furnishes the first illustration of how a popular form of discourse, the offspring of directly opposite principles, could be employed for moral purposes, and (in the parables of Christ) become a medium for the highest doctrines and mysteries.'

Trench points out the two leading distinctions between a fable and a parable, from which we gather that the distinction lies rather in their *spheres* than in their literary characteristics: 'The parable is constructed to set forth a truth spiritual and heavenly; this the fable,

with all its value, is not. It is essentially of the earth, and never lifts itself above the earth. It never has a higher aim than to inculcate maxims of prudential morality, industry, caution, foresight; and these it will sometimes recommend even at the expense of the higher self-forgetting virtues. The fable just reaches that pitch of morality which the world will understand and approve . . . the parable is deeply in earnest, allowing itself therefore no jesting nor raillery at the weaknesses, the follies, or the crimes of men. . . . There is another point of difference between the parable and the fable. While it can never be said that the fabulist is regardless of truth, since it is neither his intention to deceive, when he attributes language and discourse of reason to trees, birds, and beasts, nor is anyone deceived by him; yet the severer reverence for truth, which is habitual to the higher moral teacher, will not allow him to indulge even in this sporting with the truth, this temporary suspension of its laws, though upon agreement, or, at least, with tacit understanding. In his mind, the creation of God, as it came from the Creator's hands, is too perfect, has too much of reverence owing to it, to be represented otherwise than as it really is. The great Teacher by parables, therefore, allowed Himself in no transgression of the established laws of Nature—in nothing marvellous, or anomalous; He presents to us no speaking trees, nor reasoning beasts, and we should be at once conscious of an unfitness in His so-doing.'

'Concerning the Vapour.'

JOB xxxvi. 33: 'The cattle also concerning the vapour.'

Difficulty.—*This must be an imperfect translation, for it conveys no meaning to the reader as it stands.*

Explanation.—There is perhaps no other case in the Bible in which the English translation is so absolutely unintelligible to the ordinary reader; and it would be difficult to find a more striking instance of the need for a Revised Version. The full passage, as given in the Authorised and in the Revised Versions, will impress the value of the service which the Revisers have rendered us.

Authorised Version.—'With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not to shine* by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt. The noise thereof showeth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.' Marg., 'that which cometh up.'

Revised Version.—'He covereth his hands with the lightning' (marg., 'light'); 'and giveth it a charge that it strike the mark'

(marg., 'against the assailant'). 'The noise thereof telleth concerning him' (marg., 'it'), 'the cattle also concerning *the storm* that cometh up' (marg., 'him that cometh up').

But even the *Revised Version* needs some explanation, for the poetical figures are very abrupt and involved.

Delitzsch translates as poetry:

> 'Both hands he covereth over with light,
> And directeth it as one who hitteth the mark.
> His noise announceth Him,
> The cattle even that He is approaching.'

Dr. A. B. Davidson also translates as poetry:

> 'He covereth over His hands with light,
> And giveth it commandment against the adversary;
> His thundering telleth concerning Him;
> Unto the cattle, even concerning Him that cometh up.'

The subject is evidently God's manifestation of Himself in a thunder-storm. The lightning is held in His hands, and it illuminates the hands that hold it. God directeth the aim of the lightning as the soldier his arrows. The thunder that follows the lightning is a voice for God, declaring His majesty and power. And even the cattle are affected by the coming storm, and are poetically thought of as, in their fear, learning something concerning God. It is uncertain whether the last clause of verse 33 should be referred to the coming storm, or to God as coming up in the storm.

Bishop Wordsworth explains thus: 'The cattle also give notice of His rising up. Even the irrational animals, the herds and flocks, feel the presence of God in the elements, and give presages of the coming storm, when He rises up to show His majesty and power; how much more oughtest thou, who art endued with reason, to recognise the working of God in the universe? Probably, while Elihu was uttering these words, there were symptoms visible of the coming storm, and of the sweeping forward of the whirlwind, from which the Lord spake to Job (see xxxviii. 1), and perhaps even the cattle in the neighbouring fields, cowering beneath the tempest, gave signs of the approach of their Creator.'

The note in *Speaker's Commentary* gives a different turn to the passage by omitting the reference to the 'cattle.' 'These two verses are exceeding obscure, and the meaning of nearly every word is disputed. The following interpretation, on the whole, seems to adhere most closely to the text, and to be best adapted to the context: 'He clothed His hands with light' (sc. lightning), 'and giveth it command whom it shall reach; the sound thereof' (the crash that follows the

lightning) 'announces concerning Him fierceness of wrath against unrighteousness.' This rendering requires no change in the letters, and but a slight change in the punctuation.'

Dr. Stanley Leathes says of verse 33: 'This verse is extremely difficult, and the sense very uncertain. We may translate the first clause, "The noise thereof" (*i.e.*, the crash of the thunder) "declareth concerning Him"; it is His voice, and speaks of Him; but the last clause is almost unintelligible. The words as they stand mean, or may mean, *cattle even concerning a goer-up;* but what this means, who shall say? Possibly, *the thunder-crash telleth the cattle even concerning Him who goeth up—i.e.*, even the cattle show, by their terror, that the thunder speaketh to them of God, who goeth up on high. Some render the last clause, "The cattle also concerning Him as He riseth up"; or, "The cattle also concerning the rising storm." There can be no doubt but that the general meaning is that all nature participateth in the terror caused by the thunder, which is regarded as the audible voice of God; but what the exact expression of this general thought may be it is very hard to say.'

Delitzsch says: 'It is to be interpreted: His thunder-clap announces Him (who is about to reveal Himself as a merciful judge), the cattle even (announce) Him at His first rising up, since at the approach of a storm they herd together affrighted and seek shelter. The speakers are Arabian, and the scene is laid in the country. Elihu also refers to the animal world in ch. xxxv. 11. This feature of the picture, therefore, cannot be surprising.'

The 'Eloi' of David.

PSALM xxii. 1: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?'

Difficulty.—*This may be either an anticipative representation of our Redeemer's agony, or an actual expression of the Psalmist's distress.*

Explanation.—Probably most readers of the Psalm will feel that the language is too strained and intense to be wholly fitted to any ordinary human experience; but it is the genius of the poet to idealize human experiences, and present them in what men, in their calmer moods, may think exaggerated terms. How far the Hebrew poets must be regarded as having also prophetic insight, and anticipating the experiences of Messiah, will be decided by the school of thought to which we belong. The tendency of some minds is to exaggerate the supernatural element in the Bible, and find it every-

where, and in every conceivable connection. The tendency of other minds is to a strict limitation of the supernatural element. If God be fully recognised as working in the *natural*, little can be gained by making for Him supernatural situations. It may be fairly urged that, making due allowance for the poetical form of this passage, it expresses a time of great mental distress; and because the words were suitable, they were used by our Lord as fittingly uttering the mental distress accompanying His last bodily agonies. The words suited the Psalmist, but they even better suit our Lord.

Great differences of opinion are found as to the authorship of the Psalm. Some argue that it is David's; others ascribe it to Jeremiah; others to one of the exiles in Babylon. Some urge that the nation Israel is in it personified; and some declare that as it neither suits David, nor Jeremiah, nor anyone else, it must be entirely prophetic, and refer to the Man of Sorrows, and to Him alone.

Dean Perowne thinks 'the Psalm was composed by one of the exiles during the Babylonish captivity. And though the feelings and expressions are clearly individual, not national, yet they are the feelings and expressions of one who suffers not merely as an individual, but, so to speak, in a representative character. Naturally, one who was made the scoff and derision of the heathen, and the object of their worst cruelty, would cling to the thought that he suffered not only as an individual, but as one of the chosen of God. The bitterness of his grief was that God—so it seemed—had forsaken him; the joy born out of that grief was that he should yet praise God for His saving health in the midst of his brethren (delivered like himself out of the hands of their oppressors), and that thus, and as a consequence of this deliverance, all the kindreds of the nations should worship before the Lord.'

Aglen's note in *Ellicott's Commentary* is perhaps the most satisfactory and suggestive, and best meets the difficulty above indicated. 'The fact that Jesus uttered from His Cross the words of bitter woe that begin this poem, have given, and must ever give it, a special interest and importance. It was natural that Christian sentiment should fasten lovingly on it, and almost claim it, not only as a record of suffering typical of our Lord's suffering, but as actually in every detail prophetic of Him. But the signs of a true Messianic character of prophecy are to be looked for in moral likeness, not in accidental resemblances of situation, or coincidences of language, and in this sense Ps. xxii. must ever be considered Messianic.

'Nothing in David's recorded life bears out the title. The identification of the sufferer with Jeremiah, though much more probable, is

excluded by the joyous and hopeful tone of the conclusion of the poem. But is it an individual sufferer at all, and not rather suffering Israel, whose profound misery in the first part, and whose happy restoration in the second, the poet depicts? If such an interpretation suits the description of the suffering servant of Jehovah in Isaiah lii., liii., as many critics think (*cf.* Isa. xlix. 3), it suggests itself for this Psalm, which has so many points of analogy with that passage. The herds of wild beasts that surround the sufferer are more appropriate as a figure of hostile tribes than of personal enemies, and the vivid picture of suffering in verses 14 and 15 are not less applicable to the material condition of an oppressed nation than the description in Isa. i. 5, 6, is to their moral condition. Such a view certainly suits the conclusion of the Psalm better than any other. . . . Still, the strong personal tone in the opening of the Psalm suggests that this prophet was himself closely identified with the sufferings he depicts, and shared them not only in sympathy but in reality, and the great consensus of opinion looks for the author among the sufferers in the exile, and probably among the Levites.'

