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ARTICLE VIII.

PRIESTS AND LEVITES: THE FOURTH CHAPTER
OF WELLHAUSEN'S PROLEGOMENA.

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"For the position of the Levites is the Achilles heel of the Priestly Code."—WELLHAUSEN.

FOR the Wellhausen reconstruction of the history of Israel our present subject is second in importance only to "Sanctuaries." The latter topic was disposed of in the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* for October, 1909,¹ and of necessity much of what is said concerning the priesthood was incidentally treated, for it is not possible to consider the places of sacrifice without some reference to the persons who officiated at them. Yet much remains, and accordingly it is proposed to devote this article to a correction of the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis respecting the priesthood.

Independent investigation of the material phenomena has led me to the conclusion that the conservatives and the critics are alike at fault. Two errors are common to both equally. Neither set of students have seriously attempted to apply textual criticism, and both have assumed that the traditional views are necessarily the only explanations possible. Yet the author or authors of the Pentateuchal documents are entitled to the same measure of justice as all other authors. It is not too much to ask that some trouble should be given to the task of

¹This article is reprinted as Chapter VI. of *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*. (Oberlin: Bibliotheca Sacra Company; London: Elliot Stock.)

ascertaining what they actually wrote; and, further, that in the interpretation of their writings the plain and obvious meaning should be preferred to the views of any subsequent writer whomsoever. In addition I am of the opinion that the conservatives and the critics have made one great mistake each. The conservatives have assumed that all the statements contained in the Bible must necessarily be of equal value historically. No doubt they have been assisted in this by the departure from the order of the Jewish canon, which does not place Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah in the same category with Judges, Samuel, and Kings. These latter books belong to the series of "earlier prophets" while the former are only hagiography. This mistake has been avoided by most of the critics, who, however, have more than compensated for this by adopting an impossible documentary theory which has placed sound history out of their reach. A mediating school have combined both positions. To save the history of the Chronicler they have sacrificed the history of Moses, and have consequently failed to do any good to either in spite of many shrewd observations. The present article is accordingly written on the basis of a frank acceptance of four main principles, which will find their justification as the inquiry proceeds. These are: (1) the Mosaic authenticity of all the Pentateuchal legislation, (2) subject to the modifications introduced by a scientific textual criticism that refuses to go a single step beyond the evidence unnecessarily, but is willing to apply to the documents the textual principles that are recognized as valid in the case of all other books that depend on a MS. tradition; (3) the interpretation of the statements contained in the original authorities in their plain and natural sense as the palmary guides to the meaning of those authorities, and the application of the ordinary canons of legal construction to the laws to be

construed; and (4) the rejection of all statements in the Hagiography that conflict with the Law and the Prophets. The inquiry naturally falls into sections. It is convenient to begin with the data of P.

PRIESTS AND LEVITES IN THE PRIESTLY CODE.

As Wellhausen claims¹ that the position of the Levites is the Achilles heel of the Priestly Code, I proceed at once to the consideration of this topic. Apart from a clause in Exodus xxxviii. 21 (which is lacking in one of the old Latin copies) and the provisions of the land laws in Leviticus xxv., the whole of P's data as to Levites (except of course some genealogies) are contained in the book of Numbers. It is unfortunate that this has not yet appeared in the larger Cambridge Septuagint, and fresh light may be thrown on the subject when more textual evidence is available; but for the present the Massoretic text, with some of the existing materials, leaves us in very little doubt as to the true position of the Levites, though obscurity hangs over the exact wording of some of the verses.

What does the book of Numbers tell us of the duties of the tribe of Levi? It may be well to quote the first brief summary:—

“And do thou appoint the Levites over the dwelling of the testimony, and over all its furniture, and over all that belongeth to it: *they* shall carry the dwelling, and all its furniture, and *they* shall serve it, and round about the dwelling shall they camp. And when the dwelling setteth forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the dwelling is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall die. . . . And the Levites shall pitch round about the dwelling of the testimony . . . and the Levites shall keep the charge of the dwelling of the testimony” (Num. i. 50-53).

¹ Prolegomena, p. 167. The references are to the English translation throughout.

Thus the chief functions are to take down, set up, and transport the dwelling, and to keep its charge.

The view of the duties of the Levites here set forth is amplified but never altered in the subsequent chapters. Indeed, they furnish the best commentary on the meaning of this passage. In iii. 6-10 we hear that the Levites are to serve Aaron. They are to keep his charge and the charge of all the congregation before the tent of meeting. What is meant by these words is not immediately obvious. In the Massoretic text they are explained by the phrase "to serve the service of the dwelling" (ver. 7), but these words are unknown to the Vulgate. The next verse, however, gives more light. They are to keep the vessels of the tent of meeting. It appears from xviii. 3 that Levites approaching these vessels when in their normal position would suffer death. Accordingly we must infer that the keeping that is meant by our text is either a keeping on the march or else the encamping round the Tabernacle. The Massoretic text of iii. 8 then adds "and the charge of the children of Israel to serve the service of the dwelling"; but again the words are missing from the Vulgate. Apparently, therefore, the Levites are to act as keepers. What does this mean? The census of the Levites (ver. 11 ff.) gives a great deal of valuable information as to their functions. Taking the Massoretic text, we read: "And the charge of the children of Gershon in the tent of meeting shall be the dwelling and the tent, the covering thereof," etc. (ver. 25 f.). Now this is phraseology which if authentic lends itself very easily to misconception. The Hebrew here rendered "in" does not necessarily mean "in": and if we have before us the original text it cannot possibly mean "in." The Levites were not to go into the tent at all. To make the meaning plain we must refer to another passage. In chapter iv. the Massoretic text has "this

is the service of the sons of Kohath *in* the tent of meeting" (ver. 4). Then follows a description of how Aaron and his sons are to come and dismantle the tent when the camp sets forward, and pack certain articles. When they have finished, the sons of Kohath "shall come to bear, and shall not touch the sanctuary, lest they die: these are the burden [variant reading, "burdens"] of the sons of Kohath *in* the tent of meeting" (ver. 15). Here attention must be drawn to the peculiarity of the English version. The English word "*in*" cannot be used in this sense. The carriage of portions of a dismantled tent cannot be described in English idiom as service *in* that tent. Therefore we must be on our guard when we read that the Levites were to do service *in* the tent of meeting. They were to serve in connection with it, but not *in* it. "The charge of the children of Gershon in the tent of meeting" was not something that was to be done *in* the tent. On the contrary, they were to carry the specified articles. The charge and the service intended were a charge and service of portorage, and little more (see iv. 21-28). It is perhaps unnecessary to labor the point much further. The directions in chapters iii. and iv. are directions for portorage, and nothing else.¹ The Massoretic text may have suffered somewhat. The Versions certainly suggest that it contains a good many phrases that have been added by glossators: it is certain that these laws were long copied by men who had a very different idea of the position and duties of the Levites; but when the matter is carefully looked into, it will be found at each point that we are concerned with directions for portorage by men who would be liable to death if they touched the articles named when the tent was standing in its normal position. From time

¹ In Numbers viii. 22 the R.V. renders "went *in*." The Hebrew need not mean more than "came."

to time we meet with phrases the meaning of which is not clear at first sight, but when the context is examined we are always brought back to the fact that we have before us portage instructions and little else. This is confirmed by vii. 5 ff. Here wagons are taken, and again we meet with the phrase "to serve the service of the tent of meeting." Two wagons were given to the Gershonites according to their service, and four to the Merarites according to theirs. "But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none: because the service of the sanctuary belonged unto them: they bare it upon their shoulders." I repeat, the only service contemplated is a service of portage.

In viii. 26 a distinction is drawn between the keeping of charge and the doing of service. "And he shall minister with his brethren in the tent of meeting to keep the charge: but he shall not do service." After what has been said, it is evident that "in the tent" cannot be taken in the sense required by English usage. The keeping of the charge must apparently be some sort of service short of actual carriage — perhaps responsibility for the transport of the vessels, etc., but possibly the mere camping round the tent.

The same tale is told by Numbers xviii. The Levites are to serve Aaron. They are to keep "thy charge, and the charge of all the tent: only they shall not come nigh unto the vessels of the sanctuary and unto the altar" (ver. 3). The following verse repeats that they are to keep the charge of the tent of meeting for all the service of the tent; but Aaron and his sons are to keep the charge of the sanctuary and the charge of the altar (ver. 5). Again in verse 6 we read that the Levites are to do the service of the tent of meeting. Once more, then, it appears that the charge and the service are intimately connected, and constitute the whole function of the

Levites. What the service is we know clearly: the "charge" appears to bear a kindred meaning. Certainly it cannot mean anything like cleaning the vessels that they were not even to approach.

The only other passage that is material is xvi. 9 f. Here again the duty of the Levites is to do the service of the dwelling of the LORD: but this is followed by a phrase that is textually doubtful — "and to stand before the congregation [LXX "tent"] to serve them [Vulg. "him"]." The next verse shows that they are excluded from the priesthood of Aaron.¹

Nowhere is there any hint of functions that could have been discharged by the Levites after the period of wanderings had ceased.

Such are the positive data of P with regard to the functions of the Levites. To appreciate the significance of those data we must also test them by other standards. It is held that P stands between Ezekiel and the Chronicler. The latter especially is supposed to represent the working of the completed Law. Therefore we must consider how far the views of these two writers correspond with the contents of P. Ezekiel states in a passage that will have to be considered more fully hereafter (xliv. 9-14) that the Levites are to perform certain duties. The state of the text makes it impossible to be quite certain what exactly the first of these duties is, but apparently they are to be something in the nature of gate-keepers. Then

¹ A small discrepancy in the Massoretic text should be noticed. According to Numbers iv. the age of service was from thirty to fifty years old, but in Numbers viii. twenty-five years is given as the commencing age. The LXX does not confirm the Massoretic text in Numbers iv., but may have undergone alteration. I think, however, that it would be unwise to place much reliance on the number 25 occurring in only one passage. It might easily be due to later scribes, who certainly understood these laws in a sense quite different from that originally intended.

he continues: "*They* shall slay the burnt-offering and the sacrifice for the people, and *they* shall stand before them to minister to them." Now this is precisely what they are *not* to do in P. It is clear from the opening chapters of Leviticus that the statutory individual sacrifices were to be slain by the sacrificants themselves, not by the Levites. There can therefore be no question of any such action being in accordance with the Law. Then the prophet continues: "and I will make them keepers of the charge^e of the house, for all its service," etc. (ver. 14). The resemblance to the language of P is not more obvious than the difference in the sense. There is here a pouring of new wine into old bottles. The service contemplated could not possibly be the carrying about of sections of the walls. The "charge" is not explained by this verse, but the prophet's meaning appears pretty clearly from verses 7 f. We learn that in the temple foreigners had been brought in "to be in my sanctuary, to profane it, when ye brought near my bread, fat and blood. . . .and ye set them to keep my charge in my sanctuary." That at least seems to represent the meaning of the original text — though it differs slightly from the Massoretic readings. In that case, therefore, foreigners had been admitted to places into which (if P refers to the temple, as the critics allege) no Levite could have been allowed to penetrate on pain of death.

