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Textual Criticism versus Higher Criticism.

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IT is well known that many in the present day have learned to believe, or at any rate to acquiesce, in the main outlines of the case put forward by the higher critics. The theory has been held by so many philologists and divines, and has made such strides against the most stubborn opposition, that it has won over many adherents of different denominations and different nationalities. Under these circumstances, it might seem impossible to raise the question whether the higher critics have taken all available precautions to test the soundness of their work. And the impossibility would seem still more startling if it could be shown that the precautions omitted to be taken consist in an application of the very methods that the critics have claimed to use. At any rate, I wish to submit that no *a priori* theories of the incredibility of what is now to be stated should prevent the careful consideration of the facts to which attention is to be drawn.

My contention is that the higher critics have throughout conducted their investigations on the basis of an uncorrected Hebrew text; and if this is so, I believe it is possible to prove that, when the available materials are utilized for the restoration of the text, we are enabled to test the well-known "clue" to the higher criticism which is put forth by the leading writers on the subject.

I begin with the "clue"—*i.e.*, the use of *elohim* and the Tetragrammaton (the "LORD" of the English Bibles) in Genesis in the light of Exod. vi. 3. The story is familiar to everybody. It is held that Exod. vi. 3 means that the Tetragrammaton was unknown before Moses in the view of the author of that verse, and that therefore he cannot be responsible for the passages in Genesis where it is found. On this foundation a wonderful superstructure is raised. Genesis, it is said, consists mainly of portions of three documents—J, E, and P.

The first of these represents the Tetragrammaton as of immemorial use; the other two regard it as having been first introduced by Moses. It is claimed that this is supported by other marks of diversity of origin,[1] but this is the main stand-by of the higher critics, and, though one or two have recently broken away,[2] it formed the starting-point and basis of all higher critical work for 150 years from the time of Astruc. Yet, had the critics investigated the textual material, they would have found that Hebrew manuscripts, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the ancient Versions frequently differ from the received Hebrew text. Among Septuagintal scholars an attempt has been made to minimize the force of this, so far as the ancient Greek Version is concerned, by supposing that the Alexandrian translators often wrote "God" to avoid the Tetragrammaton in their Hebrew original. This would have been rather pointless, having regard to the fact that they did not transliterate the Name itself, but substituted $\kappa\acute{\nu}\rho\iota\sigma$; but it is not necessary to rely on this consideration to vindicate the Greek text, because extant Hebrew variants frequently confirm the Septuagintal authorities. So do the other Versions, including even Aquila the orthodox. The testimony of this translator is peculiarly valuable, for two different reasons : first, no mistake is possible in his case, since he refused to translate the Tetragrammaton at all, but wrote the Name in the old Hebrew characters; secondly, he was in close touch with authoritative Jewish exegesis, so that a reading of his represents the best Jewish text of the day.

Now, in most cases where there are variants no certain inference can be drawn as to the original reading. Either word would fit the context as well as the other, just as in a history of our own times it would frequently be possible to use " the King," or " Edward VII.," or " King Edward " indifferently; but there

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[1] Some of these may be well founded, since it is certain that the author of the Pentateuch did not invent the Genesis narrative, but used pre-existing material. Hence it is quite probable that occasionally the critics really have detected the point of junction between two different traditions, though most of their divisions are merely subjective and arbitrary, and the J, E, and P theory breaks down utterly.

[2] Dahse and Eerdmans.

are other cases where we have means of judging between the two readings on their merits, and here it sometimes happens that we can, for one reason or another, prove the received Hebrew text to be wrong. For example, in Gen. xvi. 11 the explanation of the name Ishmael, "because the LORD hath heard," cannot be right, for the explanation demands the name Ishma*yah*, not Ishma*el*. But one Hebrew manuscript, the Lucianic recension of the LXX, and the old Latin read "God." "Ishmael" is, then, parallel to Israel and Peniel, and we see that in this instance the received text has the inferior reading, and that for some reason or other the Tetragrammaton has ousted the word *elohim*.