The natural expression of mental distress takes form as a *question.* This question of the text is not any asking with desire or expectation of answer. It is no more than an uttering aloud of the anguish of the soul which creates doubt and fear. *Delitzsch* points out that this disconsolate cry of anguish 'is neither an expression of impatience nor despair, but of alienation and yearning. The sufferer feels himself rejected of God; the feeling of Divine wrath has completely enshrouded him; and still he knows himself to be joined to God in fear and love; his present condition belies the real nature of his relationship to God; and it is just this contradiction that urges him to the plaintive question which comes up from the lowest depths: Why hast thou forsaken me? But in spite of this feeling of desertion by God, the bond of love is not torn asunder; the sufferer calls God '*My God*,' and, urged on by the loving desire that God again would grant him to feel this love, he calls Him, '*My God, my God.*' That complaining question, 'Why hast Thou forsaken Me?' is not without example even elsewhere in the Psalms. See lxxxviii. 15; *cf.* Isa. xlix. 14.

The Champion Figure of Messiah.

ISAIAH lxiii. 1: 'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.'

Question.—*Can this be exclusively applied to Messiah, or must we see a first reference to some ordinarily historical person?*

Answer.—Much depends on the principles of interpretation which we adopt. If the Bible is treated as a book whose language is to suggest Christian thoughts and associations, allusions to the Messiah may easily be found anywhere and everywhere. If the Bible is regarded as a book of history and literature, having its direct references to the times in which the books were written, or the prophecies uttered, then it will be felt that this passage must be greatly forced if it is to be made into a description of the Messiah, or the Messiah's mission. No one would for a moment question the strict orthodoxy of Henderson, and yet he is constrained by simple honesty to say: 'In prophetic vision a triumphant conqueror is discovered, arrayed in military attire, and returning from Idumæa—the scene of battle and victory. To excite attention, the question is put, "Who can he be?" To which he himself replies, in language which leaves us at no loss to doubt, that he is the Divine Logos, or Speaker, who, from the beginning, revealed the Will of God to men; and as the Angel, or Messenger, of the Divine Presence, acted as the Protector and Saviour of ancient Israel (see verse 9). This interpretation, which is that adopted by most commentators, both ancient and modern, alone satisfies the claims of the passage; but nothing can be more preposterous, or more directly at variance with the entire spirit of it, than the application which some have made of it to the victory which he obtained upon the cross.'

Matthew Arnold states the connection of the passage very plainly: 'So sure are God's purposes, that even if mortal instruments (such as Cyrus) fail, God Himself will do the work upon the enemies of Israel. The prophet selects Edom as a kindred and neighbour people of Israel, and yet their ancient and specially bitter enemy (comp. chap. xxxiv.; see also Obadiah, and Ezek. xxxv. 5; Ps. cxxxvii. 7), who had assisted Nebuchadnezzar in the destruction of Jerusalem. In a kind of short drama, of sublime grandeur, the prophet exhibits God Himself as returning from executing vengeance upon Edom.'

Cheyne says: 'Modern critics in general, both Roman Catholic (see Rohling and Neteler) and Protestant, deny, at any rate, that the primary reference of the prophecy is to the personal Servant of

Jehovah. Calvin long ago put this view with a clearness and a force which leave nothing to be desired; he calls the traditional Christian interpretation a violent wresting of the prophecy, which simply declares, in figurative terms, that God will interpose for His people. The only doubt is whether Edom is to be taken literally or symbolically; whether, that is, the calamity described means only the general judgment upon the world, or a special visitation of Edom; or whether, again, we may combine these views.'

Canon Rawlinson takes much the same view as *Cheyne*. 'Isaiah had already, in the first portion of his prophecy, announced "a great slaughter in the land of Idumæa," as resolved on in the counsels of God (ch. xxxiv. 5-10). He now recurs to the subject, and represents Jehovah as a warrior with blood-stained garments, fresh from the field of battle in Edom, where he has trodden down his foes, and taken a fierce vengeance on them. The Idumæans probably represent the world-power; and the "day of vengeance" may be one still future, in which the enemies of God will feel the weight of His hand. The description stands by itself, neither connected with what goes before nor with what follows. It has the appearance of a separate poem, which accident has placed in its present position. In form it is "a lyrico-dramatic dialogue between the prophet as a bystander, and a victorious warrior (*i.e.*, Jehovah) returning from battle in Idumæa."'

Phillips Brooks vividly pictures the scene suggested by this passage, and helps us to feel how real and inspiring it was to the Israelites who first heard it, and made application of it to their immediate circumstances. 'This chapter of Isaiah opens in a strain of the loftiest prophetic poetry. A representative of Israel stands looking down one of the long ravines which open from the central mountain region of the country toward the valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. As he watches he sees a stranger approaching him, who has crossed the valley from the heights beyond, where the enemies and the heathen live, and is climbing up into the hills of Judæa. It is an heroic figure. The stature is grand. The head is proud and high. The steps are free and stately. The garments are noble, and here and there upon them, staining and illustrating their brightness, are the marks of blood. The Genius of Israel, for so we may conceive of the first speaker, is filled with amazement, and challenges the newcomer with this ringing question: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" Then comes the answer: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." As he

comes nearer the mysterious and awful stains upon his clothing become more clear, and the Genius questions him again: "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?" And then the great stranger answers, with the story of a struggle and a victory: "I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me," etc.

'What does it mean—the prophetic Genius waiting, watching, and questioning; the mighty stranger coming fresh from victorious battle, with the robe red as if with the stain of grapes, coming up from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? Edom, remember, was the country where the Israelites' most inveterate enemies lived. No other nation pressed on them so constantly, or gave them such continual trouble as the Edomites. And Bozrah was the capital city of Edom, the centre of its power. When the conqueror comes from Edom, then, and finds Israel anxious and eager upon the mountain, and shows her his stained robe in sign of the struggle which he has gone through, and then tells her that the victory is complete, that because he saw that she had no defender he has undertaken her defence and trodden Edom under foot for her, we can understand something of the power and comfort of such a poetic vision to the Hebrew's heart. There may have been some special event which it commemorated. Some special danger may have threatened on the side of the tumultuous Edomites, and some special unexpected deliverer may have appeared who saved the country, and was honoured by this song of praise.'

It may be questioned whether the champion figure of Messiah was not suggested by the triumphs of Judas Maccabeus, rather than by anything in the Prophetic Scriptures. The ideal *King* is presented by the prophets, but this is the only case in which the *Champion* is figured; and it is evident that much strain is necessary, if these verses are to be made descriptive of the work of Messiah. We may spiritualize in this direction, it is not so easy to expound.

Pressensé, after alluding to the marvellous deliverance wrought by the Maccabees, says: 'This magnificent outburst of Jewish patriotism was to create an idea full of grandeur, but also full of peril. How could Messiah assume any other form than that of Judas Maccabeus, to a people possessed by the noblest of human passions? The pathetic symbols of Isaiah and Jeremiah paled before the image of the young warrior, crushing the might of Antiochus, and bathing the steps of the sanctuary with the blood of the sacrilegious. This vision of the warrior archangel was thenceforward ever to float before the eyes of the Jews.'

Transference of Human Feelings to God.

1 SAMUEL xv. 29: 'And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent.' Verse 35: 'And the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.'

Difficulty.—*There must be differences in the meanings of the word 'repent,' if God can be said both 'not to repent,' and to 'repent.'*

Explanation.—This subject enables an additional word to be spoken concerning what is called the 'anthropomorphism' and 'anthropopathism' of the early Scriptures. The idea of representing God by the bodily actions of man, the movements of his limbs, does not suggest difficulty, because no moral quality is involved in any merely bodily movement. But when we represent God by the feelings and emotions of men, difficulty is introduced, because, in the sphere of his feelings, man has been influenced by evil, and his feelings are no longer simply natural. Whenever, therefore, we represent God's feeling by human feeling, we have to eliminate from the human feeling *the element of evil.* All terms that imply qualities that go to constitute humanity can be conceived of as innocent and worthy: and, so conceived, they can properly be applied to God. There is a right repentance, a right indignation, a right fear, even a right hatred. If we can think of a man with every human characistic and quality unaffected by wilfulness, self-pleasing and sin, then that man will represent God in His moral characteristics and qualities.

The term 'repentance' used in the above passage, may illustrate this point. Repentance, when attributed to the 'Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning' (Jas. i. 17), can mean nothing but a change of purpose resulting from the altered circumstances of those who are the occasion of it. When a nation repents of its sins God repents of the evil which He threatened to do to it. (See Jer. xviii.) And this we feel to be in every way worthy and right. We could not conceive of God as righteous if He did not adjust His dealings to the varying conditions of His free creatures. This is strikingly illustrated in the history of Nineveh. The change is in the minds of the people who repent when warned of God's judgments. The unchangeableness of the Divine perfections necessitates a corresponding change of feeling and of conduct on His part. Were He to feel and act toward the impenitent and the contrite alike, He would not be the Unchangeable One. His promises and His threatenings are made, not to certain persons, but to certain characters; the former are the portion of His obedient children; the latter the

doom of the impenitent and rebellious—'the children of wrath' (Eph. ii. 3).

This subject has been treated in other sections of this volume, and in the previous volume; but the point of the elimination of the evil element in human feeling, before it can worthily represent God, has not been fully set forth.