The Chronicler's testimony is to the same effect. He represents the Levites as performing a number of duties, but he expressly attributes some of these to post-Mosaic ordinances. In other cases, however, he tells us that the Levites had to perform duties which either find no mention in P or else are assigned to the priests. For example, the preparation and placing of the shewbread falls to the Levites in 1 Chronicles ix. 32; xxiii. 29; 2 Chronicles xiii. 11; but not in Leviticus

xxiv. 5-8, and the same may be said of "the fine flour for a meal-offering, whether of unleavened wafers, or of that which is baked in the pan, or of that which is soaked, and for all manner of measure and size" (1 Chron. xxiii. 29). It cannot be that in the intent of P such duties were to be discharged by the Levites, for a momentary glance at the sanctuary would have meant death (Num. iv. 20). When we read that the Levites were "for the service of the house of the LORD, over the courts, and over the chambers, and over the cleansing of every holy thing" (1 Chron. xxiii. 28), we remember not merely that such duties nowhere appear in P, but that that document knows nothing of any chambers, would not have allowed the Levites to touch many of the holy things, and regarded service simply as portage. Again, 1 Chronicles xxiii. 30 reads: "and to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even." This is quite unknown to P, and indeed the Chronicler himself elsewhere regards the musical service as instituted by David, not Moses. Once more, 1 Chronicles xxiii. 31 assigns to the Levites the task of offering burnt-offerings on certain occasions: but P expressly forbids their approaching the altar (Num. xviii. 3) on pain of death to both Levites and priests! It is unnecessary to examine the statements of Chronicles in further detail. They may sometimes represent a later interpretation of P: they certainly do not represent the plain meaning of his ordinances. Wellhausen nowhere shows his incompetence to deal with such topics as the present more clearly than when he writes "that in the temple of Solomon even heathen (Zech. xiv. 21), probably captives, were employed to do hierodulic services which, according to the law, ought to have been rendered by Levites, and which afterwards actually were so rendered" (p. 123). According to the law the performance of some of these "hier-

odulic services" by the Levites would have been visited by death, while their performance of others is not even contemplated. Hereafter we shall consider the reason that brought about the change. For the moment we are merely concerned with ascertaining the data of P and their true meaning.

Curiously enough, the critics end by recognizing something of all this, but without seeing its bearing on their case. Thus Kuenen writes: "Moreover we must not lose sight of the fact that P puts forward his ordinances about Priests and Levites in the form of a description of the Mosaic period and the organization of the cultus at that time. His Levites consequently are fully occupied with the taking down and erection of the Tent of Meeting and with the transport of all the holy vessels, and we are not surprised that we learn little or nothing of what they will have to do at a permanent sanctuary."¹ I venture to think that most people will be surprised. P's whole object being to introduce a particular organization of worship, it is odd that he should have said nothing at all about it (as we must suppose on Kuenen's theory): and it is still more odd—though Kuenen did not detect these facts—that he should have appointed death as the penalty—or should we say reward?—of doing the acts that he desired these persons to perform.

Thus, when the position of the Levites in P is fairly considered, certain points stand out at once that are extraordinarily unfavorable to the Wellhausen case.

First, the hypothesis that in P we have a projection of later conditions into the desert period breaks down under the weight of P's data.² The writer conceives the Levites primarily as a

¹ Kuenen, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, p. 478.

² Thus Wellhausen writes: "The former [i.e. the sons of Aaron] are priests of the tabernacle, the latter of the temple; but as in point of fact the only distinction to be drawn between the Mosaic

body of sacred porters. Now nobody living in any subsequent age could suppose that there was either occasion or possibility to carry about the temple. If we are really to adopt the projection theory according to which the duties of the Levites in P mirror their duties in the second Temple, we must imagine a priestly gentleman picturing to himself sections of the temple walls and bits of the roof as being carried about at odd times by Levites on their shoulders. In fact, on this view he must have conceived the temple as a sort of a toy house such as children play with, an erection that could be set up and taken down at will. The absurdity of these propositions must surely be obvious to everybody.

Secondly, the net result of such a scheme would be to create a body of Levites for use *during the period of wanderings and never thereafter*. As soon as the desert age was over, the whole tribe would find their main occupation gone. How can we conceive that any legislator deliberately sat down and invented such a scheme centuries after the epoch to which it relates, well knowing that in so far as his scheme purported to be a narrative of events it was fictitious from beginning to end, and in so far as it might be regarded as a legislation applicable to his own or any future day there was not a line in it that could conceivably be put into practice? If any theorist can be conceived as acting in this way, how are we to suppose that his work would meet with acceptance? Yet that and nothing less is what the theory demands.

Thirdly, P neither embodies the views of Ezekiel nor finds an accurate reflection in Chronicles. The views of P are quite different from those of the other two books. The facts are and the actual central sanctuary is that between shadow and substance, so neither can any other be made between the Mosaic and the actual central priesthood" (p. 125).

such as to enable us to say definitely that P is not in line with them. It is impossible to assume that he appointed the death penalty for certain acts if performed by Levites, because he really wished the Levites to perform those acts. It is certainly true that in the Pentateuch phrases like "keeping charge" are used which in the absence of any context might very easily be held to refer to such duties as we find assigned to the Levites in Ezekiel and in Chronicles. But the author of the Pentateuch must be judged on his own statements, not on the understanding of any other writer or of later transcribers of his work, and when we look into these statements and try to make the various functions suggested fit into the phraseology we always discover some Pentateuchal precept that negatives the conclusion we might otherwise draw. The truth is that this phraseology has a history. In the Pentateuch it is used of desert services and nothing else: in the later books it is applied to permanent services as a technical term and the Pentateuchal legislation is thus read in the light of later circumstances. In a *historical* inquiry that method cannot be followed. We are bound to go behind the expressions used to the writer's original meaning.

Thus, in whatever light the matter be viewed, the theory breaks down hopelessly, and we see that we are face to face with two alternatives, and no more. Either the passages relating to the Levites are Mosaic or else they are moonshine. *Tertium non datur*. Neither the period of Joshua and the Judges, nor the Exile, nor any other conceivable date, can possibly be made to fit.¹

¹Similarly Baudissin is finally driven to the following admission: "The Priestly Writing will in the first instance have circulated only in priestly circles and did not become binding law for the people before the Exile. In the full sense it never became so and could not become so; for under the forms of the Mosaic period this

To this result our investigation enables us to append certain corollaries. We have found that P presents us with dispositions relating to a whole tribe for the desert period and making no provision for their future after the Conquest. His regulations are purely transitory. Therefore we must conclude that some other dispositions differing from these and capable of being applied when the Israelites were settled in Canaan were also given by Moses: for he certainly cannot have supposed that the practice of the wilderness could have continued for all time. Consequently we must expect to find elsewhere supplementary regulations contemplating entirely different circumstances and proceeding on other lines: and the differences will not necessarily be an argument against the Mosaic authenticity of both sets of regulations.

Secondly, we are entitled to expect that P's regulations as to the Levites will provide us with confirmation of a view to which former investigations have already led us, viz. that the numbers of the Pentateuch are largely corrupt. If these regulations are Mosaic they will be true to the circumstances of the Mosaic age, and those circumstances rule out the number 22,000. We do in fact find what we expect in Numbers iv. The Levites are so few that Aaron and his two sons can personally control them all and appoint them to their individual tasks: "Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his burden" (ver. 19); "and by name ye shall appoint the instruments of the charge of their burden" (ver. 32). Six wagons drawn by twelve oxen were sufficient for the transport of everything that could not be

writing in many cases pictures conditions as they existed at no time after the settlement in Canaan" (my italics). (Geschichte des alttestamentlichen Priestenthums, p. 280; compare the same writer's article "Priests and Levites" in Hastings's larger Dictionary of the Bible.)

carried on men's shoulders (chap. vii.). Facts such as these abundantly confirm our previous observations. Nor should we be misled by the narratives that speak of "princes" of various sections of the Levites. The meaning would in some respects be more aptly given by the rendering "foremen."

Before passing away from the Levites we must note a point in P's representation to which we shall have to return hereafter. For the purposes of their service the Levites undergo a special ritual (Num. viii.), but it is not a ritual of consecration. It is only a ritual of purification.

In addition to the Levites we find in P Aaron the priest (at a later date Eleazar the priest) and the sons of Aaron the priests, but it is noteworthy that this reading does not appear to be recognized by all the authorities in any place. Owing to the system of abbreviations which obtained at the time the LXX was made and has been continued even in some Hebrew MSS. that are still extant, it was possible to read the same Hebrew phrase either as "the sons of Aaron the priest" or "the sons of Aaron the priests." In Leviticus i. the Massoretic text adopts the singular in verse 7 and the plural in verse 8, but where the Massoretic text has the plural the other authorities always attest one or more variants. Sometimes we find the singular, sometimes one of the phrases is omitted, sometimes a displacement in the order suggests the presence of a gloss. Usually it is the Old Latin that has the singular, either with or without the support of other authorities. A typical instance occurs in Leviticus i. 11. There the Massoretic text has the plural, the Septuagintal MS. m and the Vulgate omit the word altogether, while the Old Latin and a Bohairic copy read the singular. It is unnecessary to go through all the cases, but it is proper to say that in Leviticus xiii. 2, where

the Massoretic text gives us "to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests," the Vulgate omits "the priests."