It will be well to give a few examples of the way in which these variants affect the documentary theory. Thus, in Gen. ii. 4*b*, 5, 7, 8 it is known that the original LXX had "God" only, and that Origen in each case added "LORD" to bring it into accord with the Hebrew text of his day. A glance at any higher critical discussion of "J's" "Creation story" will reveal the revolutionary nature of these facts. Again, in iv. 1 (J) the LXX and other ancient authorities[1] read "God" for "LORD," and in view of iv. 26 it cannot be doubted that this is correct. In the Flood story, the original text with regard to the Divine appellations is quite uncertain. In xix. 29 (P) the best Septuagintal text is: "And it came to pass, when the LORD destroyed all the cities of the plain, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when the LORD destroyed," etc. In xx. 4 (E) fourteen Hebrew manuscripts have the Tetragrammaton for the Hebrew word "LORD." In xxi. 2*b* (P) the LXX has "LORD," as also in 6 (E). It would be possible to multiply instances almost indefinitely, but these are sufficient to illustrate my point. The textual authorities continually introduce the Tetragrammaton into P and E.

It is thus singularly easy to prove that the present documentary theory cannot be supported, and I doubt whether any

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[1] See Field's "Hexapla," *ad loc.*

higher critic could be found to undertake the defence of the Massoretic text in this matter. But it would still be possible to suggest that *a* documentary theory based on Exod. vi. 3 was correct, and that if we had the original text of Genesis it would be feasible to carry out a division on this basis, though it might not coincide in all cases with the present critical division. I have even known an eminent critic to take this view in private correspondence. Before disposing of it, I wish to point out what is involved in even so apparently slight a concession to the evidence of facts. The critics have throughout acted on the assumption that the Hebrew text was entirely trustworthy in this matter. If the division is wrong, the whole of their linguistic case as hitherto formulated falls with it. The lists of words, the lexicography extraordinary, in some cases even the linguistic history, depend primarily on this division. Probably the same would be true of their history of religion, but nothing definite could be said about this unless they were prepared to put forward a revised division showing what changes they thought necessary in the light of these facts.

But the matter does not stop there. If the textual evidence as to the Divine appellations in Genesis is unfavourable to the critical case, the textual evidence as to Exod. vi. 3 is fatal to it. I was once discussing the subject with an eminent critic. He surrendered the details of the Genesis division at once. I then went further, and said : " Who shall warrant that your test passage, Exod. vi. 3, is not slightly corrupt ?" " Ah," he cried eagerly, " if you have a probable conjecture !" Unfortunately I have no conjecture, but something that is far less likely to find favour in the sight of the critics—some strong evidence. An early Hebrew manuscript, supported by all the important Versions, reads הודעתי (" I made known ") for נודעתי (" I was known "), and this reading gives a smoother construction than the present Hebrew text. The meaning, which at first sight appears to be the same, is seen, in the light of comparative evidence as to primitive ideas, to be absolutely different. It appears that men in a certain state of civilization hold that

names have an objective existence, and regard the utterance of a man's name by himself as giving his interlocutor a certain power over him.   There is plenty of Old Testament evidence to show that early Hebrews believed in the objective existence of names.   It seems that here the utterance of the Name by God, not in any incidental or evasive fashion (as, for instance, in quotation, "Thus shalt thou say the LORD," etc., Exod. iii. 15), but as part of the direct formula "I am the LORD," would have an esoteric meaning for the ancient Hebrew. The true effect of the phrase was not to reveal a new name or give a fresh meaning to an old one, but to create a bond between Deity and people, and to give Moses and the Israelites a direct pledge that the whole power of this Deity would be exerted on their behalf.   In the two passages of Genesis (xv. 7 and xxviii. 13), where in the received Hebrew text God appears and says, "I am the LORD," the LXX presents readings that are inconsistent with Exod. vi. 3.   Indeed, in the second passage (xxviii. 13) it has the support of a Hebrew manuscript in reading, "I am the God of Abraham," etc. ; and the correctness of this text is further shown by the analogy of xxvi. 24. The Tetragrammaton here obviously originated in the ' of אֲנִי ("I").   There is abundant evidence that ' was frequently read as an abbreviation of the Name of God.

I have dealt very summarily with the evidence for the meaning as well as the evidence as to the text, because a full discussion would consume too much space for a monthly review.   Those who desire to follow the matter up further will find the necessary material in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for January, 1909, where I have also subjected the divisive hypothesis to a number of other tests ; but I felt that the subject was one of so much importance that it was desirable to draw the attention of CHURCHMAN readers to the facts as soon as possible.   It should be added that as early as 1784 De Rossi, in reply to Astruc, pointed to the manuscript divergences with regard to the Divine appellations.[1]

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[1] See his note on Gen. vii. 1.   Probably the system of abbreviations employed in Hebrew manuscripts is partly responsible for the immense

"What you tell me there is absolutely incredible," said a friend of mine to whom I spoke of these facts. " I thought the higher critics professed to devote special pains to the text." It is desirable that every reader of these lines who knows a higher critic should question him on the subject, and satisfy himself that my statements are not merely incredible, but also true. Those who do not know any critics may examine such books as Driver's " Genesis," and see how much attention is given to the textual evidence as to the Divine appellations.

