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in the way of practical social service. We must relentlessly condemn every form of selfishness and every expression of irresponsibility in conduct. We must protest that these are simply incompatible with the claim to be regarded as a Christian ; we must demand that either the one or the other be renounced.

The primary duty of the clergy to-day is to assist more energetically in forming a healthier public opinion. In doing this they must be better equipped with more complete knowledge of actual evil conditions, and with more of that absolute fearlessness of the consequences of plain-speaking which was so characteristic of the Apostolic teaching.

In this way (which will give the poor no reason for thinking the clergy are satisfied with things as they are—an opinion very widely held among the workers), rather than by throwing themselves unreservedly into ill-considered schemes of economic revolution, will the clergy best promote that much to be desired social reformation which at least the great majority of them have so earnestly at heart.



“Some Results of Modern Criticism of the Old Testament.”—II.

ANOTHER source of error is very similar to the cause of the legal troubles. As with law, so with history. Men who are not trained historians have undertaken the work of historical criticism, and their achievements in this department naturally bear a family resemblance to their legal feats. Something has already been said on this subject in discussing slavery. Room can only be found for one other example, and this will illustrate the higher critical lack of care in collating known facts ; but, to prevent misconceptions, it should be stated that this is only *one* of many reasons for their failure in this department. Thus, a knowledge of human nature is an indispensable requisite for a historical student, but I have repeatedly found instances

in which the higher critics have gone astray through the want of any such knowledge. It is, of course, quite easy to write that, "whatever others may do, the student of history cannot hesitate to accept the results which have been obtained by the very same inductive methods which have achieved such great triumphs in other regions of study"; but the answer is not far to seek. Whatever others may do, the real student of history will not accept any results without first testing all things,¹ and searching tests applied by competent investigators have a strange knack of turning the critical case inside out. To take an illustration: A whole group of difficulties is due to the persistence of the higher critics in locating Aram-naharaim and the group of words that go with it (Haran, Paddan-aram, etc.) in Mesopotamia, while the Bible repeatedly proves that the references are to the Damascus region.² It would occupy too much space to collect all the evidence; but here are some of the main points. Laban, hearing on the *third* day that Jacob had fled, reached him *in the mountain of Gilead* after seven days' journey (Gen. xxxi. 21-23). Obviously he had not come from Mesopotamia, since the time is wholly insufficient. This has been felt by the critics, and has led to some curious results. Instead of saying, "Are we right in identifying Aram-naharaim, etc., with Mesopotamia, and holding that the 'River' always means the Euphrates," they assume that they must be right in their identifications, and that all difficulties resulting therefrom are due either to the ignorance of the Biblical writers—who are assumed to have been quite unfamiliar with the geography of their own times—or else to a plurality of sources. Accordingly, on Gen. xxxi. 21 ("and he rose up, and passed over the River") the annotator in the Oxford Hexateuch writes as follows: "As the distance from the Euphrates to Gilead is much more than a seven days' march (23), and the extant

¹ Compare Lord Acton's Inaugural "Lectures on Modern History," p. 24.

² See J. Halévy, *Revue Sémitique*, vol. ii., 1894, pp. 193-215, and add to his discussion (pp. 199-201) of the term נַרְרִי river, a reference to Gen. xxxvi. 37, where it clearly does *not* mean the Euphrates.

passages of 'E' do not assign Laban's home to Haran, it is possible that 'E' placed it nearer to Gilead, and that the clause 'and he rose up, and passed over the River' is incorporated by the compiler from J (*cf.* Dillmann, who suggests as an alternative that 'the River' denotes some other stream. But this is less probable than that the narrator underestimated the required time)."¹

If the evidence be collated it becomes apparent that in "E" Laban's home is near by, for the erection of heap and pillar in the mountain (51-54) as a *boundary* could have no meaning if Laban came from Mesopotamia, nor is it clear—unless on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle—why "E" should call Laban "the Syrian" (20, 24) if he came from Mesopotamia.² But it is interesting to notice the thoroughly characteristic method of dealing with the matter. It is "less probable" that the narrator knew what he was talking about than that he wrote what was geographically absurd, and it is "possible" that the reference to the River was incorporated by the compiler from "J." Unfortunately, "J" also knows the story of the heap erected in Gilead, so that he cannot have been thinking of Mesopotamia either. Moreover, he locates Laban's home in Aram-naharaim (Gen. xxiv.), and the passages we have yet to consider help us further.

The next difficulty is more serious. Balaam is lodged by Deuteronomy in Aram-naharaim (xxiii. 4 [5]), and by Numbers (xxiii. 7) in Aram, which normally means Syria. This gives us the equation Aram-naharaim = Aram = Syria, and greatly relieves the chronology of the concluding chapters of Numbers, which on the higher critical hypothesis is impossible. Dr. G. B. Gray actually goes the length of writing, "A journey to Aram-naharaim, related elsewhere, was undertaken with camels (Gen. xxiv. 10); the ass of vers. 22-34 belongs to a story which locates Balaam's home much nearer Moab."³ But

¹ Vol. ii., p. 48.

