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## ARTICLE VI.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE CONSERVATIVE TASK  
IN PENTATEUCHAL CRITICISM.

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## II.

IN the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA for January, 1911, the present writer discussed "Some Aspects of the Conservative Task in Pentateuchal Criticism." The object of the present paper is to consider these further in the light of what has occurred since that article was written. It cannot be contended that the conditions of the problem are unaltered or that no new light has been thrown on the duty of conservatives by what has happened in the interval.

It may first be observed that, whether we look at the lights or the shadows of the picture, conservatism has made progress. There is more and better conservative literature in the world than before. The emergence of Mr. J. S. Griffiths as a new conservative writer is a most cheering sign of the times. His excellent "Problem of Deuteronomy" is a welcome addition to the literature of the subject, and strengthens the position of conservatives throughout the English-speaking world. Dr. W. St. Clair Tisdall has published an admirable *brochure* entitled "Why I am Not a Higher Critic," which has been warmly received in more than one country. The *Jewish Quarterly Review*, formerly an organ of the higher criticism, has been converted to sane and sober views on biblical scholarship, and is now conducted with a learning and an ability that bid fair to make it one of the most valuable of theological

periodicals to all who are interested in Old Testament Studies: it is not the only periodical that has shown signs of turning from the higher critical vagaries. In Germany, too, indications of change from the fashionable hypothesis are not wanting. Pastor W. Möller has at last broken with the documentary theory; and though his book "Wider den Bann der Quellenscheidung" may at first shock the delicate sensibilities of those who hold that orthodoxy consists in the unquestioning acceptance of a theory that makes the Pentateuch a cento of literary forgeries, it cannot in the long run fail to assist in shaking the position which that theory now occupies in the Universities of Northern Europe.<sup>1</sup> Here, too, mention should be made of Dr. Aage Schmidt's "Gedanken über die Entwicklung der Religion auf Grund der babylonischen Quellen,"<sup>2</sup> a monograph that is distinguished by the conservative results to which a comprehensive survey of the ancient evidence as to religious development has led the learned author.

The true weakness of conservatives does not lie in any inherent difficulties of the conservative case or in any faults of its champions. On the contrary, they possess the qualities that are necessary for the vindication of their views. They have the learning; they have the ability; more important than either, they have the strength of character. Unfortunately — and it is here that their whole difficulty lies — they have not the necessary organization, though in this respect they are rap-

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written, a Dutch scholar, Dr. A. Troelstra, has published a brilliant and successful piece of work "De Organische Eenheid van het Oude Testament" (Leiden: A. L. Vlieger, 1912. It is an inaugural lecture delivered to the Leyden students. It must be hoped that it will soon appear in English dress. With Eerdmans and Troelstra both lecturing at the premier Dutch University, the prospects of the documentary theory in Holland are not of the rosiest.

<sup>2</sup> Leipzig, 1911.

idly improving. Not so very long ago the lack of inter-communication between the conservative scholars of various countries and creeds was extremely striking; and though there is a growing tendency to remedy this, the evil effects of the state of affairs that long prevailed have not yet passed away. The fault does not lie with the conservatives. It is due to the control exercised over almost the whole of the technical press in the various countries by the higher critics. Hereafter I shall have to speak of the darker aspects of the higher critical tactics, and it will be seen how that control must operate for the suppression of truth. Fortunately, as already stated, it is no longer so complete as formerly: and it cannot be doubted that, as conservatism obtains a hearing, the higher critical positions will be seen, by increasingly large numbers of people, to be untenable. The rate of progress made in the diffusion of sounder ideas is cumulative.