Thus we find, first, the high priest, most usually called "the priest," but sometimes designated by other expressions; and, secondly, "the sons of Aaron" or "the priests." To these also the expression "the priest" could be applied either to designate descent or in the ritual as meaning "the officiating priest"; but the title here has not the same force as when applied to the high priest, who was the priest *par excellence*. Similarly an Englishman speaking of "the Prince" means the Prince of Wales unless there is something in the context to show that he is referring to some other prince. This usage of the term in P becomes important when we reach the later history, since there too we find persons bearing the title "the priest" who obviously stand at the head of the hierarchy. The phrase "Aaron the high priest" is entirely unknown to P. Where the high priest's name is given, the only qualifying apposition possible in his usage is "the priest."¹

On a survey of the evidence as to priests certain points emerge which are material to the present discussion. The position of the priests is very different to that of the Levites. If we ask why the priest is so holy, the answer appears to be that he is made so by the combination of two qualifications—the Divine choice and his consecration. The Levites, it must

¹It will be convenient at this point to explain a little discrepancy in the Massoretic text. It is said that in some passages (e.g. Ex. xxix. 7; Lev. xxi. 10, 12) only the high priest is anointed, while in others all sons of Aaron undergo this rite. It is the case that the high priest alone is anointed in some passages. The trouble has arisen partly through a confusion between sprinkling and anointing, and partly through textual corruption. The critical case is set out on page 251 of the Oxford Hexateuch, vol. I. Of the passages that give trouble, Numbers iii. 3 was unknown to Lucian, in Exodus xxviii. 41 the words "and thou shalt anoint them" are not in the Vulgate, nor are the material words of

be remembered, were not consecrated, only purified, and in their case P contains no Divine command enabling them to perform the duties of priests. With regard to the priestly tasks the legislation wears a twofold aspect. On the one hand it is given primarily for the wilderness and bears the stamp of the conditions of the time. On the other much of it was intended to continue after the conquest. Two features call for special notice — the inadequacy of the staff to the post-conquest conditions and the signs of date.

If we turn to Leviticus xiii. f. we shall find laws dealing with leprosy. Let us test the application of these. At the very beginning of the earlier chapter we read that a man who has certain symptoms is to be brought unto Aaron the priest or unto one of his sons. Then follow rules for inspecting and isolating the patient. Remembering that on the critical theory P assumes the capital at Jerusalem as self-evident and the priests as concentrated there, we must ask how such provisions were to work after the conquest. During the desert period nothing could have been simpler; but what was to happen when the Israelites dwelt all over Canaan from Beer-sheba to Dan? Nay more, how could such regulations conceivably occur to the mind of any sane man during or after the exile when the bulk of the Israelites were in Babylonia and there were important Jewish colonies in Egypt and else-

Exodus xl. 13, 15. In Leviticus vii. 35 a Septuagintal MS., the Ethiopic, Armenian, and Vulgate omit "anointing portion" before "his sons." On the other hand, Exodus xxix. 21 prescribes sprinkling, which is quite a different rite to anointing, Leviticus viii. 30 narrates the fulfilment of the command, and Leviticus x. 7 presumably refers to this. There remains only Exodus xxx. 30. In view of xxix. 7 and all the other passages, it is most probable that we have here some slight corruption that cannot be corrected from the LXX or the Vulgate. "And his sons" may easily be a gloss, and the words "and thou shalt sanctify them" may have come in from the preceding verse by dittography.

where? And if the theory is absurd when it is applied to men, what are we to say when we read of leprous garments (Lev. xiii. 47 ff.)? Was a man to make the pilgrimage from Babylonia to Jerusalem to consult a priest about a doubtful garment? And what about the leper's offerings in chapter xiv.? Could they conceivably have been intended for such circumstances? It is easy to multiply such questions. Neither the critics nor P can supply the answer.

Then we come to a passage which is expressly stated to apply to the period after the conquest (Lev. xiv. 33-53). It deals with houses that are leprous. The owner is to notify the priest, and the latter is to come and inspect the house. In certain eventualities he will then shut up the house and return on the seventh day. Clearly this is not a duty that could have been discharged for the whole country immediately after the conquest by the descendants of Aaron. It postulates the presence of priests either in or within reasonable distance of every "city." It contemplates a far larger body of priests than the descendants of Aaron could have been for some time after the conquest, and it demands purificatory rites over running water which are obviously designed to be practicable for those who might be at a distance from the religious capital.

It is not necessary to continue this examination of the laws. What has been said in the case of leprosy applies (*mutatis mutandis*) to other portions of P: and the antiquity of that document and the incompleteness of its priestly staff become evident here as elsewhere. Yet there is one point that helps to explain much of the subsequent history of the priesthood—I refer to the portion of the sacrificial ritual to be performed in the case of statutory individual sacrifices by the sacrificant himself. Few readers of Leviticus i. consider how clearly it mirrors early and simple conditions. It is true that

the LXX makes the priests, and not the sacrificant, kill the victim; but the correctness of the Massoretic text is proved by iii. 2, where the plural is impossible. Now turn to 1 Kings viii. 63, where we read of Solomon's enormous sacrifice. How could this ritual possibly be applied to such a case? It may be objected, with reason, that this sacrifice of Solomon's was entirely exceptional. Yet, while this may readily be granted, two reflections suggest themselves. With the growth of luxury the upper classes would inevitably object to slaughtering and flaying the cattle personally. Moreover, sacrifices would tend to grow in the number of victims, and the task would become impossible. It is one thing to slaughter and flay a single animal with one's own hand: it is quite another to slaughter and flay fifty or a hundred or five hundred. The ritual presupposes very simple conditions. With the growth of luxury modifications would inevitably have to be introduced.

Thus in the case of the priests, as in the case of the Levites, we see that P taken by itself is a torso, and nothing more, and that it represents the earliest age in the national history.

The portions of the Pentateuch that we have still to examine will supply the solutions of some of its problems.

PRIESTS AND LEVITES IN THE OTHER PORTIONS OF THE
PENTATEUCH.

The data of JE are very scanty. Perhaps the most important passage in the eyes of the critical school is Exodus iv. 14, where we read of "Aaron thy brother the Levite." It is gravely urged that this passage proves that the Levites were not a tribe, but a class of persons of priestly skill; in fact, that "Levite" here denotes profession, not ancestry. The reason advanced is that this phrase is addressed to Moses, who was necessarily of the same ancestry as his own brother and would

therefore not require to be informed of his descent. It is sought to buttress this argument by a reference to Judges xvii. 7, where we read: "And there was a youth from Bethlehem-judah, of the tribe of Judah, and he was a Levite, and he sojourned there." This youth, it is said, came of the tribe of Judah, and therefore when we are told that he was a Levite we must understand this of his profession. In point of fact, this youth "of the tribe of Judah" was a grandson of Moses, being the son of Gershom (xviii. 30). When we read in the last-cited verse "son of Gershom, son of Manasseh," in the English Versions, we must not be misled. The Hebrew has "son of M sh h" (Moses). The letter "n" was then inserted by the scribes in a suspended position to make the name "M n sh h" (Manasseh) out of reverence for the lawgiver's memory. But the true reading is "Moses," and the youth in question was therefore his grandson and a descendant of Levi. Moreover, xvii. 7 itself says as much. This Levite "sojourned" in Bethlehem. This word "sojourned" is the technical word for members of the tribe of Levi, who had no tribal lot like the secular tribes. How, then, comes it that this youth who was a Levite is described as being of the tribe of Judah? The explanation is very simple. As is well known, there were two Greek translations of the book of Judges both of which are quoted as Septuagint. Now in Field's Hexapla *ad loc.* we find two renderings of the passage which in the Massoretic text runs "from Bethlehem-judah, of the tribe of Judah." According to the one, the text should be "from Bethlehem the city of Judah"; according to the other, supported by Theodotion, it should be "from the city of Bethlehem-judah." Neither of these two confirms the Massoretic text, and neither contains a hint that Jonathan was anything but a Levite by descent. The difficulty in this case arises from slight textual

corruption, and no support can be derived from this passage for the theory of professional Levites.

If, now, we return to Exodus iv. 14, we shall see that the hypothesis is equally untenable there. The origin of the phrase leaps to the eyes. The full designation of an Israelite in the Mosaic age was "A, son of B, of the tribe of X," or else "A, son of B, the X-ite." Aaron would normally have been described as "Aaron, son of Amram, the Levite." In a speech made to Moses, however, the relationship to the latter is naturally substituted for "son of Amram"; and thus we get "Aaron, thy brother, the Levite." The designation is no more remarkable than "your brother J. S." would be in a speech made in our own day to "T. S." It is true that in such a case "your brother J." would be the more usual designation; but everybody knows, from personal experience, that there are occasions on which the former style is adopted. To assign any other meaning to the phrase is to land ourselves in a morass of absurdities. We know that before the age of Moses the Levites were a secular tribe, who, according to the blessing of Jacob, were not in particularly good repute. Immediately after the age of Moses¹ we find that the members of the tribe of Levi enjoy a sacred character, and in the blessing of Moses, which is supposed to be an early poem, Levi, the priestly body, is a tribe. To postulate by the side of the only Levites we know, the tribal Levites, an otherwise unknown professional class termed "Levites"; to suppose that the tribe then suddenly acquired a sacred character (as shown by the data of J and E, yet to be examined, and by the correct text of this passage of Judges), and that these two sets of

¹ Jonathan is described as a young man in the book of Judges. His father Gershom was born before the forty years of wandering began. The episode of his priesthood to Micah must therefore have occurred only a few years after the lawgiver's death.

Levites are entirely distinct, is to suppose a most amazing set of absurdities. Our sources tell us of but one kind of Levites — the members of the tribe of Levi — and there is not a scintilla of evidence for any other.¹

Apart from the blessing of Moses (to be considered hereafter), the Pentateuchal passages regarded by the critics as early supply us with only one reference to the special character of Levi — Exodus xxxii. 26–29. The text is not in a satisfactory condition, but there is some question of consecration and a Divine blessing. The testimony of Deuteronomy and the difficulties of the passage suggest that the text is here incomplete.

