

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_churchman\\_os.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php)

*non curat ovem sine laná.*" The "simoniacal taint" was so lightly regarded by the curialists that it became an open question whether the Cardinalate itself were a saleable commodity or not. The very promulgation of the Constitution of Julius proves that its severe penalties had become necessary, while the terror with which Gammarus regarded it was a clear indication that the universality of the evil had made the application of the remedy very difficult. The intrigues of the great Powers of Europe to influence the electors to the Papacy have introduced the "simoniacal heresy" in another form, and bribery has assumed a less direct, but more insidious, character. No election to the Papacy in any age of its long history, since the day of the establishment of Christianity, has ever been really a free one; and no Pope, at least from the period of Alexander VI., has ever had a clear title under the inflexible clauses of the Constitution of Julius II.

ROBERT C. JENKINS.



ART. III.—EXAMINATION OF GESENIUS' OBJECTIONS  
TO THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.

III.

ALTHOUGH, as admitted by the writer in Smith's Dictionary, Gesenius' classification of variations between the two codices (all of which are to be found in a very convenient form in Kennicott's great edition of the Hebrew Bible) is of very subordinate interest to the question of the age and origin of the Samaritan Pentateuch, it is yet worthy of consideration. Only it has to be remembered that where it is a question as to Hebrew grammar, or literary taste, or the spelling of words in a more or less contracted form, however interesting it may be to consider the relative æsthetic capabilities of Israelites and Jews in the age of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, it is an inquiry suitable enough for an academical thesis, but not a matter of supreme importance, and that questions of taste are proverbially incapable of being settled by disputation.

Still, there are certain points of great interest connected with it; and it has a very distinct bearing on what, when we have once recognised the antiquity of the Israelitish recension, becomes a most important question—the comparative weight to be attached to two distinct texts which were separated from each other between two and three thousand years ago.

Before entering on this inquiry, we may ask ourselves what, under such circumstances, we should expect to happen.

There is reason to think that the kingdom of Israel was not only larger and more powerful than that of Judah, but also more cultured. It is a painful but indisputable fact that high civilization and godliness are not always found united. There are sins, especially that of idolatry, that of licentiousness, and that of drunkenness, which have in the history of the world been too often combined with excessive luxury. The prophets who prophesied against Israel use language implying all these sins, and charging the people with them in very strong language. It is almost certain that they were a highly-cultured race in comparison with the people of Judah. One of their kings contrasts them as the cedar in Lebanon and the thistle—no doubt a gross exaggeration, but which implies the existence of some considerable difference of culture, as well as of strength, to give the insult any point at all.

The close of Solomon's reign and the commencement of Rehoboam's was a time of high literary development. Is it not evident that, with respect to spelling and grammatical forms, the copyists of the two nations would be likely to differ? Those of Judah would be conservative, those of Israel progressive. The Israelitish copyists would certainly correct or modernize archaic forms. If there were, as there are in the Pentateuch, certain forms of speech peculiar to the Pentateuch, and wanting in accurate discrimination, the scribes of that age in the more literary nation would be sure to correct them according to what was then modern usage. So they would solecisms, the omission of words which the sense required, incomplete forms, and a variety of such faults—as they would reckon them—in the manuscripts or fashions of writing of a former age. Even in our own printed Bibles we can find such alterations in the course of two hundred years. I have before me a Bible printed by John Field, "printer to the universitie" of Cambridge, 1668. In the first chapter of Genesis, I find "yeelding" for "yielding," "kinde" for "kind," and "cattel" for "cattle." Our modern printers, rightly or wrongly, prefer "yielding," "kind," "cattle." If in Gesenius' classification we should meet with such differences, we shall know how to understand them.

The Israelitish Pentateuch became that of the Samaritans. There are a few—very few—texts which the controversialists on either side could quote as bearing on their differences. We ought not to be surprised if we should discover that these texts had been tampered with on one side or the other.

And we should also expect that the Samaritan Pentateuch would not be praised by Jewish Rabbis of the Masoretic school.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Kohn, "Pent. Sam.," p. 4.