² Compare also "the land of the children of the East" (xxix. 1) with "mountains of the East" (Num. xxiii. 7).

³ "Numbers," p. 326.

surely, then, even the ass testifies to the error of identifying the Aram of Num. xxiii. 7 and the Aram-naharaim of Deuteronomy and Genesis with Mesopotamia. There is no difficulty in explaining the use of the camels in the circumstances narrated by Genesis, if Aram-naharaim means the Damascus region, but the Mesopotamian theory is in conflict alike with the ass, the chronological data, the statements of Genesis as to Laban, and the ordinary meaning of Aram. But even that is not all; yet another of the Biblical writers insists on identifying Aram-naharaim with the Damascus district. The title to Ps. lx. referring to the narration of 2 Sam. viii. speaks of Aram-naharaim and Aram-zobah. This corresponds to Zobah and *Damascus* in the text of Samuel.

As I am able to rely on M. Halévy's paper for a statement of some other aspects of the case, I have not found it necessary to exhaust the facts, but it may be remarked that no trained historical student would prefer the dogmatic utterances of our modern commentators to the unanimous testimony of the sources; and no scientific investigator in any branch of study could fail to view with horror the conduct of writers who make no attempt to collate all the known facts before putting forward their theories.¹

Higher criticism has found much support through its reliance on passages that should properly have fallen within the jurisdiction of the lower or textual criticism. It is amusing to note how many of the passages that are relied on to prove post-Mosaic date are regarded as glosses on "J," "E," "D," "P," etc., by "advanced" critics. Thus, in his "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament," Dr. Driver relies upon the following passages as furnishing evidence of date: "JE," Gen. xii. 6, xiii. 7, xxxiv. 7 ("in Israel"), xl. 15 ("the land of the *Hebrews*"); Num. xxxii. 41 (as Deut. iii. 14; see Judg. x. 4). Other sources: Gen. xiv. 14; Deut. xxxiv. 1 (Dan); Gen. xxxvi.

¹ For other historical points see "Studies in Biblical Law," 34-39; CHURCHMAN, June, 1906, 355-359; *Bibliotheca Sacra*, January, 1907, 12-16; October, 1907, 609-637.

31; Lev. xviii. 27f; Num. xxii. 1, xxxiv. 15 (both "beyond the Jordan"); Deut. ii. 12b, iii. 11.¹ I turn to the Oxford Hexateuch, and find that of these thirteen passages no fewer than six are regarded as glosses or notes that were not originally part of the respective "sources" — viz., Gen. xii. 6, xiii. 7; Deut. xxxiv. 1. (Dan); Gen. xxxvi. 31; Deut. ii. 12, iii. 11.² Even assuming, therefore, that there were no other explanations available in any of these cases, nearly one-half of the passages cited are not evidence for Dr. Driver's view at all.³ They fall to the lower critic.⁴

But more important difficulties than those presented by an occasional gloss may be solved by a scientific textual criticism. An interesting example occurs in Num. xiii. The view of the higher critics appears clearly from Mr. Carpenter's statement: "When the twelve spies are sent into Canaan (Num. xiii.) they explore the extreme length of the country (21), reaching the northern pass known as 'the entering in of Hamath.' But the next verse (22) represents them as starting afresh; they arrive at Hebron, and enter the valley of Eshcol, where they cut down a cluster of grapes, which they then carry back to Moses at Kadesh in fulfilment of his previous instructions (20)."⁵ Verse 21b is therefore assigned to "P," while the context goes to "JE." It is quite in accordance with the view entertained of the geography of the Biblical writers, etc., that the "editor" who is responsible for this chapter should be

¹ "Literature of the Old Testament," seventh edition, p. 124, and on pp. 84-85 the phrases "at that time" (Deut. ii. 34, etc.), "unto this day" (Deut. iii. 14), and "beyond Jordan" (Deut. i. 1, etc.).

² The same holds good of Deut. iii. 14.

³ I must not be taken as agreeing with the critics on all these passages; but in some instances—e.g., Og's bedstead—I think their gloss theory is right. Of course some of Dr. Driver's arguments are far-fetched. Thus, Gen. xxxiv. 7, xl. 15; Lev. xviii. 27f; Num. xxxii. 41, and the "beyond Jordan" passages are not really inconsistent with Mosaic date. In the present state of our knowledge Gen. xiv. 14 (Dan) must be regarded as a doubtful case. There are many hypotheses, but no certainty.

⁴ Similarly, a whole group of difficulties disappears if, with Dr. Driver, we regard Deut. x. 6, 7 as an alien intrusion into the text.