Of the priests we learn but little in JE. As has been shown elsewhere, “elders” should be read for “priests” in Exodus xix. 22, 24.² The theory that Joshua was a priest has also been demonstrated to be baseless.³ Deuteronomy x. 6 (E) tells us that “Aaron died, and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest’s office in his stead.” This entirely agrees with P so far as it goes. It shows us that Aaron was “the priest,” and that he was succeeded by Eleazar, as in P. Some of the laws imply the existence of a priesthood, but give us no information as to its composition. The passage in the blessing of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 8–11) is really the most valuable of all these, but it will be clearer when we have considered the evidence of D.

¹ Reference is sometimes made to the article “the Levite” in such passages as Exodus vi. 19. This merely shows that the textual evidence has not been examined. Thus in this verse the LXX and Vulgate read “Levi,” not “the Levite.” In such cases the article is due to later copyists. For the benefit of those who are not Hebraists it should be said that there is no difference in the original between Levi and Levite.

² *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April, 1910, p. 353.

³ *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, pp. 66–70 = *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1908, pp. 494–497.

This last document takes up all the threads that we have had to follow, and weaves them into a consistent and intelligible whole; but, as already stated, it certainly suggests that something has fallen out from Exodus.

In order fully to appreciate the data of Deuteronomy, we must briefly recall the difficulties with which P presented us. First, we found a whole tribe of Levites, chosen by God but not consecrated, whose occupation would come to an end with the conquest, with the result that as soon as the ark and tent were located permanently at any one spot they would have no duties to perform. Then we saw a small body of consecrated priests who could not possibly discharge the functions that would devolve upon them with the conquest, and we discovered laws which could be administered only by a numerous priesthood settled all over the country. Deuteronomy also knows such laws. It too has a rite to be performed locally with priestly assistance by running water (xxi. 1-9). It too contemplates leprosy laws administered by priests (xxiv. 8). But in both cases it speaks of "the priests, the Levites."

When it is carefully examined three points emerge: (1) the original text of Deuteronomy contained provisions enlarging the rights and duties of the Levites; (2) Deuteronomy probably testifies to a lacuna in the text of the earlier books; (3) the general situation postulated is the same as that which would have been brought about by P, but there are certain apparent discrepancies which require further notice.

Perhaps the most important passage is Deuteronomy xviii. 6-8. There are various small textual differences which are unimportant from our present point of view; but there is one which changes the whole meaning of the passage. In verse 7 three MSS. of Holmes omit "the Levites," and it seems obvious that the word is in fact a gloss inserted as an explana-

tion by somebody who took the late view of the meaning of the Law, and therefore found the text difficult to understand. Its omission transforms the historical import of the passage, which now runs:—

“And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourneth, and come with all the desire of his soul unto the place which the LORD shall choose; then he shall minister in the name of the LORD his God, like all his brethren which stand there before the LORD. They shall have like portions to eat, beside that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony.”

That is to say, a Levite fulfilling the necessary conditions could minister like all his brethren, i.e. the sons of Aaron — not, as the glossator thought, in an inferior ministry.

To this must be added Deuteronomy xxi. 5: “and according to their word shall be every contention and every blow”; and the passage in the blessing “They shall teach thy judgments to Jacob and thy law to Israel: they shall put incense in thy nostrils and whole burnt-offerings on thine altar” (xxxiii. 10). When this is read in the light of Deuteronomy xxi. 5 and xxiv. 8 (assigning to “the priests the Levites” the duty of teaching the leprosy regulations), and taken in combination with the fact that the teachings of P require for their administration a numerous and scattered priestly caste, it cannot be doubted that Deuteronomy in all these matters supplements the earlier books. The joint effect of all these passages is to confer on the Levites the power of exercising most of the duties of the sons of Aaron. It is, however, probable that in the Mosaic age one thing would be understood as self-evident which is not expressed. Priests, so far as we know, were always consecrated. In Judges we read of Micah’s “filling the hand” first of his son and then of the Levite. Presumably a Levite coming under this law would have to undergo consecration as a matter of course before approaching the altar.

This view of the meaning of the Law is, as we shall see hereafter, confirmed by all the data of the earlier and later prophets. But for the hagiography, the glossators, and late Jewish tradition no other view could ever have obtained. It however leaves one seeming discrepancy, which must be considered further. There is certainly no difficulty in understanding that, in view of the altered circumstances, Deuteronomy should have modified the earlier provisions as to the Levites which had been given for the period of wandering; but trouble is made by the language of Numbers xvii. 5 (E.V. xvi. 40): "a memorial to the children of Israel that there shall not come near a stranger who is not of the seed of Aaron to burn incense before the LORD: and that he be not like Korah and like his company, as the LORD spoke to him by the hand of Moses." It seems as if the burning of incense alone were not a priestly but a high priestly prerogative. In Exodus xxx. 1-9 it is Aaron who is to burn it (cp. Lev. x.; xvi. 12 f.; Num. xvii. 11 f. (xvi. 46)). Sometimes incense is used with a meal-offering, but that is different from the burning of incense by itself. In every case in P — except where persons are consumed for some unlawful use of incense — it appears that the burning is to be done by the high priest only, and then — as it would seem — as a measure of precaution against the possible results of a theophany. Indeed it seems to have prophylactic powers. The story of Korah is in agreement with this, for the "priesthood" that he sought was obviously the leadership of the congregation, not such a position as that occupied by Aaron's sons. This appears clearly from Numbers xvi. 3. In view of the language of this verse, it is not too much to say that when Korah challenged the supremacy of Aaron and Moses, the test of taking censers and burning incense before the LORD was probably suggested by the fact that this was a

high-priestly prerogative which could not be exercised by any lesser dignitary. Hence Numbers xvii. 5 cannot be quoted as conflicting with Deuteronomy, seeing that the latter book clearly recognizes "the priest" as holding an exceptional position. Deuteronomy xviii. 1-8 certainly does not place *any* Levite in the position of the high priest.

Before proceeding to consider more particularly the resemblances between P and D, it may be well to emphasize at once a characteristic of Hebrew thought and methods of expression that bears very closely on our subject. The Semites used terms of fatherhood and sonship to express all kinds of relations that would be differently expressed by a modern Western. For instance, "he was the father of such as dwell in tents" (Gen. iv. 20) would not be understood by any reader as meaning that he was in a physical sense the ancestor of all tent-dwellers. In the case of the Rechabites the founder is the "father," the members of the sect are his "sons." For this reason a Hebrew would have felt no difficulty in applying to Levites who came under the provisions of Deuteronomy xviii. 6-8 legislation that was expressed to be intended for the "sons" of Aaron. The fact that in the first instance it was so intended for those who were in fact descended from Aaron would not cause him any qualms. Hebrew usage is too elastic, and the trouble that a Western mind may feel on this subject would have been unintelligible to the tribesmen of Moses.

Once the points we have striven to make are clearly grasped, the resemblance between Deuteronomy and P becomes very marked. "The priest that standeth to minister unto the LORD thy God," in Deuteronomy xvii. 12, is no other than the successor of Aaron. The Levites are as in P—but in Deuteronomy fresh provision is made for them in view of the approaching conquest. In both they have no tribal inheritance,

yet Deuteronomy xviii. 8 speaks of his "patrimony." Two explanations have been suggested by those who wish if possible to avoid the natural inference that this is an allusion to the Levitical cities. It is said that the phrase may refer to some sacrificial dues. This overlooks the fact that the centralizing ordinances of Deuteronomy leave no room for any local priestly sacrifices, and also the obvious impossibility of a priest's selling aught that had come to him as a sacred due. It is also said that this may refer to real property. Undoubtedly it does; but then, if Deuteronomy recognizes real property in spite of the non-possession of a tribal lot, the argument against its recognition of the Levitical cities is gone. They were cities that could be owned by members of a tribe that had no inheritance like its peers.

The resemblance between P's local rites for leprosy in a house and D's local rites in the case of a man found slain has already been indicated, and it has been shown that the ultimate recognition of an extensive and scattered priesthood is necessitated by the laws of P. Both documents recognize leprosy laws locally administered by a priesthood, the Levitical carrying of the Ark, and the separation of Levi for a sacred ministry. The seeming discrepancy between the passage in Numbers that threatens death if the Levites approach the altar and the new provisions of Deuteronomy xviii. is naturally explained partly by the new enactment itself, but partly also by the probability that Levites performing priestly functions at the religious capital would first undergo consecration.

There remains one point of difference between Deuteronomy and P. The former recognizes a Levitical right of blessing which the latter assigns to Aaron and his sons. The passage relating to the priestly blessing is at present misplaced. Numbers vi. 22-27 contains the command to bless,

but in point of fact we find Aaron blessing the people at his consecration (Lev. ix. 22). As the later chapter relates the fulfilment of commands given on Mount Sinai, it would seem that Numbers vi. 22-27 must have been given at the same time — *before* the separation of Levi. What has already been said about the characteristics of Hebrew modes of expression would apply here too. The difficulty therefore vanishes. On the other hand it may be open to question whether there is not a lacuna in the text of Exodus or Numbers, giving some further account of the duties and privileges of the Levites; but this must remain doubtful. It may be that the general words in Numbers as to the duties of the Levites cover everything that is necessary. In Deuteronomy xxvii. 9, etc., we find *Moses and the priests the Levites* speaking to all Israel. Presumably they repeated what he said. If so, they may have repeated the blessing on occasions when Aaron blessed the people. But on points like this no certainty is possible. And assuredly when the discrepancies between Deuteronomy and the earlier books resolve themselves into small and doubtful minutiae of this kind, Mosaic authenticity is not in danger.¹

PRIESTS AND LEVITES FROM MOSES TO MALACHI.