'The Bars of the Pit.'

JOB xvii. 16: 'They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.'

Question.—*What particular idea of death is introduced by this expression?*

Answer.—Evidently the poet thought of the grave (Sheol) as if it were a great subterranean prison-house, having its appropriate 'gates,' and 'bars,' and 'bolts.'

Dr. Good has a striking note on this verse: 'Literally, to the *limbs*—the grasping limbs, the tremendous claws or talons of the grave. The image is peculiarly bold, and true to the general character under which the grave is presented to us in the figurative language of sacred poetry—as a monster, ever greedy to devour, with horrid jaws wide gaping for his prey; and, in the passage before us, with limbs in unison with his jaws, and ready to seize hold of the victims allotted to him, with a strength and violence from which none can extricate themselves. The common rendering of *fulcra*, *vectes*, or *bars*, as of a prison, is as unnecessary a departure from the proper figure as it is from the primary meaning of the original term.'

The difficulty in the way of explaining the verse is chiefly a grammatical one, and is very clearly stated by *Canon Cook:* 'The interpretation of this verse is encumbered with the greatest difficulties; but it is of so much importance to the whole bearing of the argument that it seems necessary to bring them before the reader. The first clause consists of three words: (1) the first is ambiguous; in other passages where it occurs, it means "boastings," or "parts," *e.g.*, limbs of a man; or "bars," either poles, such as bear the ark, or possibly bars of a gate; hence also, metaphorically, "chieftains." Of these meanings the only one which seems applicable is "bars." The "bars of the pit" will therefore signify "the bars of the gates of Hades, Sheol, the region of death." (2) The "pit," or Sheol; about this there is no doubt. (3) "They shall go down"; the plural third person feminine is used. The question is, What is the subject of this clause? Our translation leaves it doubtful. No plural goes before

except the word rendered "bars," and that is masculine. This leaves two alternatives; either "hope," in the preceding verse, is taken collectively for "all my hopes," which is very questionable, or "bars," though masculine, yet as standing for "gates" (feminine), may be followed by a feminine verb. Of this there are many examples in Hebrew, one remarkably near to this passage, Prov. vii. 17. *Merx*, also (though he renders it "my limbs") takes it to be the true subject of the sentence. If we adopt the former, with most interpreters, we have, "my hopes will go down to the bars of Sheol," will have there their home. This construction is improbable, involving a very harsh metaphor, as though a man's hopes went down to the bars of Sheol when he died, an expression to which it seems impossible to attach definite meaning. If we take the latter, we have, "the bars of Sheol will go down, will fall, be cast down." The same verb is used of a wood which is cut down and falls, of a falling wall, etc. The expression is of doubtful meaning, since the bars may fall at the approach or will of a deliverer: and again, it is possible that the words may be read interrogatively, "will the bars of Hades fall?" The former meaning seems not to accord with the state of Job's feelings at the time; it is too definite a hope, it stands out too strongly in relief from the surrounding gloom; but the latter appears to correspond exactly with his inner mind; he asks, is there hope? where is it? who can see it? will the bars of Hades fall? will God "remember me"? "shall I live again?" will God call? shall I answer Him? will the Mighty, before Whom hell is naked, destruction hath no covering (xxvi. 6), make both bear witnesses to him (see xxviii. 22)? will the gates of hell fall down, its bars be broken, its dwellers be delivered? Such a question is in harmony with the whole under-current of thought; it is not indeed equivalent to the expression of a hope, but it is a true aspiration, and, as such, an unconscious prophecy.'

Jonah's Prayer.

JONAH ii. 1: 'Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly.'

Difficulty.—*These must surely represent the prophet's afterthoughts.*

Explanation.—In the former volume, 'Handbook of Biblical Difficulties,' p. 410, *John Bellamy's* curious and original study of this narrative has been given; if his view could be accepted, and we might understand that Jonah was cast adrift in the ship's boat, and left to his fate in the angry sea, the prayer of Jonah would be readily explained. *Bellamy* reads the first verse of this chapter thus: 'Then

Jonah prayed to Jehovah his God: from the belly of the barge.' To preserve the prayer, Jonah must have thought it over again afterwards, and written it down.

There are those who would regard the Book of Jonah as a work of imagination, a poem, and not historically descriptive; and it must be admitted that the records of Nineveh have preserved no account of such an incident. On this hypothesis the extraordinary situations and figures can be naturally explained; they are the expression of the poetical genius.

'The most various opinions have prevailed as to the nature of this book. It has been accepted as literal history, it has been described as pure fiction. Some have called it a parable, others an allegory, others a poetical myth, others a dream; others again, while recognising an historical basis, hold that the narrative has been enlarged and embellished to suit the purposes of the unknown author.'

The *Speaker's Commentary* assumes an actual residence for some time in the interior of some large fish, and thus explains the preservation of the hymn, or prayer, and its very striking figures. But how the weeds could be wrapped about the prophet's head, when he was inside the body of a fish, does not readily appear. 'The narrative allows us to assume, that upon his sinking in the water, and being at once swallowed up by the fish, the prophet, in a perfectly natural way, became in a very short while insensible; that, though miraculously kept alive, he, however, continued thus insensible; and that it was not till towards the close of the time specified, or even not till he was being ejected upon the land, that he was "waked out of sleep." The testimony of many persons who have suffered drowning, or been otherwise in imminent danger of almost certain destruction, shows that, at such seasons of extraordinary experience, the extreme tension of the mind makes it capable of passing with amazing rapidity through a vast succession of thoughts and feelings, many of which are afterwards distinctly remembered. Something of this kind we may surmise to have occurred in this case of Jonah: earnest prayers, while he was sinking in the deep, and was being swallowed up by the fish, with, perhaps, even then, a prophetic assurance of Divine preservation: and when he awoke to consciousness, a joyous sense of safety, and ardent outgoing of thankfulness to his Preserver. The *sentiments* of his ode are those which he had then felt: the *form*, into which they here appear cast, and which presents a highly finished specimen of Hebrew poetry, we must suppose to have been the production of a later and more tranquil hour.' 'In Jonah's hymn several expressions occur which are found also in the Psalms. This

has suggested the remark, which has been often repeated, that the hymn is little more than a *cento* made up of passages taken out of the Psalms, and that, therefore, the book was of late composition. More exact and discriminating criticism warrants the conclusion, that probably the writer of the hymn was familiar with some of the Psalms, as the pious among the Israelites would be certain to be; but that the phrases which the hymn has in common with the Psalms seem *from internal evidence* to be of two kinds; some having the appearance of being adopted from the Psalms; while others apparently were used first in the hymn, and were borrowed therefrom by other writers.

Note.—Some persons object to any critical examination of the story of Jonah, on the ground that our Lord set His seal upon the narrative as strictly historical and true, by His allusion to it in Matthew xii. 39, 40. *A. S. Aglen, M.A.*, has an altogether satisfactory note in Ellicott's Commentary, which should correct the mistaken idea that our Lord affirms the historical truth of everything to which He refers by way of illustration. 'The references of our Lord to Jonah no more attest the literal truth of the book, than His allusion to the Psalms as David's settles the authorship of the whole of the Psalter. It would be strange if He who chose the parabolic method to convey the highest truths of His Kingdom, should have hesitated to enforce them by reference to writings of the same kind, even supposing we are not right in judging of His knowledge on points of literary criticism as limited. The argument of *Keil* and others, that Jonah could not have been adduced as a type of Christ unless his history is actual fact, is only valid when we have restricted the meaning of the word *type* to suit the argument. And the New Testament does not represent Jonah as a *type*, but as a sign.'

Job's Confidence in his Goël.

JOB xix. 25: 'For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.'

Question.—*Can Job's expression be reasonably limited to his earthly experiences?*

Answer.—So much depends on the view which we take of the design and character of this Book of Job; and, indeed, on the date we assign for its composition. If it belongs to the period of Solomon it will reflect the Solomonic ideas concerning the future world.

As a poem its range is limited to the strictly earthly experiences of

the patriarch. Its expressions may suggest more than this to Christian-minded persons, but we need not associate all our ideas concerning it with the poet, and it will give fresh force and meaning to many passages, if we can read them in the light of a hoped-for earthly vindication and restoration. And this is not difficult when a precise rendering of this passage is placed before us.

The *Various Renderings* are, for 'redeemer' put 'avenger,' Heb. 'goël.' For 'at the latter day,' put 'at the last,' *lit.* 'as one coming afterwards.' Verse 26 reads, 'after this my skin hath been mangled.' But the text is doubtful.

The *Revised Version* reads: 'But (for) I know that my redeemer (vindicator) liveth, and that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth (dust); and after my skin hath been thus destroyed, yet from (without) my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself (on my side), and mine eyes shall behold, and not another (as a stranger). My reins are consumed within me.'

Noyes' Translation reads thus:

> 'Yet I know that my Vindicator liveth,
> And will stand up at length on the earth;
> And though with my skin this body be wasted away,
> Yet in my flesh shall I see God.
> Yes, I shall see Him my friend,
> My eyes shall behold Him no longer an adversary;
> For this my soul panteth within me.'

These renderings, being more precise and literal, bring out clearly the idea of the poet, and make it plain that Job rather expected his Vindicator to appear on this earth, while he lived, than gained any clear vision of the adjustment of all perplexities in the life to come.