Side by side with these phenomena is the important fact that many lifelong critics are becoming exceedingly doubtful as to the soundness of their views. From the nature of the case one hears more of this in private than in public, for a critic who becomes doubtful as to his position tends to indulge in silent meditation, or private discussions with his friends, rather than to take the public into his confidence with respect to his mental perplexities. It must be admitted that the habit often has irritating tendencies. A man will write me that he is shaken on a particular point, but without making any public statement or modifying his published views. Then other people who know nothing of his private admissions will proceed to shout aloud about the assured results of modern criticism, in reliance on those very published views about which their author has begun to entertain doubts. That sort of thing is very annoying. But, in the case of the more honest critics, it

is merely a transition stage; for, sooner or later, they must give public expression to the change in their attitude.

Unfortunately, however, the limitation expressed in the phrase "in the case of the more honest critics" is a very narrow one.

In showing this it will be convenient to begin with the case of Dr. Charles Augustus Briggs. As stated in a footnote to the published correspondence with the general Editors of the *International Critical Commentary*,<sup>1</sup> I have waited to deal further with this, because I wished to give them an opportunity of exercising the right of further reply which they were so careful to reserve. I did this, although I realized at the time that they were indulging in what is popularly called bluff, and I have no doubt that anybody who will carefully and impartially examine the facts that I am about to quote will see that this was so.

Under date the 28th of February, 1911, Doctors Briggs and Driver wrote to me as follows: "We have both been familiar with the Septuagint for many years, and have compared large parts of it very minutely with the Massoretic text. As the result of this comparison we both hold that, where the two differ, the Massoretic text is to be preferred until the reading presupposed by the Septuagint has been shown to be superior to it, especially by yielding a sense in better agreement with the context or by being preferable upon philological or grammatical grounds. . . . In such expressions as these we have proposed no novel doctrine, but we only voice the general judgment of sober modern scholars. . . . We cannot, therefore, consistently with these principles, formed long ago, without any reference to the present controversy, admit that a variant reading presupposed either by all or by some MSS.

<sup>1</sup> See *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1911, p. 324.

of the Septuagint, possesses any value as against the Massoretic text, or even casts doubt upon the Massoretic text until good cause has been shown for preferring it." These extracts contain the main reason for the inability of the general editors to discuss the scholarly part of my contentions, because, in truth and in fact, they are absolutely contradicted by the published writings of Dr. Briggs himself and of those whom the general editors have regarded as sufficiently sober modern scholars to be entrusted with the preparation of volumes of the International Critical Commentary.

First, as to Dr. Briggs himself: In the year 1899 he published a work entitled "General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture: The Principles, Methods, History, and Results of its Several Departments and of the Whole." The preface explains that in 1883 another volume had appeared, entitled "Biblical Study, its Principles, Methods, and History, together with a Catalogue of Books of Reference," and that the "General Introduction" is a new book incorporating the material of the earlier work, which in its turn had gathered up the work of the preceding fourteen years. Thus the "General Introduction" is the product of thirty years of work at the subjects with which it deals, and must be held to incorporate "principles formed long ago without any reference to the present controversy." It would be impossible to contradict the doctrines laid down in the joint letter more thoroughly than is done by Dr. Briggs in this work and in his Commentary on the Psalms.

The following extracts will give a pretty clear idea of his real position:—

"There can be no doubt that Rabbi Akiba and his associates at Jamnia not only fixed the Canon of the Old Testament, but also established the first official Hebrew text of the

Canon. There is a fixture in the consonantal text of Hebrew Manuscripts from the second century onwards, which can be accounted for only by the establishment at that time of such an official text. *This text was established in troublous times, when it was impossible to give the time and painstaking required for such an undertaking. There was no leisure to correct even the plainest mistakes. It was made by the comparison of a few manuscripts.* Tradition speaks of three, in cases of disagreement the majority of two always determining the correct reading”<sup>1</sup> (General Introduction, p. 175).

*“The Textual Criticism of the Old Testament lagged behind the New Testament. And the reason of it is, that scholars long hesitated to go back of the Massoretic text. . . . There can be no doubt, as Robertson Smith states: ‘It has gradually become clear to the vast majority of conscientious students that the Septuagint is really of the greatest value as a witness to the early state of the text’”*<sup>1</sup> (*op. cit.*, p. 229).