Gesenius thinks their abuse of it strong evidence against it. It is more reasonable to think that if it had been as worthless as they affected to consider it, they would have let alone a few copies in the hands of a small number of poor families, and manuscripts at Nablous which no one who is not a Samaritan is now allowed to examine. Their violence shows what vitality there is in the Codex, and suggests the probability that in the long period, which hardly closed before A.D. 1000, during which the Masorites had the Pentateuch, like the rest of the Old Testament, in their hands for revision and punctuation, and compelled all Jews, under the penalty of excommunication, to adopt their revision,<sup>1</sup> the few words which bore on the controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans, as well as a good many words in other parts of the Bible which bore on the controversy between Jews and Christians, underwent correction at their hands. When we look at the texts we shall see reason to agree with Kennicott that in these passages the readings in the Samaritan Pentateuch were probably those which they received from the Ten Tribes, and those in the Jewish Pentateuch alterations subsequently made by the Jews.

The first and most obvious difference is, as already stated, in the character in which the two recensions are written. The ancient Hebrew character is known not to have been that square writing to which we give the name. Not only up to, but long after the Exile, this ancient character was used, and the other, unlike as it is, having been formed gradually from it, was not in existence. It was almost, not quite, identical with the old Phœnician and Moabite alphabet, as found on the Moabite stone. We have proof of this in ancient monuments of the eighth or seventh centuries before Christ, on coins of the Asmonæan dynasty, and of the time of the war between the Jews and the Romans.<sup>2</sup> The Samaritan character closely resembles this ancient Hebrew in its earlier development, before it began in the reign of Hyrcanus II. to change so much. As on the Moabite stone, every single word in the Samaritan is separated from that which follows it by a dot. The critics following Gesenius suppose, but apparently without any evidence, that in those early ages there was also continuous writing, without dots or spaces between the words; but that the other method of writing, still used by the Samaritans, existed in the earlier antiquity was well known before, and is now confirmed beyond a doubt by the Moabite stone.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Kennicott, "Dis. Gen.," p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Herzog, B. ii., 382.

<sup>3</sup> "Moabite Stone," W. Pakenham Walsh, p. 29.

It must always be remembered that in these manuscripts of the Pentateuch in the ancient Hebrew character, the corresponding letters in the modern Hebrew and Samaritan alphabets are employed, but in the powers which they possess in the Hebrew, not in the Samaritan, language. They could not have been originally written for the use of Samaritans, as, if read by them as they read their own language, they would not at all express the Hebrew sounds. Since the originals, of which those in the hands of European scholars are copies, were written, the Samaritan language must have been formed. The pronunciation of the letters used in the Samaritan Codex is of necessity quite different from that of the same letters used in the Samaritan translation; unless we were to assume that the Masorites entirely failed to give anything at all resembling the traditional sound of the Hebrew words—a very improbable supposition.

The square character did not exist in the time of Hyrcanus II., 70 B.C.<sup>1</sup> The Pentateuch is held to have been the first part of the Bible translated into Greek, nearly three hundred years before Christ. At this time there must have been two recensions, both in some form of the Old Hebrew character. We know that the ancient Samaritan manuscripts, as seen by Origen and Jerome, were in the Old Hebrew character. The copies we possess resemble it; but, as they are in the character used by the Samaritans now, it is impossible to be sure that the copyists may not have modernized them. It is remarkable enough that the present Samaritan should be so like that found on the Moabite stone, and on other ancient monuments and coins. The contrast between the fate of that branch of the Old Hebrew alphabet which developed into the square character, and that which has continued so persistently in the Samaritan, is very striking. But it cannot be told with which of the Old Hebrew alphabets the Samaritan is most closely connected, whether with that of the Moabite stone or that of the Siloam inscription, or whether it is distinct from any of them, till the most ancient manuscripts have been examined. Nor can we be sure that the Hebrew writing in the two kingdoms was absolutely identical.

Between the Jewish and Samaritan Codices there are a thousand variations. The greater part of these variations would have been objectless where the language was not that of the people. Many of them it is inconceivable that any body of learned men like the Masorites would have intro-

---

<sup>1</sup> From a comparative view of successive alphabets, which I have seen in the British Museum, it is clear that the square character was developed out of the old Hebrew character, and did not make its appearance long before, if at all before, the Christian era.

duced. Philologists may like solecisms, ungrammatical phrases, false concords, unusual words, when they find them in ancient writings, and count it bad taste to correct them; but they do not introduce them. Their existence in one recension and not in the other proves the greater antiquity of the former, but proves also that both were written while the language was in familiar use, and undergoing change.