Dr. A. B. Davidson has an instructive note. 'The term *redeemer* (Heb. *goël*) is frequently used of God as the deliverer of His people out of captivity, and also as the deliverer of individuals from distress. Among men the *goël* was the nearest blood-relation, on whom it lay to perform certain offices in connection with the deceased whose goël he was, particularly to avenge his blood if he had been unjustly slain. Job here names God his *goël*. The passage stands in close relation with ch. xvi. 18, 19, where he names God his "witness" and "sponsor," or representative. It is probable, therefore, that there is an allusion to the Goël among men—Job has in God a Goël who liveth. This Goël will vindicate his rights against the wrong both of men and God (verses 3, 7). At the same time this vindication is regarded less as an avenging of him, at least on others (though compare verses 28, 29), than as a manifestation of his innocence. This manifestation can

only be made by God's appearing and showing the true relation in which Job stands to Him, and by Job's seeing God. For his distress lay in God's hiding His face from him, and his redemption must come through his again beholding God in peace. Thus the ideas of Goël and Redeemer virtually coincide.' 'The word "earth," or "dust," does not mean earth in opposition to heaven; such an antithesis did not need to be expressed: if God came forward or interposed in Job's behalf He must do so upon the earth.'

Dr. Stanley Leathes marks carefully the connection of the passage. 'We must carefully note all the passages which lead up to this one. First, we must bear in mind that Bildad (ch. xviii. 17-20) had threatened Job with the extinction of his *name* and *memory*, so that he now appeals to the verdict of futurity, and with what success we ourselves, who read, and repeat, and discuss his words, are witnesses. Then in Job's own speeches we have, as early as ch. ix. 32-35, his longing for *a daysman* to come between himself and God. Then, in chs. x. 7, xiii. 15-19, he emphatically declares his innocence, and appeals to God as conscious of it. In ch. xvi. 19 he affirms that his *witness is in the high heavens;* in verse 21 of the same chapter he longs for an *advocate to plead his cause.* In ch. xvii. 3 he calls upon God to *be surety for him.* Therefore, he has already recognised God as his *judge*, his *umpire*, his *advocate*, his *witness* and *surety*, and in some cases by formal confession of the fact, in others by earnest longing after and aspirations for some one to act in that capacity. Here, then, he goes a step further in expression, if not by implication, and declares his knowledge that he has a Goël or Redeemer. . . . The various and conditional functions, then, of this Goël, Job is assured, God will take upon Himself for him; He will avenge his quarrel (comp. Ps. xxxv. 1, 23), He will be surety for him. He will vindicate him before men and before God Himself; He will do for him what none of his professed friends would undertake to do. And as to this matter, he has not the slightest doubt, he states most emphatically that he himself *knows* that this *Goël* liveth. "And I, even I, know; as for me, I know that my Vindicator is living, that He liveth, is a reality existing now, and not one to come into existence hereafter, though His manifestation may be a thing of the future, for He shall stand at the last upon the earth," or, "He shall stand last upon earth" (comp. Isa. xl. 8), that is, after all others have passed away and gone down to the bars of the tomb.'

This deeply interesting, though unusually difficult, passage will fully repay further study. A consideration of anything beyond its language would not be appropriate in this section.

Angels' Food.

PSALM lxxviii. 25: 'Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.'

Question.—*What idea could the Psalmist possibly have had of the food of angels?*

Answer.—We cannot wisely force precise meanings to a poet's figures of speech. The Psalmist knew little or nothing about angels, or about their food: it was enough for his purpose that there were common sentiments about angels prevailing in his day. This fact sufficiently justifies his figurative allusion to them and their food.

But the actual Hebrew means 'bread of mighty ones,' and, as the second clause suggests, may only be a poet's representation of the idea of *abundance.* The 'mighty ones' are the men of large appetites and capacities; and God provided so abundantly for His people, that it seemed as if He reckoned them all to be 'mighty ones,' men of large appetites: and then every one of them was satisfied 'to the full.'

Some, however, prefer to understand 'Food supplied by angel ministrations.' See the expression 'corn from heaven' as descriptive of 'manna,' in verse 24. 'The symbolism of manna is recognised by all Christian divines, and rests upon the authority of our Lord, from whose words, however, it is clear that manna was a product of earth, supplied by heavenly power, and but a figure of the true bread "which cometh down from heaven" (John vi. 49-51).'

Some explain, after Job xxiv. 22, xxxiv. 30, *lordly* food, such as *nobles* eat—here *quails.*

The ancient versions (*Sept.*, *Vulg.*, *Syr.*, *Arab.*, *Æthiop.*) render it 'bread of angels,' and the *Targum* paraphrases it, 'food which came down from the dwelling-place of angels.' (Comp. Wisd. xvi. 20.) 'Thou feddest Thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste.'

Dean Perowne says: '"Angels' bread," not as if angels were nourished by it, or as if it were food worthy of angels, but as coming from heaven, where angels dwell. The word *mighty* is nowhere else used of the angels.'

Delitzsch writes: 'Notwithstanding Israel's unbelief, God remained faithful: He caused manna to rain down out of the opened gates of heaven (*cf.* 'the windows of heaven,' Gen. vii. 11; 2 Kings vii. 2; Mal. iii. 10), that is to say, "in richest abundance." The manna is called *corn* (as in Ps. cv. 40, after Exod. xvi. 4, it is called *bread*) of

heaven, because it descended in the form of grains of corn, and supplied the place of bread-corn during the forty years. . . . The manna is called 'bread of angels,' as being bread from heaven, the dwelling-place of angels, as being *mann es-semâ*, heaven's gift, its Arabic name—a name which also belongs to the vegetable manna which flows out of the *Tamarix mannifera* in consequence of the puncture of the *Coccus manniparus*, and is, even in the present day, invaluable to the inhabitants of the desert of Sinai.'

The Parable of the Ploughman and Thresher.

ISAIAH xxviii. 24: 'Doth the plowman plow all day to sow?' verse 27, 'The fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument.'

Question.—*Can this passage* (verses 23-29) *be treated as an instance of Old Testament parabolic teaching?*

Answer.—The parable proper, though not invented by our Lord, received special treatment from Him. It would not have struck us to call this passage more than an *illustration*, taken from agricultural customs, but one of our most careful and suggestive Bible writers, Dr. S. Cox, finds in it a parable, and we are set upon re-examining it with his help.

Vallings strongly affirms that our Lord created the parable. 'Our Lord's sympathy with Nature was not only artistic, it was moral. The poet interprets the beautiful in Nature, the physicist the order of facts; Christ drew out the moral and spiritual revelation. Job had seen something of this. Isaiah too, and the psalmists. But Christ was the first to emphasize the unity between Nature and grace. His parables are translations of the order of Nature into the order of grace. He created the parable. Apologues are found such as Judg. ix. 8 and following, 2 Sam. xii. 1, but the parable was a spiritual work of art unattempted before. The Buddhist parables of the so-called "Sower," and "Prodigal Son," may be compared, not as possessing "exactly the same tone and the same character," as M. Renan affirms, but as allegorical tales and images suggesting doctrinal or moral lessons.'

Stalker says: 'It was a favourite Jewish mode of putting truth, but Jesus imparted to it by far the richest and most perfect development.'

Edersheim carefully distinguishes the Jewish from the Christian parable. 'Little information is to be gained from discussing the etymology of the word *Parable*. The verb from which it is derived means *to project*; and the term itself, the placing of one thing by the side of another. Perhaps no other mode of teaching was so common

among the Jews as that of Parables. (Every ancient Rabbinical work is literally full of them.) Only, in their case, they were almost entirely illustrations of what had been said or taught; while, in the case of Christ, they served as the foundation for His teaching. In the one case, the light of earth was cast heavenwards, in the other, that of heaven earthwards; in the one case it was intended to make spiritual teaching appear Jewish and national, in the other to convey spiritual teaching in a form adapted to the standpoint of the hearers. This distinction will be found to hold true, even in instances where there seems the closest parallelism between a Rabbinic and an Evangelic Parable.'

Trench says that every type is a *real* parable; and in calling the above passage a *parable*, Dr. Cox must use the term in such a comprehensive sense. He says: 'The double aspect of God's character, as Judge and Redeemer, as judging that He may redeem, is set forth by the prophet Isaiah in a parable which is not familiar to most readers of the Bible, I think, although it deserves to be familiar, since it expresses the merciful and redeeming purpose of the Divine judgments in a simple, yet beautiful and impressive form. The general drift of it is obvious. The husbandman does not for ever vex and wound the tender bosom of the earth with the keen edge of the ploughshare, or the sharp teeth of the harrow. He ploughs *only that he may sow;* he harrows the ground only that he may produce a level and unclodded surface on which to cast his seeds. And when he sows, he gives to every seed its appropriate place and usage. He scatters the dill (black cummin) and strews the cummin broadcast; but the wheat he sets, according to the Oriental fashion, in long rows, and the barley in a place specially marked out for it, so marked as to exclude the borders of the field: and here, along the edges of the field, where it is most likely to be bitten or trampled by passing beasts, he sows the less valuable spelt (or hairless corn). In short, he ploughs and harrows only that he may sow and plant; and when sowing-time has come, he deals with every seed after its kind, giving it its appropriate place and treatment. And this he does because God has given him discretion, and has taught him by experience how to handle the soil and the seeds so as to produce the most abundant results. Is God, then, less wise than the husbandman whom He has taught? So, again, when the harvest is gathered in, the wise husbandman still varies and adapts his means to his end. When he would thresh out the light aromatic seeds of the black and the grey cummin, he does not crush them under the heavy rollers of the threshing-sledge, nor does he drive the ponderous and serrated wheels of the threshing waggon over them, but he strikes them lightly

with a switch or other slender flail. "Bread-corn," indeed, "must be bruised," but even when the sledge, or the waggon, is driven over it, to separate the grain from the chaff, or when the horses are led to and fro on the threshing-floor, to tread out the grain with their feet, the judicious husbandman takes care that the process is not prolonged until the grain itself is crushed. He does not go on threshing "for ever;" his single aim is to separate the chaff from the wheat, to save as much of the grain as he can, and to save it in the best condition he can, that it may be gathered into his garner. And he thus varies his modes of treatment, and adapts them to the several kinds of seeds, because God has given him sagacity and wisdom. Will God, then, who gave the husbandman this sagacity, be less observant of time and measure? Will He crush and waste the precious grain of His threshing-floor?" "In this parable, the mystery of the Divine Providence is laid open, its secret disclosed. All ploughing is for sowing; all threshing is intended for the preservation of the grain." When God chastens us, it is not because He means to destroy us, but because He has set His heart on saving us, because He has appointed us to life, and not to death.'