The data of the book of Joshua add nothing fresh to our information. This book, like all the other prophetic books, entirely agrees with the interpretation of the Pentateuchal laws that has just been given. Phrases like "the priests the bearers of the ark of the covenant" alternate with such expressions as "the priests, the Levites, bearers of the ark of the covenant of the LORD." In many places the text is in an

¹ It is very noteworthy that in 2 Chronicles xxx. 27 we read: "And the priests, the Levites [several MSS. and versions "*and* the Levites"] arose and blessed the people." The Levites are here conceived as uttering the priestly blessing.

uncertain condition, but there is no sign that the original MS. in any way conflicted with the view taken of the Pentateuchal laws. One phrase deserves especial notice, for its complete confirmation of what has been said. In xviii. 7 we read: "for the Levites have no portion in your midst; *for the priesthood of the Lord is his inheritance.*" Dr. Carpenter is much puzzled and assigns the verse to a *priestly redactor* of all conceivable figments! How on his principles could a *priestly* writer ascribe the priesthood to the Levites?

The only other point of interest is the fact that in their division of Joshua into sources the critics are compelled to represent J and E and P and a Deuteronomic writer as all entertaining precisely the same conception — though on critical principles they ought to be at hopeless variance — and curiously enough this conception is precisely the conception I have derived from the Pentateuch. For example, in iii. 8, P^a speaks of "the *priests* that bear the ark" — not, be it observed, the Levites. J does the same in verses 13 and 17, E in verse 14, and a Deuteronomic redactor in iv. 9 and other verses. After all, it seems simpler to suppose that the Pentateuch means what it says and was so understood until after the exile, than to indulge in such speculations as these.

The story of Jonathan the grandson of Moses is the only important contribution of the book of Judges to our present topic. "Now I know that the LORD will bless me, since I have a Levite as priest" (xvii. 13), clearly testifies to the sacred character of the tribe soon after the death of Moses. The textual question on this narrative has already been discussed: it remains only to notice that the position of the Levites as well as their character corresponds with the data of the Pentateuch. The idolatry and the separate shrine are regarded as breaches of the Law, — as of course they were. "In those

days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This significant comment was perhaps meant to be enforced by the narrative of the theft of Micah's image—an event that would hardly enhance the prestige of such "gods" in the minds of the readers.

The narratives of the books of Samuel and the early chapters of Kings have been much commented on by the Chronicler and the critics. As the statements of the Chronicler cannot fairly be reconciled with the older sources for this period, it will be well to leave them out of account.

The difficulties that have been found in the history of the age of Samuel are diverse in nature and due to a variety of causes. Some of them need not detain us long. It is claimed that sacrifice is offered without the intervention of a priest.¹ This is explained by the distinction between customary lay offerings and statutory individual offerings—a distinction that, as I have shown elsewhere,² accounts for many features that give difficulty. Another point that need not detain us long is the blessing of the people by the kings (e.g. 2 Sam. vi. 18). The critics choose to claim that they used the priestly benediction. There is not the least evidence of this. Indeed in this passage we are told that David blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. If this is to be taken in its most literal sense, he cannot have employed the priestly benediction, for the expression "LORD of hosts" does not occur in

¹ See, e.g., Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, p. 128: "Sacrifice is in two instances offered, by Gideon and Manoah; but in neither case is a priest held to be necessary. . . . Until the cultus has become in some measure centralised the priests have no *locus standi*; for when each man sacrifices for himself and his household, upon an altar which he improvises as best he can for the passing need, where is the occasion for people whose professional and essential function is that of sacrificing for others?"

² *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, chapter vi. = *Bibliotheca Sacra*, October, 1909.

it. But, putting this aside, can anything be more absurd than this theory? Blessing was a common and graceful act among the ancient Hebrews. We meet with many instances. Perhaps the most striking is Jacob's "in thee shall Israel bless," etc., for this passage demonstrates the prevalence of the custom. In this very chapter we read, two verses later, that David returned to bless his household (vi. 20). Would anybody assume that he used the priestly blessing? And if it be admitted that there is no reason to suppose that this is the priestly blessing, why should we make such an assumption when we read of David's blessing his people? What can be more natural or indeed more universal than that a king should bless his people? There is certainly nothing here to point to any usurpation of priestly functions. The same holds good with even more force of Solomon, since in his case we have the words of a blessing in 1 Kings viii. 56 ff.

More important is the argument based on three passages that appear to show that non-Levitical persons were priests. In each case the textual evidence proves that there is corruption. The first of these is 2 Samuel viii. 18. The Massoretic text has "and the sons of David were כהנים, i.e. priests." It is curious, if this is the case, that the statement does not follow 17a, where we are told that Zadok and Abiathar were priests; but that is not the only suspicious circumstance. The Chronicler (1 Chron. xviii. 17) paraphrases "first to the hand of the king," which looks as if they held some office. Now this is confirmed by the LXX, which here reads *aularchs*—a word we might suitably render "chamberlains." It has been suggested that this might be a paraphrase, but another passage proves that it represents a genuine Hebrew variant. In 1 Kings ii. some of our Septuagintal authorities have preserved a list of officers that is not found in the Hebrew.

It appears that at that time Benaiah son of Jehoiada was ἐπὶ τῆς αὐλαρχίας καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ πλιυθείου, "over the aularchy and over the brickmaking" (LXX, 3 Kingdoms ii. 46h). It is not possible to claim that he was "over the priesthood and over the brickmaking," and it therefore appears that the Septuagintal *aularchs* does in fact represent some secular Hebrew office. Further, the notes on 2 Samuel viii. 18 in Field's Hexapla prove corruption. According to one of these, Symmachus¹ read σχολάζοντες, which means "at leisure." This makes no sense, but it cannot possibly be a rendering of כהנים, and proves that this translator knew a different text. A footnote quotes a scholiast as saying that Theodotion had τὴν κατάστασιν ἔχοντες τῆς βασιλικῆς οἰκίας, while in Chronicles he rendered δομέστικοι. Both these point to a Hebrew word meaning "chamberlains," and suggest that our present text of Chronicles is a gloss to the rare earlier word which was used by the Chronicler as well as in Samuel. For these reasons it appears certain that the Hebrew is corrupt. Possibly, as Hitzig and Cheyne have conjectured,² we should read סכנים for כהנים, comparing, for this use of the word, Isaiah xxii. 15.

The next passage is 2 Samuel xx. 26: "and also Ira the Jairite was priest to David." That we are dealing in this case with a genuine priest is proved by the phrase "and also" attaching to the mention of the priests in the preceding verse. The Syriac, however, instead of הַיַּרִיתִי, "the Jairite," has הַיַּתִּירִיתִי, "the Jattirite"; and this is confirmed by the Lucianic LXX, which had the same letters, and by xxiii. 38. Jattir was a priestly city (Josh. xxi. 14), so that this notice is not remarkable.

¹ According to another note, Symmachus read "priests," but if this latter note is correct, it only means that σχολάζοντες was the reading of some other translator.

² See the *Expositor* (5th Series), vol. ix. (1899) pp. 453-457.

Lastly, we come to 1 Kings iv. 5. The Massoretic text tells us that זבוד, "Zabud" (there is a variant זכור, "Zachur") son of Nathan was כהן רעה המלך, "priest, friend of the king." Origen did not find the word "priest" as part of the Septuagintal text, and added it under an asterisk. Thus the question arises, whether כהן is original, or has resulted from dittography of the preceding word נתן *Nathan*. Here again the Septuagintal list of 1 Kings ii. throws light on the subject, for we learn from it that the son of Nathan was, at the time to which the list refers, the occupant of another secular office — that of counselor (LXX, 3 Kingdoms ii. 46h; cp. Lucian's text of ii. 34). This had been Ahitophel's title (2 Sam. xv. 12, etc.); while Hushai the Archite, whose functions appear to have been similar, bore the official style of "king's friend" (see especially 1 Chron. xxvii. 33 f., apparently taken from an old source). There can therefore be no doubt that there in fact existed a secular office of "king's friend," and that the LXX is right in making this the office filled by Nathan's son, either before or after his occupancy of the kindred secular office of "king's counselor." Hence no support can be derived from these passages for a legitimate non-Levitical priesthood.

Then it is urged that there were dealings with the Ark that are not in accordance with the Law. When the curtain first rises on the age of Samuel we find the Ark exactly where we should expect it to be, viz. at Shiloh. That was where it was located in Joshua xviii. 1, and that was where, in the absence of any particular reason to the contrary, it would presumably remain. We find Eli and his sons in charge of it. The book of Samuel does not provide us with a genealogy of Eli, but from 1 Samuel ii. 27 we learn that he was descended from Aaron. This part of the narrative is therefore in order (apart from the question of Samuel to be considered hereafter). It

appears that the Ark did not usually go to war with the forces of Israel, for it was not till after a defeat that it was removed from Shiloh to take its part in a campaign against the Philistines. It was then taken to the camp under the charge of two sons of Eli. So far everything is in accordance with the Law. It is sometimes said that non-Aaronic Levites ought to have carried the Ark, but this will not bear investigation. As we have seen, these arrangements were made for the desert period. Even then there is no reason to suppose that priests could not bear the Ark. On the contrary, they were holier than Levites and were allowed to do things that were not permitted to the latter. Thus they had to cover up the Ark and make it ready for its journey before the Levites were allowed to come near it. Probably the only reason why the portage of the Ark was assigned to Levites was the smallness of the number of priests available. At the time the arrangements were made only Aaron and his two sons appear to have been of an age for any service, and Aaron himself was clearly too old to execute this duty. Moreover it appears from the narrative that his two sons had a large amount of other work to perform. Hence probably the choice of Levites; but, as this is a case of the work being done by less holy persons, it is clear that there would be nothing to prevent descendants of Aaron from carrying the Ark; and of course, if the view taken above of the provisions of Deuteronomy be correct, the two classes had almost been fused into one.