In examining Gesenius' classification of variants, we must bear in mind that whatever else it may have settled, it did not, by the confession of his followers, and his own virtual admission, settle anything as to the origin and age of the Samaritan recension. And, as will appear in most of these cases, the variants are just what we might have expected to be the result of its being in the hands of the Israelitish, as distinguished from the Jewish, at a period of literary activity like that at the close of Solomon's reign. He divides the variants into eight classes.

#### I. Emendations attempted of a grammatical nature.

Several sub-classes of these he mentions: the supplying the quiescent letters which are known as "Ehevi"; the substitution of more ordinary for less ordinary forms of the pronouns; the completion of apparently incomplete forms in the flexion of the verbs, such as altering the apocopated, or short, future, into the regular future; the omission of certain letters, *Nun* and *Yod*, at the end of nouns, which have no signification, and may be paralleled by the change of "leaden" into "lead," or of "olden" into "old"; the alteration of such an expression as "The waters returned to go and to return" (Gen. viii. 2) into "The waters returned, they went and they returned," either phrase meaning "The waters returned continually," and expressing it equally well, but the latter sounding "quaint" in the ears of Gesenius; more common words substituted for obsolete ones; and gender in various ways made apparent in words and flexions where there is no distinction of gender in the Jewish manuscripts.

All these changes are in reality in exact accordance with what we have seen would probably happen with copies taken in the most cultured of the two nations at the time of their separation. The copyists, proud of their superior grammatical knowledge, would, whether in good taste or bad taste, make just such alterations. They would replace archaic forms by others more modern, fill up incomplete sentences, reject useless appendages, substitute more usual for less usual words, and generally modernize.

One of these sets of variants has to do with gender. Gesenius mentions some words which the Samaritan manu-

scripts make masculine and some which they make feminine, which in the Jewish manuscripts are the reverse or common. Of these one is the word for "young man" (נער), which in the Jewish Pentateuch stands equally for "damsel" in every passage but one where the word "damsel" occurs; while in all the other books of the Old Testament there is always the feminine termination *He* (ה) to distinguish "damsel" from "young man." The letter *He* (ה) is always added, everywhere when the word means damsel, except in the Pentateuch, where the distinctive feminine termination only occurs in one single text. The Masorites, by an arrangement of vowels and by means of the text or marginal reading, made the distinction apparent in sound; but, except in one text, the archaic form of the word is universal in the Pentateuch, and is found nowhere else. One of the complaints made by Gesenius and Kohn against the Samaritan Codex is that, in this respect, the form has been assimilated to the rest of the Old Testament, and the distinction recognised between a young man and a damsel. Gesenius refers to other cases in which the gender is not so clearly marked in the Jewish Pentateuch as in other books, but has been corrected, in bad taste as he thinks (and as no doubt every archæologist of the nineteenth century would think), in the Samaritan. There is no distinction in the Jewish Codex of the Pentateuch, in the majority of cases, between "he" and "she." The Masorites here, also, have made the sound different for "she," but the consonants are the same for both. This change respecting gender was introduced into the language before the Book of Joshua was written, and was, naturally, followed by the scribes in Jeroboam's day.

But how do the critics, who for a Pentateuch substitute a Hexateuch, and place the writing of it in different ages, part in the time of the Judges, or of the later Israelitish Kings, part in the time of Josiah, part in or after the Exile, account for the fact that in all these parts, in what they call "J. E.," or "the Jehovist," in Deuteronomy, and in what they denominate the "Priests' Code," there is this remarkable difference from all the other books which they make contemporaneous with them? How do they explain what, for the purpose of discrediting the Samaritan Codex, Gesenius notes, that this imperfection, this want of development of the idea of gender, this using the same word for young man and young woman, this identification of "he" and "she," should be so common throughout the Pentateuch and nowhere else? They speak sometimes, though as if they were treading on ice, of differences of style between "J. and E.," "J. E.," "the Deuteronomist," and the "Priests' Code." Will they produce one single grammatical distinction characteristic of any of those parts into which they

have divided the Pentateuch, to compare with these grammatical distinctions respecting gender between the whole Pentateuch and every other book from Joshua to Malachi? They have not done so yet.