The Cross as a Symbol.

MATTHEW x. 38: 'And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.'

Difficulty.—*Our Lord must have used this term as a well understood and familiar figure of speech in His day. He could not have referred to His own death on the cross.*

Explanation.—Our associations with the figure of the cross so entirely absorb us, that it is difficult for us to admit any other associations; and yet the cross has been a great religious symbol from the earliest times, and in connection with nearly all religions; and came to take its place as a common figure of speech, long before the special Christian associations were fixed to it.

This point is one of so great interest, and is so little known by ordinary Scripture readers, that a few facts in relation to it will be acceptable.

'Turning to the early Chaldæan and Egyptians nations, we find that a variety of the *crux ansata* (crosses with circles on their heads) is found in the sculptures from Khorsabad and the ivories from Nimrod. *M. Lajard* refers it to the Assyrian symbol of divinity, the winged figure in a circle; but Egyptian antiquaries quite reject the theory. In the Egyptian sculptures a similar object, called a *crux ansata*, is constantly borne by divinities, and is variously called "the

key of the Nile," "the character of Venus," and more correctly, the "emblem of life." "The Egyptians thereby expressed the powers and motion of the spirit of the world, and the diffusion thereof upon the celestial and elemental nature." This, too, was the signification given to it by the Christian converts in the army of Theodosius, when they remarked it on the temple of Serapis, according to the story mentioned in Suidas. The same symbol has been also found among the Copts, and (perhaps accidentally) among the Indians and Persians.'

Dr. Otto Zoeckler has fully dealt with the literature of this symbol, and a few points may be taken from his valuable and instructive work 'The Cross of Christ' (Hodder and Stoughton). 'The cross is the deeply significant symbol of the Christian faith, and yet religious significance attaches to it not merely within the bounds of Christianity. It is not so exclusively an emblem of faith in Christ as to appear, beyond the sphere thereof, only in the form of ordinary embellishment, as a meaningless ornament or an unimportant thing of chance. The cross plays an important part as a religious symbol, even in the history of the pre-Christian and extra-Christian religions. We meet with it under various modifications, alike of its external form and character as also of its import, among the extra-Christian nations of antiquity as of the present day, of the Old as of the New World. Rude and barbarous peoples of the torrid as of the temperate zones, and representatives of almost every stage of heathen civilization—Greeks and Romans, dwellers by the Nile, as by the Ganges, Godavery and Indus, aborigines of the new-discovered North, Central, and South America, and islanders of the South Sea—have placed this mysterious symbol upon their monuments. Only in rarer cases can a purely mundane significance be shown to attach to these cruciform signs which adorn the monuments of heathendom. The entire absence of any kind of religious import appears in the case of most of them more difficult of supposition, than their destination to some kind or other of culture-end—though this end may often remain scarcely discernible, or may in the course of time have fallen into oblivion, and the cruciform figure in question may thus have sunk down almost to a mere ornament, or garniture without significance. Nay, a certain general identity of nature in the religious significance of these extra-Christian cross-symbols with that of our religion is susceptible of proof. They are either, as in the majority of cases, emblematic of *Blessing*, and thus express a religious consciousness directed positively to the Divine, and thence beneficially affected and satisfied; or they are symbols of the *Curse*, and thus serve only to express a consciousness disposed in a negatively

religious manner, one which remains unreconciled and obdurate under the experience of the Divine wrath against sin. The two forces, that of the curse and that of the blessing, that of death and that of life, of wrath and of grace, brought into immediate oneness in the Cross of Christ, regularly diverge from each other in the typical phenomena of the pre-Christian religious life; yea, they appear almost always abruptly severed, and opposed the one to the other, so that we find *either* divinely blessing (agathodæmonic) powers, *or* hellishly condemning and destroying ones (cacodæmonic, typhonic), apparently manifesting themselves therein. A shadowy expectation that the place of the curse might and would one day become the place in which the fountain of blessing and salvation would be opened for the suffering, God-estranged humanity, does not appear clothed in any other form than in one extremely obscure and indefinite, either in heathendom, or even in Judaism. To the height of a clear prophetic prescience it does not appear to have been developed even in the case of the most enlightened man of God under the Old Covenant.'

But this does not help us to the specific associations which made 'bearing the cross,' 'taking up the cross,' familiar symbolical expressions in the time of our Lord. In this case we find purely local suggestions. *Dean Plumptre* says: 'The words (Matt. x. 38) were hardly a specific announcement of the manner of our Lord's death, though they imply, interpreted by events, a distinct prevision of it, such as that which we trace in John iii. 14. To the disciples they would recall the sad scenes which Roman rule had made familiar to them, the procession of robbers or rebels, each carrying the cross on which he was to suffer to the place of execution. They would learn that they were called to a like endurance of ignominy and suffering.'

Carr regards the sentence as a 'further advance in the devotion and self-abandonment required in the disciples of Jesus. The cross is named for the first time by the Saviour . . . The Galilæans would know too well what was meant by "taking the cross." Many hundreds had paid that forfeiture for rebellion that had not prospered under Judas the Gaulonite and others.'

A Mystical Allegory.

GALATIANS iv. 24 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'Which things contain an allegory: for these women are two covenants.'

Difficulty.—*It is nearly impossible to follow the Apostle's argument in this passage. He seems to use the historical allusion in a strained sense.*

Explanation.—The passage may properly be called a *mystical allegory*, 'in which a double meaning is couched under the same words, or when the same prediction, according as it is differently interpreted, relates to different events, distant in time, and distinct in their nature. The *Mystical Allegory* differs from the ordinary Allegory, or continued metaphor, and from the parable, or similitude, in the nature of its materials; the mystical allegory is exclusively derived from things sacred. There is likewise this further distinction, that in those other forms of allegory, the exterior or ostensible imagery is fiction only; the truth lies altogether in the interior or remote sense, which is veiled, as it were, under this thin or pellucid covering. But, in the mystical allegory, each idea is equally agreeable to truth. The exterior or ostensible image is not a shadowy colouring of the interior sense, but is in itself a reality; and, although it sustains another character, it does not wholly lay aside its own. As every allegory is a representation of real matters of fact under feigned names and characters, it must be subjected to a twofold examination. We must first examine the immediate representation, and then consider what other representation it was intended to excite. Now, in most allegories the immediate representation is made in the form of a narrative; and since it is the object of an allegory to convey a moral, not an historical truth, the narrative itself is commonly fictitious. The immediate representation is of no further value, than as it leads to the ultimate representation. It is the application or moral of the allegory which constitutes its worth.'

In explaining the Scripture *parable*, Trench points out how it differs from the *allegory*, and so is led to give his idea of the allegory. 'In the allegory an interpenetration of the thing signifying and the thing signified finding place, the qualities and properties of the first are attributed to the last, and the two are thus blended together, instead of being kept quite distinct, and placed side by side, as is the case in the parable. Thus John xv. 1-8, "I am the true vine," etc., is throughout an allegory; and there are two allegories scarcely kept apart from one another, John x. 1-16; the first, in which the Lord sets Himself forth as the Door, the second, as the Good Shepherd of the sheep. So "Behold the Lamb of God" is an allegorical, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" a parabolical, expression. The allegory needs not, as the parable, an interpretation to be brought to it from without, since it contains its interpretation within itself; and, as the allegory proceeds, the interpretation proceeds hand in hand with it, or, at least, never falls far behind it.

And thus the allegory stands to the metaphor, as the more elaborate and long drawn out composition of the same kind, in the same relation that the parable does to the isolated comparison or simile. And as many proverbs are concise parables, in like manner many also are brief allegories. For instance, the following, which is an Eastern proverb, "This world is a carcase, and they who gather round it are dogs," does, in fact, interpret itself as it goes along, and needs not, therefore, that an interpretation be brought to it from without; while it is otherwise with the proverb spoken by our Lord, "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together;" this gives no help to its own interpretation from within, and is a saying, of which the darkness and difficulty have been abundantly witnessed by the very different interpretations of it which have been proposed. . . . A parable differs from an allegory, comparing as it does one thing *with* another, but, at the same time, preserving them apart as an inner and an outer, and not transferring, as does the allegory, the properties, and qualities, and relations of one *to* the other.'