“The study of the text of the Old Testament has been advanced in recent years by a great number of scholars in Germany, France, Switzerland, Holland, Austria, Italy, Great Britain, and America; scholars of all faiths, Jew and Christian, Roman Catholic and Protestant. They have vied with one another in this fundamental work of biblical study. *It has now become practically impossible for any scholarly work to be done on the Old Testament without the use of all the resources of Textual Criticism for a sure foundation*”<sup>1</sup> (*op. cit.*, p. 230).

“The next step in Textual Criticism is to ascertain the original autographs of the Canon of the Law and the Prophets, when they were first collected and fixed. *The Septuagint version of the Law and the Prophets, and possibly also of some*

<sup>1</sup> My italics.

of the writings, takes us back of the Maccabean text”<sup>1</sup> (*op. cit.*, p. 238).

Dr. Briggs has, moreover, contributed to the International Critical Commentary, a work on the Psalter (dated 1906). The preface contains the following remarks that appear to be material to any consideration of the textual opinions expressed in the body of the work: “This commentary is the fruit of forty years of labour. . . . I have spared no pains upon the text of the Psalter, not only in the study of the Versions, but also in the detection and elimination of the glosses in the search for the original texts as they came from their authors. . . . A public Version, in my opinion, should be less pedantic and literal than the Revised Version, *and not so slavish in its adherence to the Massoretic text.*<sup>1</sup> In this respect the older Versions, especially the Version of the Book of Common Prayer, is [*sic* H. M. W.] to be preferred; for while it is less accurate than the later Versions, it preserves many readings of the Greek and Vulgate Versions which later English Versions unwisely rejected.”

I proceed to quote some of the relevant dicta of this work:—

“*The earliest Version of the Psalter was that of the Greek Septuagint, translated from the Hebrew in the second century B.C. at Alexandria, and preserved in many ancient codices, the earliest of the fourth century A.D., giving evidence as to an original Hebrew text, many centuries prior to any Hebrew authorities*”<sup>2</sup> (p. xxv).

“It was made from the best MSS. accessible at the time, and gives evidence as to the original Hebrew text of early second century B.C., three centuries earlier than the text fixed by the school of Jamnia, and twelve centuries earlier than the

<sup>1</sup> My Italics.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Briggs's Italics.

*Mass. text as fixed by Ben Asher and preserved in the earliest Hebrew codd."*<sup>1</sup> (*ibid.*).

"The text of the LXX where there is a consensus of readings has a value which has not been estimated by critics as highly as it ought to be, so far as the Psalter is concerned. In a very large number of cases this common text is to be preferred to the Hebrew consonantal text"<sup>1</sup> (p. xxviii).

"The text of the LXX carries us still farther back, to a Hebrew text of the second century B.C., very soon after the Psalter had received its final editing" (p. xxxiii).

"The divine names were inserted very often in order to make it evident that God was the subject or object of the verb"<sup>1</sup> (p. liii).

"In a very large number of instances the ancient Versions, especially the LXX and Vulgate, are more correct than the unpointed Hebrew text. MODERN SCHOLARS HAVE GREATLY ERRED IN A TOO EXALTED ESTIMATE OF THE CORRECTNESS OF THE UNPOINTED HEBREW TEXT IN THIS REGARD. THE MEASURES MAKE IT EVIDENT THAT EVEN THE UNPOINTED HEBREW TEXT, BY ITS NUMEROUS ADDITIONS AND CHANGES OF THE ORIGINAL, IS AS TRULY AN INTERPRETATION OF AN OLDER TEXT AS THE LXX AND OTHER ANCIENT VERSIONS"<sup>2</sup> (*ibid.*).