A question, however, arises on the part played by Samuel in these opening chapters of the first book called by his name. Vowed by his mother to God, he is brought to Shiloh to serve Eli. Wellhausen goes so far as to write: "Samuel, who is not a member of the family, is nevertheless adopted as a priest" (p. 130; cf. p. 136). The details of the narrative

that are inconvenient from the Wellhausen point of view are ignored. In point of fact he was brought soon after he had been weaned. He may have been three or even as much as four years old at the time.¹ It would be interesting to know what priestly functions the boy can be supposed to have discharged at this mature age. Of course he grew older, but the little cloak annually brought by his mother (ii. 19) shows clearly that the whole narrative relates to his boyhood. When we read (ii. 18) that he ministered before the LORD, being a child, girded with a linen ephod, we call to mind an attractive picture. But that does not exempt us from the duty of applying a little common sense to the narrative. It stands to reason that the child can have performed no priestly duties whatever, though doubtless he ran errands and performed odd jobs for Eli as a kind of page. Every reader must be familiar with pages and office boys, but nobody in our own day hearing that a boy served in the consulting-room of a physician would assume that he performed a doctor's services. The only positive information we have as to Samuel's functions is to the effect that he slept in some part of the building (called a temple) where the Ark was, and opened the doors in the morning (iii. 15). To say, as Wellhausen does, that he sleeps "beside the ark" (p. 131), or "in the inner portion of the temple beside the ark of the covenant" (p. 130), is to read into the narrative something that simply is not there. What we are told is that he slept in the temple in which the Ark was. Unlike the wilderness tent, this had door-valves which had to be opened from inside. As the structure of this house of the LORD was entirely different from an erection of planks and curtains, it seems probable that there was some accommodation within its precincts where the boy porter

¹ See Murray's *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, p. 280a.

could sleep without penetrating to any place where he could not lawfully be. The later temples certainly had plenty of chambers for various purposes, and it is natural to infer that there was such a chamber or recess particularly provided for the porter to which the rays of "the lamp of God" could penetrate. Samuel may have been a Levite, as the Chronicler says, or again the vow made by the mother and the solemn surrender to God may have had the effect of consecrating him so that he could perform duties that could not be discharged by a layman; but these scanty notices do not necessarily prove anything of the sort. It is more probable that the internal arrangements of the Temple were such as to provide for the presence of a priestly servant as lay porter. The opening of doors is not a very exalted function.

When the Ark came back from the Philistines we read of various transactions that require consideration, but before turning to them I must bring out one point. So far as we know, the Ark had always been under the custody of the house of Aaron till the death of Hophni and Phineas. When David brought it up to Jerusalem it was under the charge of his two official priests Zadok and Abiathar, and from that time forward till the exile it was always under the care of the priests of Jerusalem. Abiathar was a descendant of Eli and therefore of Aaron. Hence the only period of irregularity, if there in fact was irregularity, is a period of about twenty years (1 Sam. vii. 2). It is important to emphasize this; because, putting things at the very best for the Wellhausen theory, we should have to say that twenty years of irregularity at a time of great national difficulty could overrule the consistent and unquestioned practice of all the rest of history, extending over some six or seven hundred years.

Whether there was irregularity, and if so, how much, is the question to be considered.

In 1 Samuel vi. we read that the cart bearing the Ark came to the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh and stood there. Then comes a passage that presents difficulties. It reads "and there was there a great stone, and they split the wood of the cart, and the kine they offered as a burnt-offering to the LORD" (ver. 14). A pause should be made here to note the fact that this narrative does not explain what happened to the Ark. If the Ark was transferred to the stone, as we should expect, it seems curious that a statement to that effect does not appear before we are told of the breaking up of the cart, and of the offering of the men of Beth-shemesh. The next verse draws from Wellhausen the following comment: "After they [sc. the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh] have finished, the Levites come up (ver. 15) (in the pluperfect tense) and proceed as if nothing had happened, lift the ark from the now no longer existent cart, and set it upon the stone on which the sacrifice is already burning;—of course only in order to fulfil the law, the demands of which have been completely ignored in the original narrative" (p. 128). That the present text is impossible may be conceded at once; at the same time the difficulty of the preceding verse does not favor the hypothesis that verse 15 is a mere gloss. It is not suggested that there is any evidence for expelling this verse from the text. It *may* be a gloss, but it seems much more probable that the second half of verse 14 has accidentally suffered transposition.

It may be that the original text of these two verses ran as follows:—

"14a And the cart came into the field of Joshua the Bethshemite, and stood there, and there was there a great stone; 15a And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the

great stone, 14b and clave the wood of the cart and the kine they offered up for a burnt-offering unto the LORD; 15b and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day to the LORD."

It will be seen that this is by far the least violent expedient for dealing with the text, and makes perfect sense. As Beth-shemesh was a Levitical city, the presence of Levites causes no astonishment: and we get rid of the curious narrative by which the cart is split up and the cattle offered without any notice being taken of the Ark. The Wellhausen treatment of this passage leaves an extraordinarily strange narrative in verse 14, and destroys the history that we have, in the interests of a theory. That is the first irregularity charged in the history of this period. Even if Wellhausen were right as to the text — and it must be remembered that there is no tittle of evidence to that effect — the circumstances of the return of the Ark were so exceptional that no general inference could be drawn from the occurrence.

The next episode is one on which the Wellhausen critics do not love to dwell. It appears that the men of Beth-shemesh treated the Ark irreverently, and were punished quite as severely as would have happened in P. The representation of the Ark is here exactly the same as in the Law, and for this reason we hear very little of it from the critics. Then the men of Beth-shemesh sent to Kiriath-jearim. The men of that place came and fetched the Ark, and they brought it "to the house of Abinadab in the Gibeah [hill], and Eleazar his son they sanctified to guard the Ark of the LORD" (vii. 1). There it remained for twenty years, and we hear nothing further of it till David fetches it (in 2 Sam. vi.). On this, two points are made: (1) that the Ark remained for twenty years in the house of a private individual; and (2) that somebody who was not a descendant of

Aaron was here sanctified as its keeper. The first point is not of much consequence. The building of a suitable temple was not something that could be improvised in great haste at a time of political confusion. The former abode of the Ark had (as appears from Jer. vii. 12, 14; xxvi. 6, 9) been destroyed — presumably by the Philistines — and it is probable, if we discard the data of Chronicles, that the Mosaic tent or what remained of it had perished. The present narrative of 1 Kings viii. 4 appears to refer to David's tent. If it does not, then the Mosaic Tent of Meeting still existed but, for some reason, was not available at Kiriath-jearim.

The seat of the Ark appears, however, to have had considerable importance even in these twenty years. Our present Hebrew text presents us with at least three place-names that are almost identical: גִּבְעָה *Geba*, גִּבְעָה *Gibeah*, גִּבְעֹן *Gibeon*. In addition to this, the word גִּבְעָה *Gibeah*, means "hill," and we get the Gibeah of Kiriath-jearim. Further we find expressions like "Gibeah of God," "Gibeah of Saul," etc. It is obvious that textual errors would necessarily arise in dealing with words so much alike, and differences between the Massoretic text and the Versions show us that this was in fact the case. The matter is further complicated by the close geographical proximity of all these places: Kiriath-jearim was one of the cities of the Gibeonites (Josh. ix. 17); it follows that its Gibeah must have been near Gibeon. According to the Massoretic text of Isaiah x. 29, Geba and Gibeah of Saul were near each other, but the names are textually doubtful. Geba (Josh. xviii. 24), Gibeon (ver. 25), and the Gibeah of Kiriath-jearim (ver. 28) were, according to the Massoretic text, all in the territory of Benjamin. Gibeon and Geba

were both priestly cities (xxi. 17). Geba, Gibeah, and Gibeon were all near Ramah.¹

When the facts are examined, one point emerges from the tangle with considerable clearness. It is plain that the Gibeah of God in 1 Samuel x. 5 must be the same place as that which is called Geba in the Massoretic text of xiii. 3, where the LXX and Targum have Gibeah. There cannot have been two places of almost the same name in Benjamin, both containing a גִּבְעָה (rendered by the R.V. "garrison") of Philistines. The importance of this identification is considerable. The hill or Gibeah of God can hardly have been anything but the Gibeah of Kiriath-jearim in Benjamin, where was the Ark of God. Other identifications may be correct: but this one alone proves that in the view of the Philistines considerable importance attached to the seat of the Ark. We learn too from 1 Samuel x. that there was a high place there. Obviously, even during these twenty years, the place where the Ark was, continued to preserve no small measure of religious and political consequence.

The second point is more serious — if any point based on such fragmentary information can be deemed to be serious. Who Abinadab was we do not know, except that he lived on the Gibeah or hill of Kiriath-jearim. Dr. H. A. Poels, a pupil of Professor Van Hoonacker's, has devoted a good deal of work to the subject, and published two monographs on the seat of the Ark in these narratives. Many of his conclusions appear to me untenable, yet in dealing with these questions I have profited by his labors. A very ingenious conjecture of his should be mentioned here, as it may convey to some minds the conviction that it has failed to bring to me. He thinks — and Professor Van Hoonacker supports him with

¹ Poels, *Le Sanctuaire de Kirjath-jearim*, p. 41.

the weight of his authority — that for *וַאֲתֵּן אֵלְעָזָר בְּנֵו* “and Eleazar his son,” we should read *וַאֲתֵּן בְּנֵי אֵלְעָזָר* “and the sons of Eleazar.” The change is very slight indeed and may be correct. If it be, there is an end of critical case on this point. It is, however, a mere conjecture, and personally I see no sufficient reason for altering the present text. It is quite true that this Eleazar is not mentioned as one of the sons of Abinadab when the Ark leaves the Gibeah: but he may have died in the intervening twenty years. In any case the data are too scanty for any certain inference.

For, after all, what does the whole difficulty amount to? Eleazar, son of Abinadab, is consecrated to guard the Ark. Who Abinadab was we do not know. Dr. Poels connects him with the family of Saul, but on insufficient evidence. He may have been of priestly descent. Nor again do we know how or where Eleazar guarded the Ark. The functions he discharged may have been such as could be performed by a person of lay descent. The theory that he slept in the same chamber with it is unsupported by evidence and is intrinsically improbable. To attempt to come to any certain conclusion on this half verse of Samuel is to seek to make bricks without straw.