J. Farrar, in 'Bib. and Theo. Dictionary,' refers to this passage, and says: 'The Apostle says: "Which things"—events in the history of Isaac and Ishmael—"are an allegory"—that is, "have been allegorized." He does not mean that this portion of the Old Testament is an allegory, which ordinarily means a fiction, but that these facts are allegorically applied. An allegory is a continued metaphor, or a series of metaphors, in one or more sentences. The term "allegory" denotes a representation of one thing, which is intended to excite the representation of another thing. There are, then, two representations—the *immediate* and the *ultimate;* and the former is only important, as it leads to the latter. It is the application of the allegory which constitutes its value. The immediate representation is understood from the words, and with them we are concerned; the ultimate must be gathered from the things signified by the words.'

G. G. Findlay, writing on the fourth chapter of Galatians, says: 'Allegory was the instrument of Rabbinical and Alexandrine Scripturists, an infallible device for extracting the *pre-determined sense* from the letter of the sacred text. . . . But Paul's allegory, and that of Philo and the Allegorical School, are very different things, as widely removed as the "words of truth and soberness" from the intoxications of a mystical idealism. With Paul the spiritual sense of Scripture is based on the historical, is, in fact, the moral content and import thereof; for he sees in history a continuous manifestation

of God's will. With the Allegorists the spiritual sense, arrived at by *à priori* means, replaces the historical, destroyed to make room for it. The Apostle points out in the story of Hagar a spiritual intent, such as exists in every scene of human life if we had eyes to see it, something other than the literal relation of the facts, but nowise alien from it. Here lies the difference between legitimate and illegitimate allegory. The utmost freedom may be given to this employment of the imagination, so long as it is true to the *moral* of the narrative which it applies. In principle the Pauline allegory does not differ from the type. In the type the correspondence of the sign and thing signified centres in a single figure or event; in such an allegory as this it is extended to a group of figures and a series of events. But the force of the application depends on the actuality of the original story, which in the illicit allegory is matter of indifference.

'"Which things are allegorized"—so the Apostle literally writes in verse 24—*made matters of allegory*. The phrase intimates, as Bishop Lightfoot suggests, that the Hagarene episode in Genesis (xvi.; xxi. 1-21) was commonly interpreted in a figurative way. The Galatians had heard from their Jewish teachers specimens of this popular mode of exposition. Paul will employ it, too; and will give his own reading of the famous story of Ishmael and Isaac. Philo of Alexandria, the greatest allegorist of his day, has expounded the same history. These eminent interpreters both make Sarah the mother of the spiritual Hagar of the worldly offspring; both point out how the barren is exalted over the fruitful wife. So far, we may imagine, Paul is moving on the accepted lines of Jewish exegesis. But Philo knows nothing of the correspondence between Isaac and *Christ*, which lies at the back of the Apostle's allegory. And there is this vital difference of method between the two divines, that whereas Paul's comparison is the illustration of a doctrine proved on other grounds—the painting which decorates the house already built (Luther)—with the Alexandrine idealist it forms the substance and staple of his teaching.

'Under this allegorical dress the Apostle expounds once more his doctrine, already inculcated, of the difference between the Legal and Christian State. The former constitutes, as he now puts the matter, a bastard sonship like that of Ishmael, conferring only an external and provisional tenure in the Abrahamic inheritance. It is contrasted with the spiritual sonship of the true Israel in the following respects: It is a state of *nature* as opposed to grace: of *bondage* as opposed to freedom; and, further, it is *temporary*, and soon to be ended by the Divine decree.'

Because of the Angels.

1 COR. xi. 10 (*Rev. Ver.*): 'For this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels.'

Difficulty.—*No other passage even suggests that the angels bear any special relation to married women.*

Explanation.—This passage is chosen for treatment as a specimen of not a few New Testament expressions which depend for their meanings upon lost associations. We do not regard Old Testament Scriptures precisely as the Jews did: and we have no such surrounding of legend and tradition as they had. We do not even use terms with the same meanings, and it is often difficult for the antiquary to discover the lost connotations.

The subject which the Apostle is here dealing with is the appropriateness of a woman appearing in public only with a *covering on her head.* But that is clearly a matter of custom and sentiment, which may change for different nations, and different periods. The only natural basis the Apostle can find for his advice is that woman is provided with long hair, which is a kind of covering for the head. The Apostle had to deal with a practical difficulty which had arisen in the Corinthian Church. The converted women had taken up the idea that sex-distinctions were abolished in Christ. They claimed to do all that the men did in Church-life; and they took upon themselves to appear unveiled in the Christian assemblies. St. Paul tells the women that they should not affect any attire which was felt to be unbecoming. They had no right to defy those established rules of decorum that were rooted in the feelings of the country.

F. W. Robertson says: 'The veiled head is a symbol of dependence, and a token also of modesty, for to pray unveiled was to insult all the conventional feelings of Jew and Gentile. Here let us distinguish between rules and principles: of course, there is no eternal rule in this: it cannot be a law for ever that man should appear habited in one way, and woman in another, and it is valuable to us only so far as a principle is involved. . . . The use of the veil was a representation and symbol of dependence. It is the doctrine of St. Paul that, as Christ is dependent on God, and man is dependent on Christ, so is woman dependent on man. St. Paul perceived that the law of Christian equality was quite consistent with the vast system of subordination running through the universe. . . . He distinguishes between inferiority and subordination, that each sex exists in a certain order, not one as greater than the other, but both great and right in being what God intended them to be.'

Archdeacon Farrar, in the 'Pulpit Commentary,' says of the first clause of this verse: 'The only question worth asking is *why* the word *exousia* (power, authority) had come at Corinth, or in the Corinthian Church, to be used for a 'veil' or 'covering'? The simplest answer is that just as the word 'kingdom' in Greek may be used for 'a crown' (compare *regno* as the name of the pope's tiara), so *authority* may mean a *sign of authority* (Revised Version), or 'a covering, in sign that she is under the power of her husband' (Authorized Version, margin). The margin of the Revised Version, 'authority over her head,' is a strange suggestion. Some have explained the word of *her own* true authority, which consists in accepting the rule of her husband; but it probably means 'a sign of her husband's authority over her.' Similarly, the traveller Chardin says that in Persia the women wear a veil, in sign that they are 'under subjection.' If so, the best comment on the word may be found in the exquisite lines of Milton, which illustrate the passage in other ways also:

> 'She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
> Her unadorned golden tresses wore . . .
> As the vine curves her tendrils, which *implied*
> *Subjection*, but required with gentle sway,
> And by her yielded, by him best received.'

The brief comment of Luther sums up all the best of the many pages which have been written on the subject. He says that *exousia* means 'the veil or covering, by which one may see that she is under her husband's authority' (Gen. iii. 16).

Professor Agar Beet asks: 'What is the authority which, by wearing a veil, woman carries on her head? Not a liberty of action or control over others which she herself exercises; for of such we have no mention in the whole passage. The only authority here is that to which, by the ordinance of the Ruler of the universe, she is subject. And this authority, looked upon as representing the great abstract principle of authority, which is the law of the Kingdom of God, she ought to bear upon her head. But how can she do this? By wearing on her head the distinctive dress which proclaims that she belongs to the subordinate sex, and that she accepts her divinely appointed position; for of the authority to which she bows, her headdress is a visible embodiment.'

This will prepare us to understand the second sentence of the verse, 'Because of the angels.' *Tertullian* suggests that the reference may be to the *bad* angels, who might take advantage of unveiled women. 'In the opinion and traditions of Oriental Jews, a woman is liable to injury from the *shedîm*, if she appears in public unveiled;

and these evil spirits are supposed to delight in the appearance of unveiled women.' 'The verse may, however, mean (in accordance with the Jewish belief of the day) that good angels, being under the possibility of falling from the same cause as their evil brethren, fly away at once from the presence of unveiled women. Thus Khadijah tested that the visitant of her husband Mohammed really was the angel Gabriel, because he disappeared the moment she unveiled her head' (*Farrar*).

Beet has the following explanation: 'But is there any aspect in which the angels furnish to women a real motive for veiling their faces at public worship? I think there is. The distinction of sex is so radical and so important that it ought to be clearly set forth in the dress of the sexes. This is taught by a genuine human instinct, which has found expression, in every age and country, in the different dress of men and women. And the same true instinct condemns as shameful all attempts of women to make themselves look like men, either by cutting their hair, or by disowning a woman's headdress. Now every correct instinct is strengthened by the felt presence of the good. A good man before our eyes gives fresh force to every good principle in our hearts. This influence is felt and acknowledged in various ways by all men, good and bad. Therefore St. Paul, after appealing in verse 6 to his readers' instinctive sense of the impropriety of that which he condemns, and after supporting his appeal by tracing this instinctive sense to its source in the original constitution of the sexes, now supports it further by bringing his fair readers into the presence of superhuman goodness. He appeals to the common Jewish teaching that in the worship of God's people the angels of heaven join. This teaching commends itself to us at once. If angels take interest in men, and afford them invisible help, surely they will take most interest in us in those moments when we are nearest to God. Without hesitation we may say that when God's people on earth bow together to their Father in heaven, they join the worship of the one great family of earth and heaven. And no thought is more powerful than this to repress all impropriety in public worship, by strengthening every true instinct of propriety. St. Paul knew that he had an ally in a deeply-seated and divinely-planted instinct; and to his appeal to this instinct he gives force by drawing aside the veil which hides from our view the great company of heavenly worshippers, that his readers may feel the influence of the presence of these celestial companions.'