Further down on the same page we are told that not infrequently both *Elohim* and *Adonay* "appear as a conflation of the original text." I think I have quoted enough to show that Dr. Briggs, at any rate, is in no case to put forward any vindication of either Dr. Skinner or himself, and that in this controversy he has taken a part which is inconsistent with the elements of truthfulness and honor. So far as he is concerned, the statements about "the principles formed long ago" were a tissue of falsehoods. We shall now see that he

<sup>1</sup> My Italics.

<sup>2</sup> My Italics and capitals.

does not stand alone in rejecting the preposterous doctrines that he falsely professes to accept in the correspondence. I begin by quoting Professor Toy, the author of the volume on Proverbs in the International Critical Commentary. In his case we are happily dealing with an honorable man. On p. xxxii of the work he writes: "Of these the oldest and, for the criticism of the text, the most valuable is the Septuagint. It represents in general an older text than that of the received Hebrew tradition." As he was not prepared to sacrifice his convictions on the altar of the documentary theory, Dr. Toy, in reviewing my "Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism," wrote as follows: "Several writers have recently dwelt on the fact that the Septuagint and other ancient Versions differ considerably from the received Hebrew text (the Masoretic) in the use of divine names. . . . The Septuagint translators, it is commonly supposed, followed their Hebrew text faithfully, and this text is equally authoritative with the Masoretic (in both cases internal evidence must decide as to the value of readings): it is concluded that the latter is not a trustworthy guide for a division of documents based on divine names, and this is Mr. Wiener's contention. While this point calls for a more thorough examination than has yet been given it, the conclusion just stated is not out of keeping with the tone of modern criticism. As is well known, critics generally hold that our Hebrew text has suffered greatly from scribes and editors in the process of transmission. It is agreed that divine names have been changed in Chronicles, Psalms and elsewhere, why not in the Pentateuch?"<sup>1</sup> Dr. Toy, it will be seen, is not prepared to contradict the lifelong principles of Dr. Briggs and himself on textual Criticism for the sake of the documentary theory.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Register*, April 28, 1910, p. 455.

And yet he is a man who suffered for his conscientious beliefs when it appeared to him that the higher criticism was true. My authority is Dr. Briggs, and I quote the account he gives in the General Introduction that I have already cited so often. "The first to suffer for the Higher Criticism in the United States was C. H. Toy, who was Professor of Old Testament Interpretation in the Baptist Theological School, at Greenville, S. C., from 1869 to 1879. In the latter year he was forced to resign because of his views as to Biblical Criticism" (p. 286). As he was the first in the United States to suffer for his Higher Critical views, so has he been the first to admit that those views might be unfounded. *Amicus Plato, magis amica veritas.*

Similarly with Dr. H. P. Smith, from whose pen comes the volume on Samuel in the International Critical Commentary. He writes: "In the absence of light from the MSS. we must seek the help of the ancient versions. And among these the Greek easily takes the first place, owing to its age and to the fact that it had a Hebrew original very different from the one known to us. If we had the LXX in its earliest form, it would be equivalent to a Hebrew codex of the first Christian century, or even of earlier date" (Samuel, p. xxxi). In accordance with this, Dr. Smith has publicly stated that the work of Professors Eerdmans and Schlögl and of the present writer necessitate a careful reëxamination of the whole field of textual and historical Criticism.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Smith, too, according to the same repertory of convenient information, was one of the first to suffer for his critical views. Dr. Briggs writes: "The discussion of the Higher Criticism in the United States began

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. xxx. (1910), p. 19, *note*. See also his statement in the text: "Each year we have the necessity forced upon us to learn something new and to unlearn some of the things we had supposed settled."

for the Presbyterian body, in the plea for freedom of criticism in my inaugural address as Professor of Hebrew in the Union Theological Seminary, N. Y., in 1876. . . . I was sustained by Henry P. Smith. . . . Prof. Henry Preserved Smith was tried on similar grounds. . . . He was also suspended from the ministry in the same year by the Presbytery of Cincinnati, which action was sustained next year by General Assembly" (*op. cit.*, pp. 286-289). Such men as Doctors Toy and Smith must command the respect and admiration of supporters and opponents alike.