The distinction in this respect between the Jewish Pentateuch and the rest of the Old Testament Scriptures, and also that between the Jewish and Samaritan Pentateuchs, is explained at once when the Pentateuch is admitted to have been written long before any of the other books, and revised by Israelitish scribes after the division of the kingdom five hundred years later. It shows that the transcribers of the Israelitish manuscripts were less conservative than those of the Jewish manuscripts, and than the Samaritans were when it came into their hands. But the preservation of archaic forms not to be found elsewhere in Scripture, in the Jewish manuscripts of the Pentateuch up to the present day, if it proves, as it does prove, for which reason it is noticed by Gesenius, the priority of the Jewish Codex to the Samaritan, is, at the same time, the most conclusive grammatical proof possible of the antiquity and unity of the Five Books of Moses.

II. Gesenius' second class of variations consists of glosses and interpretations received into the text. As, for instance, Gen. vii. 2, 9, where the words in the Jewish manuscripts are "man and his wife," while in the Samaritan manuscripts they are, as in our translation, and also in the Septuagint, "male and female." Nothing is in itself more probable than that at the separation of the kingdoms, as at the time of the translation of the Septuagint and of our own English translation, the idiom had changed. In fact, as in many of these cases the Septuagint agrees with the so-called Samaritan, there is absolutely no difficulty in the matter, and when it is said that there are such variants, all is said that need be said. There is no doubt that Gesenius is right in considering the variation just mentioned as a proof of the greater antiquity of the Jewish than that of the Samaritan Codex. The idiom in the Jewish Codex is that used when the Pentateuch was written; that in the Samaritan Codex is that which was used when it passed under the review of Israelitish transcribers in Jeroboam's day, five hundred years later.

III. "Conjectural emendations, sometimes far from happy, of real or imaginary difficulties in the Masoretic text." One of these is quoted in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible" thus: "Genesis xxiv. 62, בַּא מְבוֹא, he came from going (A.V., 'from the way') to the well of Lahai-roy, the Samaritan alters into 'in or through the desert' (LXX. διὰ τῆς ἐρήμου)." One thing is clear, either the Septuagint translators had both the Israelitish and the Jewish manuscripts before them as equal



authorities, and in this case preferred the Israelitish, or the Jewish manuscripts of three hundred years B.C. did not coincide with the Masoretic text. It is, in this case, immaterial which alternative we take. But it is well to reflect that this alternative has to be faced in each of the thousand cases in which the Septuagint agrees with the Samaritan against the Jewish text. There is no reason for always choosing the same horn of the dilemma. What Gesenius classifies as a conjectural emendation may in one instance be the genuine reading of the Jewish text as it existed B.C. 300, and in another the alternative reading of the Israelitish text, possibly an emendation, whether happy or not, in the days of Jeroboam, or possibly a mere mistake of the Samaritan copyists. Here, again, this whole class of variants is perfectly explained when the fact is recognised that the Samaritan text, so called, is the ancient Israelitish text.

Under this head he mentions Numbers xxiv. 17, where, in the Jewish Codex, there is the difficult word קרקר, which is translated "destroy" in our version and taken in the same sense in the Septuagint. For קרקר the Samaritan reads קרקר, which he calls an easier reading, but rejects. The sense of the Samaritan reading he gives thus: shall smite "the corners of Moab and the crown of the head of all the fierce."<sup>1</sup>

Though he rejects it, he says it has a great support in the parallel passage, Jeremiah xlvi. 45, where the prophet, commenting, as it were, on Balaam's prophecy, writes קרקר for קרקר. It is no doubt true that the emendations made in the Samaritan Pentateuch are not always happy; but it is still more true, as I hope to show further on, that they are not always the reverse, but sometimes very valuable corrections of the Masoretic text.

IV. Readings corrected or supplied from parallel passages. Of these Gesenius gives very few examples. One of them is Genesis i. 14, where he says that the words "to give light upon the earth" are inserted from verse 17. It is so also both in the Septuagint and the Syriac. He mentions, also, the phrase which occurs so frequently in the genealogies of the post-diluvian patriarchs in the Samaritan text, "and he died," which he considers as taken from the corresponding passages in the genealogies of the antediluvian patriarchs. There can be no doubt that the different copyists left it out of the one codex or inserted it in the other. Copyists are almost sure to make

<sup>1</sup> "Et (percutit) verticem omnium ferocium."

such mistakes. But, either way, what then? What does the omission or insertion prove?