Chrysostom expounds the passage thus: 'If thou despisest the man, respect the angels.'

INDEX.

INDEX OF TOPICS.

PAGE

Abel and Cain Offerings - - 429
Abijah's Mother - - - - 138
Abomination of Desolation - - 388
Adullam, Identification of - - 333
Age, The Picture of Old - - 530
Ahasuerus, Identification of - - 93
Ahaz, Assyria helping - - - 137
Allegory, A Mystical - - - 554
Angel-Charge - - - - 437
Angel-Worship - - - - 469
Angels of Book of Daniel - - 445
Angels, Because of the - - - 558
Ants Storing their Food - - 347
Appeal to God, An Egyptian - 442
Araunah, Identification of - - 103
Argob, Cities of - - - - 317
Ark of God with Saul's Army - 111
Ark, Later Contents of - - 397
Arrows Bright, Making - - 266
Ass's Jaw, Water from - - - 515
Assyrian Invasion, The First - 65
Astrologers, Chaldæan - - - 248
Astronomy, Ancient - - - 243
Atonement, Phinehas' - - - 457

Babel, Scattering from - - - 398
Balaam's Prophecy - - - 48
Balaam, the Magician - - - 257
Baptism and First Passover, Events between - - - - - 224
Baptism, Date of Our Lord's - 226
Bear of Palestine - - - - 351
Beast, Spirit of the - - - 430
Beasts, Changed Nature of the - 355
Bees in Lion's Carcase - - - 350
Belshazzar, Identification of - - 27
Bethshemesh, Number smitten at - 411
Birth, Date of Our Lord's - - 213
Blood is the Atonement - - 435
Body of Moses, Dispute over - 475
Bodies, Burning Dead - - - 395
Boils, Egyptian - - - - 282
Brethren, The Lord's - - - 208

Cain? Who was there to find - 369
Cain and Abel Offerings - - 429

PAGE

Calamities, Heavenly Bodies as figures of Earthly - - - 272
Calves, Jeroboam's Two - - 118
Canaanites not Native Races of Palestine - - - - - - 373
Captivity, Kings associated with the - - - - - - - 127
Carmel Sacrifice? Whence came Water for the - - - - 330
Cart, God pressed as a Loaded - 527
Census of Quirinius - - - 222
Children, Slaughter of Bethlehem 223
Colony, Philippi as a - - - 189
Commands, Necessity for Positive 464
Coney and Hare chewing the Cud 343
Council, The First Christian - 180
'Create,' The Senses of the Word 503
Cross as a Symbol - - - 552
Crucifixion, History of - - 198

Dans, The Two - - - - 327
Darius the Median - - - 40
David, Saul's and Abner's Ignorance of - - - - - - 84
David and the Philistine Images - 136
David's Lion and Bear - - 59
David's Magnanimity, Two Accounts of - - - - - - 62
Day,' The Expression, 'Unto this 501
Days of Creation - - - - 520
Dead Child, Elisha restoring a - 291
Death, Early Conceptions of - 449
Desire,' 'Unto thee shall be his - 489
Devil Possessions viewed Medically - - - - - - 296
Devils, Sacrifice unto - - - 424
Dew, Morning Cloud and Early - 358
Disease, An Incurable - - - 277
,, Job's - - - - 284
Dreams, Communications through 271
Dust, Panting after the - - 512

Eagle's Ways with Young - - 346
Ears,' 'Opening the - - - 498
Ebal, Joshua's March to - - 69

PAGE
Ebenezer, Site of - - - - 146
Ed, Altar of - - - - 131
Egypt, The River of - - - 324
Election, The Divine - - - 471
'Eloi' of David - - - - 536
Ephraimites, Number of Slain - 409
Esau's Wives - - - - 43
Eternal Life - - - - 460
Evil, God creating - - - 443

Face, A Cloth on the - - - 292
Father?' 'Who is their - - 500
Fatherhood of God in Old Testament - - - - - 453
Feelings to God, Transference of Human - - - - - 542
Feet, Disease of the - - - 284
Fire Unquenched - - - 518
Fire of God - - - - - 523
Flood, Extent of the - - - 313
Food of Humanity before and after Flood - - - - - 385
Food, Angels' - - - - 549
Foods, Clean and Unclean - - 337
Foot, Watering with the - - 506
'For Ever,' The Old Testament term - - - - - 452

Genealogies, The Two - - - 210
Geology, Mosaic Creation and - 305
Giant Races, Ancient - - - 361
Gleaning Better than Vintage - 490
God, The Fire of - - - 523
Goël, Law of the - - - - 70
Goël, Job's Confidence in his - 546
Golgotha, Situation of - - - 183
Goliath, Identification of - - 18
Goliath's Head and Armour? What became of - - - - - 55

Haman's Plot - - - - 80
Hart and Waterbrooks - - 483
Heaven, Outmost Parts of - - 269
Hell for Wicked Nations - - 433
Hermon, Names for - - - 312
Herod Agrippa, Fate of - - 174
Herodians, The - - - - 204
Hittites, Kings of the - - - 22
Hormah, Identification of - - 336

Idolatry, Nature of Solomon's - 129
Image, The Divine, in Man - 419
Immortality, Psalmist Hopes of - 422
Infancy, Different Records of our Lord's - - - - - 187
Ishbosheth's Reign, Time of - 410
Israel, Assyrian Location of Captive - - - - - - 109
Israelites, Syrian Origin of the - 378

James, Two Apostles named - 205
Jealousy applied to God - - 463

PAGE
Jehoshaphat's Men of War - - 414
Jericho, Fulfilment of Curse on - 31
Jerusalem, The First Siege of - 97
" David's Siege of - - 99
" Our Lord's last Arrival at - - - - - - - 216
John's Imprisonment and Death, Dates of - - - - - 188
Jordan Memorials - - - 90
Joseph's Land Scheme - - - 366
Judah, The Sceptre in - - - 89
Judas Iscariot, The Fate of - - 172
Judicial Deadness - - - 465

Kingship, Mosaic Preparations for 94
Kinsman Duties - - - - 389
Kirjath-Sepher, The Book-Town - 116
'Kiss the Son,' The Command to - 492

Labourers, Solomon's forced - 123
Lamech's Boasting - - - 510
Law, Hilkiah's Book of the - - 112
Leprosy, The Infection of - - 279
Leprosy in Clothing and Houses - 286
Life, Eternal - - - - 460
Light before the Sun - - - 244
Lots, Jehovah's People casting - 261

Mahanaim - - - - - 310
Males, Number of First-born - 408
Man, Spirit of - - - - 430
Medicine of our Lord's Time - 294
Melchizedek, Mysterious Figure of 52
Mercy is Just Dealing - - - 448
Messiah, Champion Figure of - 539
Mice, Plague of - - - - 353
Mining Allusions in Job - - 381
Mixt Multitude, Influence of - 82
Moab and Ammon, Origin of - 60
Molech and his Rites - - - 470
Monotheist, Cyrus no - - - 121
Moon, Influence of the - - 303
Music, Medicinal Value of - - 298

Naaman's Compromise - - 143
Name of God, The 'I am' - - 487
Nazareth, Our Lord's Visits to - 228
Nebuchadnezzar, Mania of - - 289
Nimrod, Scripture Figure of - - 77
Noah's Ark, The Resting-place of 120
'None shut up, or left' - - 524

Original Sin, David's Idea of - 427

Parable, Jotham's - - - 532
Partridge, The Ways of the - - 340
Passover, Time for Killing the - 33
Passovers in Christ's Ministry - 218
Perfectness, Job's - - - - 528
Pharaoh of Abram's Days - - 21
" who advanced Joseph - 140
" who knew not Joseph - 86

PAGE
Pillar of Cloud and Fire - - 262
Pit, Bars of the - - - - 543
Ploughman and Thresher, Parable of - - - - - - - 550
Positive Commands, Necessity for - 464
Power over the Angel, Jacob's - 472
Prayer, Jonah's - - - - 544
Pressed as loaded Cart - - - 517
Proselytes, Baptizing of - - 169
Providence, Judgments in order of 46

Races, Distribution of - - - 391
Rahab, A Name for Egypt - - 506
Rahab's Scarlet Line - - - 508
Rainbow, Appointment of - - 254
Red Sea, Crossing and Disaster at - - - - - - - 325
'Revenge,' applied to God - - 463

Sacrifices? Did God Command - 434
Saliva as a Curative Agent - - 295
Samaria, Assyrian Colonists of - 133
Sanhedrin, History of the - - 202
Satan, Direct Agency of - - 450
,, Resisting the High Priest - 456
,, among the Sons of God - 486
Satan's Proverb - - - - 495
Saul's Death, Different Accounts of 98
,, Court, David's Introduction to - - - - - - - 150
Saul's Conversion, Accounts of - 171
,, Life from Conversion to Ministry - - - - - 178
Saws and Harrows, Under - - 156
Scapegoat, Various Fates of - - 128
Seer, Seeking the - - - 274
Sennacherib's Calamity - - 37
Serpent, Curse on the - - - 356
Seventh-Day Rest, Institution of the - - - - - - - 438
Shepherds, Sentiments of Egyptians concerning - - - - 34
Shishak, Identification of - - 105
Shoes, Iron and Brass - - - 517
'Shut up or left, None' - - 524
Sin, David's Idea of Original - 427
,, The Unpardonable - - 474
,, with a Cart-rope - - - 525
So, King of Egypt, Indentification of - - - - - - - 50