It is noticeable that these two men — the two International Critical Commentators who suffered for their beliefs, but were not prepared to throw away their honor for the sake of the documentary theory — had used far less emphatic expressions as to the rôle of the LXX in textual criticism than Dr. Briggs, or even, as we shall see, Dr. Driver himself.

One other International Critical Commentator must be quoted, the late Dr. William Rainey Harper, whose name is affixed to certain papers on Pentateuchal Criticism that appeared in the *Hebraica*, and attracted attention some years ago. The preface to his "Amos and Hosea" contains a polemic against Dr. Driver in the course of which he writes: "It is unquestionably the first duty of a commentator to reconstruct the text as best he may" (Amos and Hosea, preface, p. viii). Further on, in the course of his introduction, he says of the LXX: "In the correction of MT, LXX is most helpful. . . . When due allowance is made for the errors of LXX there still remain many passages in which its text is preferable to M.T." (p. clxxiv).

I come now to Dr. Driver. The attitude as to textual criticism assumed by the general editors of the International Critical Commentary in the letter of the 28th of February,

1911, is more like his general attitude than that of Dr. Briggs. But Dr. Driver himself does not altogether adopt the extraordinary contentions of the letter. I have pointed out some of the ways in which he differs from Dr. Skinner (and consequently from the defense of Dr. Skinner) in reviewing his "Additions, etc.," in the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* for October, 1911, and also in the second answer to Dr. Gordon in this number. Perhaps the strongest instance of the divergence between the Dr. Driver of textual criticism and the Dr. Driver of the joint letter is, however, to be found on pages lii f. of his "Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel," where he quotes and endorses Klostermann's famous dictum "Let him who would himself investigate and advance learning, by the side of the other Ancient Versions accustom himself above all things to the use of Field's *Hexapla*, and Lagarde's edition of the Recension of Lucian." Why does this principle suddenly cease to be valid when Dr. Skinner's conduct comes up for consideration?

It must not be thought that in laying stress on the question of textual criticism I am urging a principle that is rejected or doubted in the case of other ancient works that have depended on a MS. tradition. On this point let the identical Dr. Briggs speak in the words he has adopted in the work representing the carefully matured convictions of so many years which I have already had frequent occasion to quote: "Biblical Textual Criticism derives from general Textual Criticism its principles and methods of work. These differ in their application to the Bible only as there are special circumstances connected with the biblical writings that differ from those of other writings. As Hort says: 'The leading principles of textual criticism are identical for all writings whatever. Differences in application arise only from differences in the amount, va-

riety, and quality of evidence: no method is ever inapplicable except through defectiveness of evidence'” (General Introduction, p. 231).

Now there can be no doubt that the well-known rules of textual criticism entirely condemn the practice of accepting readings on the authority of any text whatever without investigation. In proof of this I need only quote some of the observations made by Professor J. P. Postgate in the article on “Textual Criticism” in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. He writes as follows:—

“Where the critic has ascertained the earliest form of a reading in his text, he will apply to it the tests of intrinsic probability. No part of a text can be considered exempt from this scrutiny, though for a very large part of it it may be dispensed with. *It should, however, be here observed, that whoever takes a reading without investigation, on the authority either of a manuscript or of a great scholar, or of a number of scholars, ceases for the time being to be a textual critic*”<sup>1</sup> (vol. xxvi. p. 713b).

“Illegitimate doubt is the uncertainty of the doubter as to whether he has examined the whole of the evidence. Such doubt is much more frequently felt than acknowledged, and its effect upon critical work is highly injurious. On the one hand, *it is apt to take refuge in an uncritical acceptance of the traditional readings*, and, on the other hand, to produce a crop of hesitant and mutually destructive conjectures which a reader naturally resents as a needless waste of his time”<sup>1</sup> (*ibid.*, p. 714a).