With this half verse our difficulties end. The narrative of the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem is far simpler. First, an attempt is made to carry the Ark on a new cart. Probably the method of conveyance was suggested in part at least by the fact that it was in this way that the Ark had returned from the Philistines. Uzzah accidentally touches it, and the result that we should have expected from our P follows. This episode, reinforcing the narrative of the great slaughter in the field of Beth-shemesh, again leads me to think that the guardianship of the Ark by Eleazar cannot have consisted in any

very intimate association with it. The occurrence inspired David with a natural fear, and the Ark was promptly deposited in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. Much has been made of this, but without reason.¹ After the episodes we have noticed, we may infer with perfect certainty that Obed-edom and all his family took very good care not to approach the chamber where the Ark was. It is then transported to Jerusalem, but the method of carriage is changed. "When the bearers of the ark of the LORD had gone six paces" is the phrase employed (2 Sam. vi. 13). Here we have a reversion to the practice of carrying the Ark. Why? Surely because it was known that this was the old practice, and events had shown that the new method was not safe. We are not told in Samuel who bore the Ark, but we are entitled to assume that this task was discharged by duly qualified persons. Thus the only real question on the whole narrative is as to the identity of Eleazar who — if the text be sound — discharged functions which in the wilderness period would probably have been performed by priests or Levites. Our materials do not enable us to say definitely whether his action was lawful.

There is one important point made by the critics on the history of this period which appears to me to be in the main sound. The facts about the descent of Zadok set forth in the second division of the Hebrew canon do not agree with the statements of the Hagiography, and there can be no doubt which is entitled to the preference. We have seen that in Deuteronomy Moses enacted that Levites going to the central sanctuary were to have a position similar to that of the descendants of Aaron. In the post-Mosaic age we find a Leviti-

¹ Wellhausen's statement that David made Obed-edom "its keeper" (p. 130) is one of those little imaginative touches that distinguish this writer.

cal priesthood. We are now to witness a further step. Accepting the data of the prophets and rejecting the conflicting data of the Hagiography, we must hold that God transferred the high priesthood from the line of Aaron to Zadok and his descendants, a family stated by Ezekiel to be Levitical. Here is the most material passage:—

And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, I did surely reveal myself [Septuagintal text] to thy father's house when they were in Egypt as bondmen [so the LXX] to the house of Pharaoh. And I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up on my altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me, and I gave to thy father's house all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire. . . . Therefore saith the LORD, the God of Israel, I said indeed that thy house, and thy father's house, should walk before me for ever: but now, saith the LORD, Far be it from me; for them that honor me will I honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house [or, according to another possible pronunciation of the same Hebrew followed by the LXX, "thy seed and the seed of thy father's house,"]. . . . And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thy house shall come to bow down to him for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, in one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a morsel of bread" (1 Sam. ii. 27-36).

But one priestly personage had received a revelation in Egypt, and it was he that was subsequently chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to be a priest. Everything in the description applies, naturally interpreted, to Aaron and his family. Apart from the rationalistic presuppositions, the following comments of Wellhausen are just: "Here it is the house of Eli, and of Eli's father, that is the priestly family duly chosen in Egypt; *contrary* to hereditary title, and *contrary* to a promise of perpetual continuance, is it deposed at the higher claims of justice. The faithful priest who is to fill the vacant

place is Zadok. This is expressly said in 1 Kings ii. 27; and no other than he ever had 'a sure house,' and walked uninterruptedly as its head and ruler before the kings of Judah. This Zadok, accordingly, belongs neither to Eli's house nor to that of Eli's father; his priesthood does not go back as far as to the time of the founding of the theocracy, and is not in any proper sense 'legitimate'; rather has he obtained it by the infringement of what in a certain degree might be called a constitutional privilege, to which there were no other heirs besides Eli and his family. Obviously he does not figure as an intermediate link in the line of Aaron, but as the beginner of an entirely new genealogy" (p. 126). Ezekiel speaks of the sons of Zadok as Levites, (xli. 46, etc.) It is antecedently probable that if a man like Micah preferred to have a Levite as his priest, a king of all Israel would not appoint a non-Levite: and, once we look at the other material passages from the standpoint we have now reached, we see how they all fit in. It is striking, now, that Jeremiah xxxiii. 18-22 speaks of the covenant with "the Levites, the priests" — *not* with the house of Aaron. Malachi is even more emphatic, speaking of the covenant with Levi (ii.). From the beginning of Judges to the end of the prophetic writings we hear of Aaron only in 1 Samuel xii. 6, 8; Micah vi. 4; i.e. in passages of historical retrospect; we never hear of his sons as the priests of Jerusalem or of the covenant with his family. When the author of Kings charges Jeroboam with having made priests of persons who were not fitted for the office by descent, the complaint is that he "made priests from among all the people, which were not of the sons of *Levi*" (1 Kings xii. 31). Surely these facts all point in one direction, and in one direction only.

The Law was understood as entitling all suitable Levites to perform priestly offices: and it was known and realized that

the high priesthood itself had been transferred from the house of Aaron to a Levitical non-Aaronic family when Solomon deposed Abiathar and appointed Zadok in his stead.

What Zadok was before we find him mentioned in David's reign we do not know. Possibly he had been Saul's priest in the later years of the latter's reign. The first king had quarreled with the house of Eli; yet that he had a priest appears from the passage where we read that the LORD answered him not with Urim (1 Sam. xxviii. 6) for their use implies the presence of a priest. But on this point no certainty is possible.

There is one verse in the books of Samuel which is valuable for our purpose because it throws light on the development of the hierarchy. It is the verse already cited where we read that Eli's descendant shall come and bow down before the high priest for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread and ask for one of the priests' offices in order to gain a living. This shows us a variety of priestly posts, with emoluments attached, to which the high priest could appoint. Contrast this developed organization with the simplicity of the Pentateuchal system, in which we find one high priest and some assistants without gradations of rank or payments in silver. Can any candid inquirer doubt which of the two representations is the earlier in point of time?

In passing to the books of Kings it may be well to say at once that the reference to "the priests the Levites" in 1 Kings viii. 4 was unknown to the LXX, and was probably not a part of the original text. When this is omitted, the data of this period present us with a hierarchy that is obviously more developed than that of the Pentateuch; while, as has already been indicated, the Levitical descent of the priesthood is assumed as unquestionable (1 Kings xii. 31). It is perhaps just worth noticing that in 1 Kings ii. 35 the LXX has a statement

that the king made Zadok first priest instead of Abiathar. Whether the additional words be accepted or rejected, there can be no doubt that they represent the true meaning of the text.

The high priest is often mentioned in the books of Kings — generally, like Aaron in the Pentateuch, with the simple title of “the priest,” but sometimes with some more elaborate style. Thus we read of “Jehoiada the priest and the priests” (2 Kings xii. 8), though he is also called “the high priest” in verse 11, if the text be sound. “Uriah the priest” (xvi.) is another instance, while Hilkiyah is sometimes styled “the priest” and sometimes “the high priest.” The other references to the hierarchical organization are even more interesting, though they are tantalizingly meagre. We read of a second priest (2 Kings xxv. 18; Jer. lii. 24; also 2 Kings xxiii. 4, if the reading of the Targum be sound), of certain guardians of the threshold — three in number — who appear to hold high rank in the hierarchy (2 Kings xxv. 18; Jer. lii. 24; 2 Kings xii. 10), and of “elders of the priests” (2 Kings xix. 2; Isa. xxxvii. 2; Jer. xix. 1, if the text in the last-cited passage be sound). All this is a great advance on the Pentateuch, as are also the powers of the overseer of the house of the LORD, of whom we read in Jeremiah.

If we except Ezekiel, the most interesting passage relating to the priesthood that has come down to us from this period is Jeremiah xxxiii. 18–21. Significance attaches in particular to the variants — due either to erroneous interpretations or to glossators — that have been preserved by the Vulgate: “Neither shall the priests [Vulg. and Syriac add “and”] the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt-offerings, and to burn oblations, and to do sacrifice [Vulg. adds “and to kill victims] continually . . . then may also my covenant be broken

. . . with the Levites [Vulg. adds " and "] the priests [Syriac, inverting, reads " the priests and the Levites "], my servants." Now there we have the two views in a nutshell. To the prophet, " the priests the Levites " are the ministers of God who are qualified to serve him at the altar of the religious capital: to later interpretation, priests and Levites are two separate classes: the latter are occupied in killing victims, while only the former are qualified to discharge the higher duties. The verses are lacking altogether in the LXX, and are for that reason thought by some to be the work of a later writer. If that were so, it would merely prove that the original view survived to a later date than that of Jeremiah. As the priestly functions of Levi are fully recognized by Malachi (ii. 1-9; iii. 3), and, as will be seen hereafter, were also regarded as historically true by Ezekiel, it appears clearly that the whole of the second part of the Hebrew canon adopts the standpoint of the Law. The Aaronic priesthood was merged in the Levitical by the dispositions of Deuteronomy, and the high priesthood was subsequently transferred from the line of Aaron to Zadok. In the organization of the hierarchy there was development during this period, but no breach, save in the Northern kingdom, with the fundamental principle that the priesthood was Levitical. The duties of the priests remained substantially what they had been from the Mosaic age onwards, — the charge of the great central sanctuary with its national offerings, the performance of the priestly duties in the case of statutory individual offerings, the consulting of the Urim and Thummim, and the giving of torah. Amid modifications and developments of details the main outlines of the priestly position and the priestly duties remain unchanged. Haggai and Malachi draw for us the same picture of the priesthood as Leviticus and Deuteronomy. One prophet, however, deserves

separate consideration — not because he contradicts our other data, but because special importance has been attached to his work by the modern critical school. We shall see that he holds the same views of the course of history as the other authorities we have examined, but that he also realized that the changes of circumstances which had taken place in the course of centuries called for corresponding changes in the priestly organization and ritual, and that he accordingly propounded a scheme, not by way of literary fraud but speaking in his own proper person as the messenger of God.

EZEKIEL.

The prophet Ezekiel was of priestly descent and displays extraordinary interest in matters of priestly concern. The part of his work that most closely concerns us is a portion of the vision with which the concluding chapters of his book are occupied; but, as it has been asserted that he was unacquainted with P, we must just glance at one or two of the facts that are material to this question. No reader of Ezekiel will deny that there exists between him and P some very close relationship. Either he has steeped his mind in the phrases and thoughts of the Pentateuch or else he in some way influenced its composition. In considering which of these two views is correct it is necessary to recall several facts.