PAGE
Sodom? Does the Salt Sea cover the Site of - - - - 321
Solomon, Hiram's Contract with - 101
,, as Avenger of Blood - 396
Solomonic Kingdom, Limits of - 328
Son of God, A Form like the - 425
Sons of God and Daughters of Men - - - - - - 371
Soothsayers - - - - - 260
Soul-Sin? What is a - - - 467
Souls going to Egypt with Jacob, Number of - - - - 406
Species in Ark, Preservation of - 376
Spirit, The Holy, in Old and New Testaments - - - - 439
Spirits, Consulters of Familiar - 268
,, in Prison - - - - 454
Stars Fighting - - - - 264
Stephen's Speech, Chronology in - 200
Stones, Listening of - - - 497
Stoning, History of Jewish - - 191
Supper, Precise Date of the Last - 194
Swine, Ceremonial Uncleanness of 344

Temple, Solomon's Ascent to the - 138
,, Date of Building the - 412
Theocracy, Dissatisfaction with the 74
Thorn in the Flesh, Paul's - - 300
Thunder Clothing the Horse's Neck - - - - - - 502

Vapour,' 'Concerning the - - 534

Uncircumcised, Left - - - 57
Unicorn, The - - - - 340
Ur, Identification of - - - 320

Wars of the Lord, Book of the - 384
Water out of His Buckets - - 513
Weeds and Thorns following on Man's Culture - - - - 379
Weeks, Limits of the Seventy - 415
Witch, A - - - - - 251
Woman, Origin of - - - 363
Worm Undying - - - - 518

Years, Forty or Four - - - 108

Zerubbabel, Descendants of - - 91
Zion, Stronghold of - - - 154
Zipporah's Exclamation - - 493

INDEX OF TEXTS.

OLD TESTAMENT.

GENESIS.

CHAPTER PAGE
i. 1 - - - - - - - 503
i. 5 - - - - - - - 520
i. 3, 14 - - - - - - 244
i. 27 - - - - - - - 419
ii. 2, 3 - - - - - - 438
ii. 4 - - - - - - 305
ii. 16, 17 - - - - - 464
ii. 21, 22 - - - - - 363
iii. 14 - - - - - - 356

CHAPTER	PAGE
iii. 18	379
iv. 3, 4	429
iv. 7	489
iv. 14	369
iv. 23, 24	510
vi. 4	361
vi. 1, 2	371
vi. 13	313
vi. 19	376
viii. 4	120
ix. 3, 4	385
ix. 13	254
x. 8-10	77
x. 32	391
xi. 8	398
xi. 28	320
xii. 15	21
xiv. 14	327
xiv. 18	52
xv. 18	324
xix. 25	321
xix. 37, 38	60
xxxii. 2	310
xxxvi. 2, 3	43
xli. 14	140
xlvi. 26, 27	406
xlvi. 34	34
xlvii. 20	366
xlix. 10	89

EXODUS.

i. 8	86
iii. 8	373
iii. 14	487
iv. 24-26	493
ix. 11	282
xii. 6	33
xiii. 21	262
xiv. 22, 28	325
xxii. 18	251

LEVITICUS.

iv. 2	467
xi. 2	337
xi. 5, 6	343
xi. 7	344
xiii. 46	279
xiii. 47	286
xiv. 34	286
xvi. 21, 22	128
xvii. 7	424
xvii. 11	435
xx. 2	470

NUMBERS.

iii. 42, 43	408
xi. 4	82
xiv. 45	336
xxi. 14	384
xxii. 5	257
xxiv. 7	513
xxiv. 17	48
xxv. 11	457
xxxv. 12	70

DEUTERONOMY.

iii. 4, 5	317
iii. 9	312
iii. 14	501
xi. 10	506
xvii. 14, 15	94
xviii. 11	268
xxvi. 5	378
xxx. 4	269
xxxii. 11	346
xxxiii. 14	303
xxxiii. 25	517

JOSHUA.

ii. 21	508
iv. 9, 20	90
v. 5	57
viii. 35	69
xii. 6	409
xv. 16	116
xviii. 6	261
xxii. 10	131
xxiv. 27	497

JUDGES.

i. 8	97
i. 21	97
v. 20	264
viii. 2, 3	490
ix. 7	532
xii. 6	409
xiv. 8	350
xv. 19	515

RUTH.

iii. 12	389
iv. 6-8	389

I SAMUEL.

iv. 1	146
vi. 1	412
vi. 5	353
vi. 19	411
viii. 7	74
ix. 6	274
x. 12	500
xiv. 18	111
xv. 29	542
xvi. 16	298
xvi. 21	150
xvii. 4	18
xvii. 34-36	59
xvii. 37	351
xvii. 54	55
xvii. 55	84
xxi. 9	55
xxii. 1	333
xxiv. 7	62

CHAPTER PAGE
xxvi. 9 - 62
xxxi. 4 - 98
xxxi. 12 - 395

2 SAMUEL.

i. 8-10 - 98
ii. 10 - 410
v. 6-8 - 99
v. 7 - 154
v. 21 - 136
xii. 31 - 156
xv. 7 - 108
xxiv. 16 - 103

1 KINGS.

ii. 31 - 396
iii. 5 - 271
iv. 21 - 328
v. 9 - 101
vi. 1 - 412
vii. 19, 20 - 46
ix. 20-22 - 123
ix. 25, 26 - 46
x. 5 - 138
xi. 4 - 129
xii. 28, 29 - 118
xiv. 25 - 105
xv. 19, 29 - 65
xvi. 34 - 31
xviii. 33 - 330

2 KINGS.

iv. 34 - 291
v. 18 - 143
vii. 6 - 22
viii. 15 - 292
xiv. 26 - 524
xvi. 9 - 137
xvii. 3, 5 - 127
xvii. 4 - 50
xvii. 6 - 109
xvii. 33 - 133
xix. 35 - 37
xxii. 8 - 112

1 CHRONICLES.

iii. 19, 20 - 91
xiv. 12 - 136
xxi. 1 - 450

2 CHRONICLES.

v. 10 - 397
vii. 14 - 414
xi. 20 - 138
xiii. 2 - 138
xvi. 12 - 284
xvii. 14 - 414
xxi. 18 - 277
xxviii. 20 - 137
xxxii. 21 - 37
xxxv. 21 - 442

EZRA.

CHAPTER PAGE
i. 1 - 121

ESTHER.

i. 1 - 93
iii. 6 - 80

JOB.

i. 6 - 486
i. 8 - 528
i. 16 - 523
ii. 4 - 495
ii. 7, 8 - 284
ix. 7-9 - 243
x. 21, 22 - 449
xvii. 16 - 543
xix. 25 - 546
xxxvi. 33 - 534
xxviii. 1, 2 - 381
xxxix. 9 - 340
xxxix. 19 - 502

PSALMS.

ii. 12 - 492
ix. 17 - 433
xvi. 10 - 422
xvii. 15 - 422
xxii. 1 - 536
xl. 6 - 498
xlii. 1 - 483
li. 5 - 427
li. 11, 12 - 439
lxii. 11, 12 - 448
lxxxviii. 25 - 549
lxxxix. 10 - 506
xci. 11 - 437

PROVERBS.

vi. 6-8 - 347

ECCLESIASTES.

iii. 14 - 452
iii. 21 - 430
xii. 1 - 530

ISAIAH.

ii. 6 - 260
v. 18 - 525
vi. 10 - 465
xi. 6 - 355
xiii. 10 - 272
xxviii. 24 - 550
xlv. 7 - 443
lxiii. 1 - 539
lxiii. 16 - 453
lxvi. 24 - 518

JEREMIAH.

vii. 22 - 434
xvii. 11 - 340

EZEKIEL.

xxi. 21 - 266

DANIEL.

CHAPTER	PAGE
ii. 2	248
iii. 25	425
iv. 33	289
v. 30	27
v. 31	40
ix. 21	445
ix. 26	415
xii. 11	388

HOSEA.

vi. 4	358
xii. 3, 4	472

AMOS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
ii. 7	512
ii. 13	527

JONAH.

ii. 1	544

NAHUM.

i. 2	463

ZECHARIAH.

iii. 1	456

NEW TESTAMENT.

MATTHEW.

CHAPTER	PAGE
i. 1	210
ii. 1	213
ii. 16	223
ii. 22, 23	187
iii. 13	226
iv. 12, 13	224
ix. 28	296
x. 38	552
xii. 31	474
xiii. 53, 54	228
xiv. 3	188
xxiii. 15	169
xxvi. 3	202
xxvi. 17	194
xxvii. 3-8	172
xxvii. 33	183
xxvii. 35	198

MARK.

iii. 6	204
v. 26	294
vi. 1	228
vi. 3	208
xi. 1	216

LUKE.

ii. 1, 2	222
ii. 39	187
iii. 22	210
iv. 16	228

JOHN.

ii. 13	218
ix. 6	295

ACTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
i. 18, 19	172
vii. 6	200
vii. 59	191
ix. 7	171
xii. 2	205
xii. 23	174
xv. 6	180
xv. 13	205
xvi. 12	189
xxii. 9	171
xxvi. 14	171

ROMANS.

ix. 11	471

I CORINTHIANS.

xi. 10	558

2 CORINTHIANS.

xii. 7	300

GALATIANS.

i. 15-18	178
iv. 24	554

COLOSSIANS.

ii. 18	469

I PETER.

iii. 19	454

I JOHN.

ii. 25	460

JUDE.

verse 9	475

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