“Authority, as already hinted, has properly no place in textual criticism. For his facts a textual critic may, and often must, be beholden to others: but never for his opinions. It

<sup>1</sup> My Italics.

adds nothing to the evidence for a reading that it has been approved by a Lachmann or a Madvig or rejected by a Stoeber or a Carutti: and an appeal to names on any such question confuses issues and deters inquiry" (*ibid.*, p. 715b).

The net result of all this is to show, beyond any possibility of doubt, that the general editors of the International Critical Commentary have belied every principle of scholarship, and even of honor, in violation of the very doctrines that one of them has accepted and striven to propagate throughout his life. To all appearance they have as little compunction about deceiving their readers as a fraudulent company promoter has about deceiving the public whom he hopes to despoil.<sup>1</sup> I use this clear language purposely, because I feel that a state of affairs has arisen which must be terminated. We have to deal with a number of professors who abuse their positions in the last way one would expect, for it must be remembered that the public supposes them to be men of high standing actuated by the purest motives, adopting and advocating particular views because those views arise necessarily from the relevant evidence. Now I feel that the time has come when their conduct has passed all reasonable limits, and it is a public duty to say so. If men who should be, and profess to be, servants of truth undertake to abuse their positions by deliberately propagating falsehood, a time comes when it is necessary to denounce them publicly as falsifiers who would never dare to enter a witness-box to sustain their allegations on oath and under cross-examination. Dr. Alexander R. Gordon, of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, affords an excellent illustration of this in the correspondence that ap-

<sup>1</sup> In the case of Dr. Driver the best illustration of the above statement is the volume on Exodus in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges. See my review, *ante*, pp. 151-158.

pears in this number of the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA. In reply to questions whether he had believed Dr. Skinner's representations when he read them, he alleged that he could no more say "yes" or "no" to such questions than he could to the interrogation "Have you left off beating your mother?" In the witness-box he would be on oath, and subject to cross-examination. Dr. Gordon would have either to give straightforward answers to straightforward questions or to take the consequences, which would be ruinous to his reputation; and it would appear clearly that he had been duped by Dr. Skinner. A court of justice is not to be deceived by the methods which are apparently thought good enough for theological students.

Similar considerations apply to Dr. Skinner himself. I once wrote to Dr. Driver, in a private letter for the information of the general editors and Dr. Skinner, that, if the latter brought an action for libel against me, it would be the end of the school of Astruc in England, and I now repeat this statement for the information of a larger public. I propose to devote some little space to explaining exactly why this is so, because in some quarters there appears to be misunderstanding as to precisely what Dr. Skinner has done.

The controversy which has done so much to expose the conduct of the higher critics began with a very innocent question published in the *Expository Times* for May, 1909, by the Rev. A. P. Cox, referring to my article in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA for January, 1909.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Skinner answered in the same number, but it was perfectly clear that he had not read my article. Thus he wrote: "in Genesis . . . the LXX [differs from the Jewish version] in 49 [cases] — about one-sixth of

<sup>1</sup> Now reprinted, with slight modifications, in the first chapter of my *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*.

the whole." "These facts were not discovered by Mr. H. M. Wiener" — that, at any rate, was a great deal truer than he suspected. Had he read my article he would have found that "these facts" were not facts. He then proceeded: "but are the common property of scholars, whether scholars have always given due weight to them or not. It does not on the face of it look as if very much capital could be made out of so limited a divergence." After some further discussion, which did not in itself prove that he had not read my article, Dr. Skinner proceeded to betray his ignorance again by claiming: (1) that Greek copyists were likely to observe the distinction between the two words less carefully than Jewish scribes; and (2) that where MT and LXX differ the cases where God is used for the Tetragrammaton "show an immense preponderance over those where 'Lord' is used for Elohim, the preference for the common word being as marked as it is intelligible." This was a particularly unnecessary betrayal of ignorance, because Mr. Cox had emphasized the fact that I had adduced evidence showing that the versional variants rest on divergent Hebrew texts, and are not due to avoidance of the Tetragrammaton by translators. Hence a careful reading of the question Dr. Skinner was purporting to answer would have put him on his guard in these matters. After some further discussion, in which he compared the critical achievements to the discovery of America, Dr. Skinner thought fit to lay down what my arguments (which he obviously had not read) could ever accomplish. Now I do not know what standards of honor commend themselves to higher critical minds: but, from the point of view of laymen, it is certain that Dr. Skinner transgressed in two respects: First, although he had not troubled to read my work, he passed adverse judgment on me. It is not the custom among