V. "Whenever anything is mentioned as having been done or said previously by Moses, or when a command of God is related as being executed, the whole speech bearing upon it is repeated again at full length. These tedious, and always superfluous, repetitions are most frequent in Exodus." They are not by any means confined to Exodus. There are many instances of this peculiarity in Numbers and in Deuteronomy. But here we have a question of taste; and it is interesting to observe how different are the opinions of modern European scholars of eminence on this point. Kennicott, instead of being wearied like Gesenius by these repetitions, says that "especially in some cases we sorely miss this iteration. One speech which, in the Samaritan Codex, is found in Numb. xiii. 1, as well as in Deut. i. 20-23 (although the Hebrew text has it only in the latter place), was judged by Origen to be so necessary in the former place that he relates that he had translated it, and added it in the former place from the Hebrew Samaritan text."<sup>1</sup>

And with especial reference to the "tedious and superfluous repetitions" in Exodus of which Gesenius complains, Kennicott says: "But as to the Divine commands which were conveyed by Moses to Pharaoh, the Hebrew text is in great confusion, *valde turbatus est*, for it relates that Moses had received commands from God without mentioning that Moses delivered them; and, on the other hand, that Moses delivered commands to Pharaoh without its being mentioned that he had received them from God. One Divine command in Exodus xi., omitted in the present Hebrew text, so evidently ought to be inserted that the Hebrew text can hardly be explained without it."<sup>2</sup> In the Samaritan text the insertion begins at the close of Exod. xi. 2 with the words "and garments," which word is also in the Septuagint, and proceeds: "And I will give this people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians, and they shall borrow<sup>3</sup> them. And about midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt. And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne even unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is behind the mill, and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his

<sup>1</sup> Kennicott, "Dissertatio Generalis," p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 12.

<sup>3</sup> I translate the word "borrow" in order to keep the passage in harmony with the A.V. Of course "ask," as in R.V., or "demand," is the true rendering.

tongue, against man or beast, that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt and in the sight of the servants of Pharaoh, and in the sight of the people. And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God, Israel is My firstborn, and I say to thee, Let My son go that he may serve Me, and thou refusest to let him go. Behold the Lord will slay thy son, thy firstborn." All this comes in the place of verse 3, and then follows verse 4, in which Moses repeats the prediction which God commanded him to speak to the people.

It is impossible to decide in such matters, mainly questions of taste, between Origen and Kennicott on the one hand, and Gesenius on the other. They certainly do not admit of being ruled by authority, nor do they in any way affect the question of the age and origin of the Samaritan Pentateuch, nor even the further question, for the settlement of which they are brought forward by Gesenius, of the value of the variants.<sup>1</sup>

VI. Emendations of passages and words of the Hebrew text which contain something objectionable in the eyes of the Samaritans on account of historical improbability, or apparent want of dignity in the terms applied to the Creator.

The most noticeable changes of this kind to which Gesenius draws attention are in the chronology of the patriarchs. There are three chronologies—the present Hebrew chronology, the Septuagint chronology, and the Samaritan. The chronology in our present Samaritan copies is not that which existed in those with which Origen was acquainted, which was much more conformable with the Septuagint.<sup>2</sup> It has been altered since Origen's time, and not on account of historic improbability, since as altered, whether by accident or design, it is not consistent with the history, the lives of some of the patriarchs lasting beyond the Flood. The Jewish copies have also been changed. Abul-Pharagi not only states the fact, but gives the reason. The object was to make it appear that the time had not yet arrived, in which, on the Cabbalistic interpretation of Gen. i. 1 that the world would last 7,000 years, Messiah ought to have appeared.<sup>3</sup> The corruption of the Hebrew text since the time of Jerome is certain, for he says that in every instance our Lord quoted from the Hebrew, and in no single case from the Greek where that differed from the Hebrew. And it is also certain that our present Samaritan

<sup>1</sup> Gesenius says that Houbigant refers to the example of Homer to justify in a literary point of view these repetitions. So idle are such questions about taste.