⁵ Oxford Hexateuch, I., p. 32.

incapable of distinguishing between the North and the South of Canaan ; nevertheless, some readers might prefer to collate the other passages relating to the incident. The results do not tend to strengthen the divisive hypothesis, for a few chapters further on a late priestly writer (" P = P³ ") represents the spies as going only as far as Eshcol (xxxii. 9). This is confirmed by Deut. i. 24. Having regard to these passages and the extreme improbability that Num. xiii. 21 really was placed in juxtaposition to a verse that makes nonsense of it, the view that the place-names in ver. 21 (*unto Rehob to the entering in of Hamath*) are corrupt acquires plausibility, especially as nothing is known of this Rehob.¹ Names and numbers, it must be remembered, are peculiarly liable to corruption. Textual corruption in this instance is almost as probable from the higher critical point of view as from the conservative standpoint, for we have a consensus of three sources—" JE," " D," and " Ps " (including the earliest)—in favour of Eshcol as the limit of the exploration.

In this connexion a word may be said about an interesting theory which was put forward some time since by Colonel Conder. " The First Bible " owed its origin to the view that some, at any rate, of the Old Testament books were originally written in the cuneiform script. In support of this theory Colonel Conder collected a number of instances in which a very slight error or injury to a cuneiform text would produce a very different word in our present writing. Some of these appear to be probable, others, perhaps, less probable. One of the more interesting examples may be mentioned. Colonel Conder writes Jethro and Reuel—the seemingly discrepant names of the father-in-law of Moses—in cuneiform, and shows how very trifling the difference between them is.² It is a pity that our Assyriologists have refrained from testing and discussing the theory. While many of Colonel Conder's details and inferences might perhaps require modification, the main idea is certainly attractive and well deserving of attention.

¹ The consideration of the other points raised by Mr. Carpenter on this incident (Oxford Hexateuch, I., p. 32) would consume too much space.

² " The First Bible " [1902], pp. 105, 120-122.

Dr. Kirkpatrick devotes a good deal of his space to the so-called "literary criticism" of the documents. I have dealt with this matter at some length in special connexion with Deuteronomy in an article in the October number of the *Princeton Theological Review*, to which reference may be made.¹ Here I must content myself with a single illustration. In Gen. x. 19 we read, "*As thou goest toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah, and Zeboim.*" The places named were destroyed in Abraham's lifetime. It follows that this passage must have been originally composed before the catastrophe narrated in Gen. xix. Mr. Carpenter attributes it, however, to a late stratum of "J," making it subsequent to xii. 10, which was obviously composed *after* the destruction of Sodom. Dr. Driver assigns the passage to "J," and writes:

"Nor does the language of 'J' and 'E' bring us to any more definite conclusion. Both belong to the golden period of Hebrew literature. They resemble the best parts of Judges and Samuel (much of which cannot be greatly later than David's own time); but whether they are actually earlier or later than these, the language and style do not enable us to say. . . . All things considered, both 'J' and 'E' may be assigned with the greatest probability to the early centuries of the monarchy" ("Literature of the Old Testament," sixth edition, pp. 124-125).

In other words, Dr. Driver would on "literary" grounds be prepared to accept a date 1,000 years after the age of Abraham as the time of composition of this passage. What precisely is the value of a method which does not permit its ablest and most cautious exponent to arrive at results that are correct to within 1,000 years?

I may here also point to two of the causes that vitiate the lexicographical work of the higher critics. Paradoxical as it may seem, their knowledge of Hebrew has proved a snare to them. When a clever man knows that he is eminent among his contemporaries in the extent of his linguistic attainments, he is apt to forget how defective our acquaintance with the language is. Hence the higher critical professors, taken as a body, have failed in many instances to make careful study of the exact

¹ *Princeton Theological Review*, October, 1907, pp. 605-630.

shades of meaning of technical Hebrew words. This becomes very evident to an investigator who has occasion to make independent inquiry into their usage. Secondly, Hebrew studies have suffered for some decades now from the philological Bacchanalia of the nineteenth century, in which all branches of linguistic study were represented. After all, comparative philology can never occupy more than a very subordinate (albeit useful) position in lexicography and literary exegesis, and its undue exaltation spells disaster. In their anxiety to compare the meanings of a Semitic root in Arabic or Assyrian, our critics appear to have too often forgotten that the usage of the *Hebrew* authors must always be the palmary guide to its meaning in Hebrew.

In conclusion, we must just mention two other matters in which Dr. Kirkpatrick appears to have gone astray. His reference to Chronicles seems to suggest that he has never faced the argument in Van Hoonacker's important monograph¹ on the subject; while he could hardly have written that "the decipherment of the Cuneiform Inscriptions has shown that some at least of the early narratives of Genesis were not the peculiar property of the Hebrews," etc.,² if he had given due weight to Dr. W. St. Clair Tisdall's masterly papers.³

It is most sincerely to be wished that the Dean of Ely should open up a new and original path for the higher critics of this country by endeavouring to give conscientious and impartial consideration to the work of those who write on the other side. At present the great bulk of the higher critical writers do not appear to make even the slightest attempt to understand the arguments that make their positions untenable.

¹ "Le sacerdoce lévitique dans la loi et dans l'histoire des hébreux."

² *Guardian*, May 22, 1907, p. 846.

³ "The Hebrew and the Babylonian Cosmologies," *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1905, pp. 259-266. Hasisatra and Noah, CHURCHMAN, November, 1906, pp. 659-671.