men of honor to condemn what they have not read.<sup>1</sup> For them, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" is still binding. Secondly, he was deceiving his public by making false representations. Any reader of his note who had not independent knowledge must have supposed that he had read my article, and that he was putting forward statements which he had reasonable ground to believe to be true. In these circumstances I did my best to recall him to a sense of right without exposing him too openly. My reply, which was published in the *Expository Times* for July, 1909, was designed to draw his attention to the article he had not read, and to the unsoundness of his statements of fact and his arguments.<sup>2</sup> Thus he had twice had public warning — once in Mr. Cox's note and once in mine — of the true state of affairs, and this was reinforced by Professor Schlögl's correction of him in the September number of the same magazine. It was in those circumstances that he took it upon himself to repeat his representations in his volume on Genesis. Of course he could not support his published statements in the witness-box without committing direct perjury, and that is why there can be no question of his bringing proceedings for libel. I did all I could to keep him straight after his first offense by the note in the *Expository Times*: but if the principal of a theological college, after repeated warnings, persists in giving currency to statements which he could not support in the witness-box without committing perjury, a time comes when the interests

<sup>1</sup> It seems, however, to be the usual practice among higher critics. I could give instance after instance that has come to my knowledge, and may perhaps do so on another occasion should necessity arise.

<sup>2</sup> I fear that Dr. Gordon has not realized this. It is, to say the least, doubtful whether he has done me the justice of carefully reading and considering the *Bibliotheca Sacra* article and comparing it with Dr. Skinner's discussion in his Genesis.

of the public necessitate a full and clear exposure. There is a further reason why no action can be brought. At present the critics are able to use their control of the technical press in the interests of their theories: but an action would give wide publicity to inconvenient facts, and would clearly expose the tactics that they have pursued for years.

One other point must be made. Two friends of Dr. Skinner's wrote to me independently to say that they did not think that he intended to deceive. I answered one by giving him some further facts: whereupon he did not pursue the subject. But is the position tenable? No, it is not; for every man must be supposed to intend the natural and necessary consequences of his own acts. If Dr. Skinner did not intend to deceive, it was open to him (both before and after I had warned him) to tell the truth about my work. He did not do so, but went out of his way to put forward statements that were false, and that he must have seen to be false if he examined my work and Professor Schlögl's. Now in the letter of the 4th of January, 1911, the general editors assert, no doubt truly, that Dr. Skinner had told them that he had examined this work. If this statement of Dr. Skinner's be true — and so far as my work is concerned there are expressions in his "Genesis" which lend it some confirmation — I do not see how anybody can suppose that Dr. Skinner did not intend to deceive. According to his own account, he knew the truth but chose to make statements that were untrue. If he did not intend to deceive by acting thus, what did he intend to do?

Unhappily his offense is a continuing offense, for every fresh reader of his book is likely to be deceived unless he has had warning *aliunde*, and neither Dr. Skinner nor his general editors can be ignorant of this. If, therefore, there were no intention to deceive, the book would long since have

been called in. Old Testament Studies have indeed come to a pretty pass when theological professors and principals can behave as these men have been doing; but obviously matters cannot continue thus. The position is in fact impossible and must shortly be recognized to be so. If men occupying such positions wilfully and persistently give currency to false statements which they could not support in the witness-box without committing perjury, they must in the long run prove the most efficient means of destroying the theories they support.