Ezekiel writes: "Her priests have done violence to my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and the common, neither have they caused men to discern between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them" (xxii. 26). This is tantamount to a direct statement that Ezekiel knew a law following the very words of

Leviticus x. 10 and other passages of P.¹ Other proofs are provided by the passages of earlier writers and Ezekiel himself that have been examined in "Studies in Biblical Law," "Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism," and the present article, and by the internal marks of date shown by P itself. It may safely be said that, but for the long-standing misconceptions of the meaning of P, nobody would ever have dreamt of denying Ezekiel's acquaintance with it.

When we come to the vision several things strike us. Ezekiel omits to mention many existing institutions; for instance, the high priesthood and the Feast of Weeks. Whatever the reason may be, it is clear that such omissions cannot give ground for an argument from silence, seeing that both these institutions admittedly existed long before his time. Other elements in his proposed legislation were clearly ideal and could never have been realized without a miracle. In some cases our information does not suffice to enable us to understand what was in the prophet's mind when he put forward his plan for dealing with them. Yet in the case of the most important of all the proposed changes — the distinction between the sons of Zadok and the other Levites — the reasons he gives are so clear, and are so convincingly supported by our other information, that we cannot fail to understand the workings of his mind.

In xl. 45, 46, he begins to draw a distinction between "the priests that keep the charge of the house" and "the priests that keep the charge of the altar, they are the sons of Zadok

¹This conclusively refutes Wellhausen's "That the prophet should know nothing about a priestly law with whose tendencies he is in thorough sympathy admits of only one explanation, — that it did not then exist" (p. 124). Compare, also, the inference on page 123 as to the non-existence of "the systematic separation of that which was holy from profane contact."

that come near from among the sons of Levi to the LORD to serve him"; and this is continued in subsequent chapters. But the most important passage of all is xliv. 6-16:—

"And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God: O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations, in that ye have brought in allens, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to profane it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and ye [so read with LXX, Syriac, Vulgate] have broken my covenant with [so read with LXX, Syriac, Vulg.] all your abominations. And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have set [read probably "them as," changing one letter of the Hebrew,] keepers of my charge in my sanctuary. Therefore [so read with LXX] thus saith the Lord God, No alien uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any alien that is among the children of Israel. But the Levites that went far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray from me after their idols; they shall bear their iniquity. Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house, and ministering in the house; *they* shall slay the burnt-offering and the sacrifice for the people, and *they* shall stand before them to minister unto them. Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and became a stumbling-block of iniquity unto the house of Israel; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord God, and they shall bear their iniquity. And they shall not come near unto me, to execute the office of priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, unto the things that are most holy: but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed. Yet will I make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein. But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, *they* shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and blood, saith the Lord God: *they* shall enter into my sanctuary, and *they* shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge."

The ideas here set forth are worked out further in other parts of the vision. In view of all the facts we have considered, the prophet's meaning is sun-clear. Under the old system many abuses had crept in. One that concerns us

particularly relates to the entry of aliens into the sanctuary. We have seen that the Pentateuch expected the sacrificant himself to slay the animals that he presented for sacrifice at the religious capital. With the growth of luxury well-to-do people would naturally develop a distaste for the functions of a slaughterer; while the increase of wealth, with the concomitant increase in the number of victims offered, rendered the task impossible. To meet this and other necessities of the natural expansion of the sacrificial organization, heathen hierodules had been introduced. Ezekiel held that this and other practices were inconsistent with the proper separation of holy and profane. And so he puts forward a scheme of legislation which shall apply the Mosaic principles to the altered circumstances of the age. Among the Levites most had been faithless: Ezekiel therefore degrades them from their right to the full priesthood and provides that they shall take the place of the temple slaves in certain necessary functions. On the other hand the sons of Zadok had been loyal to their charge. They are therefore to have the monopoly of the full priestly position, and Ezekiel practically reenacts — with slight modifications — the Pentateuchal legislation as to the sons of Aaron, this time applying it to the sons of Zadok, whom history and the Divine choice had set in the place of the descendants of the first high priest. Other provisions (e.g. xlii. 14; xlv. 4 ff.) are designed to carry out more effectually the dominating principle of the legislation — the due separation and safeguarding of what is holy. The architecture is also stated to be inspired by this consideration (see especially xliii. 7 ff.). No doubt Ezekiel throughout borrows from the ideas of the Pentateuch: the idea of the separation between the sons of Zadok and the rest of the Levites is suggested by the old wilderness distinction between the sons of Aaron and the sons

of Levi. His very phraseology is adopted from the language of P, though familiar expressions such as "keep the charge" are invested with a new meaning suited to the circumstances of the age and the nature of the functions to be performed. In so far as it is practical, Ezekiel's legislation may be defined as an endeavor to bring up to date and apply to changed circumstances the ideas of the legislation of the wilderness. The need of the reform was suggested by the abuses in the temple of Solomon and the disloyalty of the Levites; its principles were developed from the ideas of the priestly legislation; its language was borrowed from the Pentateuch; its methods were dictated by the teachings of experience.¹

CONCLUSION.

On the view set forth in these pages, the last book in the Hebrew canon no longer governs the meaning of the first, and the history follows an orderly and intelligible course from

¹This paper is already so long that further remarks about Ezekiel's vision must be compressed as much as possible. The explanation given of the provisions as to the Levites contains two elements: (1) that it was designed to regulate circumstances that had arisen since the time of Moses and to remedy obvious abuses and defects, and (2) that for this purpose Ezekiel followed as closely as he could the old Mosaic provisions. Both these are confirmed by other portions of the vision.

(1) A king's offering had come into existence in the monarchy in addition to the statutory national offerings (2 Kings xvi. 15). Naturally Moses had not provided for this. Ezekiel apparently regulates it in xvi. 2, 4-8, 11-15; for in 13 f. the second person appears to have ousted the third which is found in several MSS. and Versions. I do not think that these offerings are identical with the national offerings which, according to xlv. 16 f., were to be provided by the prince out of the oblation there mentioned. On the contrary, they appear to be additional and in substitution for the king's offering, *not* for the statutory individual offerings which were instituted by the Pentateuch, and (see *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, pp. 200-202) are found in existence during the monarchy. Other additions to the Pentateuchal legislation (e.g. xvi. 16-18)

Moses to Malachi. The priesthood of Aaron and his family is created to provide for the due exercise of the sacerdotal functions, and for the desert period a tribe is set apart to act as sacred porters of the wilderness sanctuary. At the same time a corpus of ritual legislation is given, some of which applies only to the age of Moses, while other portions, intended for use after the conquest, require for their administration, in the conditions of settled life, a numerous and scattered priesthood, such as could not be provided by the descendants of Aaron living at the time of the conquest. On the eve of the entry into the promised land, Deuteronomy enlarged the rights and duties of the Levites to meet the need thus created. From Moses to Malachi every writer who touches on the subject recognizes this Levitical priesthood. The high priesthood remained in the house of Aaron till the time of Solomon, when it was definitely transferred from Abiathar to Zadok of the tribe of Levi, and it remained permanently in the house of the latter. Ezekiel, writing in the exile, strove to purify the

are evidently also due to post-Mosaic changes (this indeed applies to xlv. 16 f.). Probably many of his other ordinances are intended to meet later abuses. For instance, when one reads xlv. 19-24, the scene at Shiloh in the days of Eli's sons recurs to the mind, and one wonders whether this and other architectural details are not intended to insure improvements on the practice of Solomon's temple.

(2) With regard to the Mosaic inspiration, Van Hoonacker appears to me to have hit the nail on the head with his suggestion that the impracticable chess-board division of the land—so impossible in a country like Canaan—was suggested by the desert camp where, of course, the Mosaic pattern was feasible and natural. I hope, further, to adduce evidence on a future occasion for holding that the "king" of the Massoretic text was unknown to the original text of Deuteronomy, in which case Ezekiel's "prince" would be an intentional reversion to the language of Moses. While therefore it must be fully admitted that Ezekiel's vision is impracticable and contains ideal elements, it does not seem to be nearly so difficult of explanation as is commonly supposed.

priesthood and the ritual from the abuses which had crept in. Finding his inspiration in the books of Moses, and seeking to remedy the serious faults of the organization, he put forward a plan for once more dividing the Levitical priesthood into two classes; the one consisting of the descendants of Zadok, who should be priests of the highest type; the other formed by the disloyal Levites, who should discharge a lower ministry. In many respects his scheme influenced the course of history, and we find that in the days of Nehemiah a distinction is drawn between priests and Levites, though we cannot suppose that the sons of Zadok were alone recognized as priests. The national misfortunes had put a new spirit into the people. A study of the Law in its entirety, including even the most technical parts, began to spread in non-priestly circles.¹ The destruction of Kingdom and Temple had put an end to the period in which new precedents were readily created to meet fresh needs. It had also dispersed the central body of priests who had continued the line of interpreters of the original meaning of the Mosaic law. This task now fell to men who were not equally in touch with the original living tradition, and might be largely theorists not particularly fitted by their professional occupations to solve the problems that arose. The results were curious. On the one hand men regarded the Torah as containing unchangeable rules that were applicable to their own day: on the other they were confronted with institutions (such as the Nethinim and the children of Solomon's servants) that were long subsequent to the age of Moses, and with needs for which the Torah did not provide. The creative period was over; it only remained to modify under the guise of explain-

¹Originally the large portions of the Pentateuch were intended to reach the people only through the teaching of the priests. Even Ezekiel (xlv. 23) held this view as completely as Moses and the other prophets.

ing. Accordingly there arose a system of interpretation which read the Law in the light of circumstances for which it was never intended, and put into its provisions meanings that had not been contemplated by the Lawgiver. The chain of living tradition and formative precedent had been snapped by the exile: the work of Ezekiel had tended to direct the current of religious progress into the new-old channels that seemed to provide for the needs of the period by the devices of the Mosaic ordinances: the labors of the scholarly interpreters of the Law — the scribes — did the rest. These factors brought into existence the non-Mosaic Mosaism with which we meet in the books of Chronicles and in the glosses on the text of the earlier books.