<sup>2</sup> Hale's "Chronology," vol. i., pp. 281, 282.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 279.

chronology differs from that in the time of Origen. It must be remembered that there is nothing in which copyists so easily make mistakes as in numbers. Of the Samaritan ages of the patriarchs, or rather of those as reckoned by the Ten Tribes, and the time of the birth of their firstborn sons, we can learn nothing accurately<sup>1</sup> till the ancient manuscripts at Nablous have been examined. When will some enterprising traveller induce the Samaritan priests to be as communicative of their treasures as the monks of Sinai?

Under this sixth class of objections Gesenius includes a passage which ought to have been quoted for the purpose of showing the value of the Samaritan text—Exod. xii. 40. The Jewish manuscripts read: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years." This statement, as is well known, has created great difficulty, since St. Paul gives four hundred and thirty years (Gal. iii. 17) as the interval between the promise to Abraham and the giving of the law. But the Samaritan (supported by Sept. Codex Al.) has: "The sojourning of the children of Israel and their fathers who dwelt in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt was four hundred and thirty years." There is a disposition on the part of the critics to reject as an interpolation whatever helps the sense, and makes the history conformable to what we otherwise see it must have been. It is an exaggeration of a principle laid down by Griesbach, true enough in certain cases, but which, as now used, involves the absurd assumption that it is more probable that the writers of Holy Scripture—it is applied to no other writings—made mistakes than not, wrote bad grammar than not, misstated dates than not, and that of two readings the most palpably untrue is the most likely to be genuine.

The seventh class of variants, according to Gesenius, consists of "forms of words accommodated to the Samaritan dialect." This amounts when examined to very little. It is not words, but the forms of words, which are spoken of. These consist of changes occasionally of the silent letters of the Samaritan alphabet, the introduction into words of one of the Ehevi letters, especially of *Yod* and *Vau*, which has been already noticed under the first class, and in a few cases of their being dropped. The changes are very slight, and there does not seem any considerable difference between the first and seventh classes of the arrangement of Gesenius, or any reason why the alterations should be ascribed to assimilation to the Samaritan language when they can be so easily accounted for otherwise. But, in fact, considering that we know from the genealogies as

---

<sup>1</sup> Kennicott, "Dissertatio Generalis," p. 28.

seen by Origen, compared with those existing now, that the copies we possess have been changed from the originals, and that these copies were made by Samaritans, the wonder is that they have not been more tampered with. If, instead of the insertion or rejection of a *Jud* (Hebrew *Yod*) here, or a *Ba* (Hebrew *Vau*) there, we had found Samaritan words unknown to the Hebrew Lexicons in considerable numbers, it would not, under the circumstances, have been surprising; and as to the changes which are found, and which Gesenius considers as accommodated to Samaritan usage, he himself in the following words removes the force of any argument founded on them: "We may observe that in nothing do the manuscripts vary so much among themselves, some of them in many places retaining the pure Hebrew form where others incline to the native idiom, from which it is clear that the whole thing depends almost entirely on the pleasure of the scribes."<sup>1</sup>

Of course, this reduces the objection or the criticism to nothing, especially when we bear in mind that the actual manuscripts in the hands of European scholars are not only few (eighteen in all are those collated in whole or in part by Kennicott), but all of them copies by Samaritan scribes in or near the fifteenth century.

In examining this classification, I have taken it mainly from Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," but have subsequently compared it with the original work, from which, in some cases, I have quoted directly.

There remains one more class to be considered.

SAMUEL GARRATT.



#### ART. IV.—THE GROWTH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.<sup>2</sup>

FROM time immemorial the Old Testament has been spoken of as a threefold compilation of Law, Prophets, and other Writings, a mode of regarding it which is at least as old as St. Luke's Gospel and the preface to Ecclesiasticus. It is hopeless to discover the origin of this designation, but it is also manifest that it is one which is so apparently appropriate as to be self-suggestive. For the difference between these several parts is independent of age, and is one of substantive matter. And yet, nevertheless, the difference, though marked and obvious, is not rigidly and exclusively exact, because there are portions of each section which manifest the peculiarities of the others. There are prophetic parts both of the Law

<sup>1</sup> Gesenius, "De Pent. Sam. Origin Indol. et Autoritate," p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> A paper read at the Exeter Church Congress, 1894.