Another instructive instance of textual corruption which has been exploited in the interests of the documentary theory is to be found in Num. xvi., where the LXX has preserved readings that are manifestly superior to those of the received Hebrew text. As it stands, ver. 24 speaks of the dwelling of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. But "dwelling" ought, in accordance with the practice of the Pentateuch, to mean the tabernacle, and the very next verse (as also the rest of the story) makes it clear that Dathan and Abiram were not with Korah. But the LXX has " company " for " dwelling," and the great Codex B (supported by F) reads " Korah " only. Clearly, " Dathan and Abiram " have been added to the Hebrew text by a glossator. Similarly, in 27 F has "congregation of Korah," though B, less correctly, has "tent of Korah." These are not the sole alterations required in the chapter, but they remove the worst difficulties. They are supported by the Samaritan text of xxvi. 10, which reads : " And the earth opened its mouth, and the earth swallowed them, when the congregation died, when the fire devoured Korah and the two hundred and fifty men." The repetition of "the earth " is clumsy, but in other respects the text is better than the Massoretic. It explains why in Num. xxvii. 3 Korah is mentioned without Dathan and Abiram, while Deuteronomy speaks of the latter

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number of variants as to the Divine appellations. Possibly, too, some copies of the Pentateuch were made for some special purpose or under the influence of some religious or other views similar to that which finds expression in the existence of duplicate psalms.

two rebels without Korah (xi. 6). The modes of their deaths were different, Korah being consumed with the two hundred and fifty, while the other two were swallowed up in the earthquake. As a matter of fact, the unity of chap. xvi. is guaranteed by the literary marks, the repeated, " Ye take too much on yourselves " (vers. 3 and 7), and the repeated, " Is it too little " (vers. 9 and 13). Such repetitions are frequent marks of angry dialogue both in real life and in literary art.

A third interesting difficulty which can be explained by textual criticism is to be found in the numbers of the Israelites, which are certainly inflated. Unfortunately, our materials are too scanty to enable us to do more than trace the last stages of the process by which they reached their present form, but these stages are very suggestive. Abbreviations were freely used in old Hebrew manuscripts, as is proved, not merely by the evidence of the versions, but by extant texts, specimens of which may be seen in Ginsburg's Introduction. Now, among the abbreviations in use, the omission of a final מ (I write it so because I am speaking of a time when the forms of the final letters were not differentiated), a final ה, and a final ת, were among the commonest. But in Hebrew the tens from thirty to ninety are the plurals of the corresponding units. Accordingly, there would on this system be no palæographical difference between, say, 40,000 and 4,000. Differences of reading of this kind are accordingly very common. I will only cite one instance that is most to the point for our present purpose—the number of the fighting men of the trans-Jordanic tribes in Josh. iv. 13. The reading that has prevailed in our present Hebrew text is 40,000; the reading represented by the Lucianic recension of the LXX is 4,000. The difference lies simply in the reading of identical characters, not in the earlier Hebrew text. There seems to be no reason why the Lucianic figure may not be historical.

This is one prolific source of error in the Hebrew numbers. It is not the only one. The number of variants chronicled in Kennicott raises the suspicion that at some time the Hebrew

word for thousand must have been represented by some method that led very easily to its wrong omission or insertion.

A further possibility (and though I have no actual evidence of it, I think that it harmonizes with what is known of early Hebrew manuscripts) is that the letter מ, when written as the sign of the plural, may sometimes have been mistaken for an abbreviation of the Hebrew word for hundred, of which it is the initial.[1] For instance, in 2 Sam. xxiv. 9 we find Israel credited with 800,000 warriors and Judah with 500,000. If these figures be reduced to 80,000 and 50,000 respectively, they become quite probable. I suggest that they may have arisen through the mistake of a scribe, who in each case read the final מ, not as the sign of the plural, but as an abbreviation for מאות, " hundreds."

Another source of corruption that is amply attested by extant readings consists in the natural ordinary decay of a manuscript text, which inevitably gives rise to variants. For instance, in Num. i. 23 our received text has, "and three hundred"; one manuscript has "five" for "three," another " seven"; while Lucian reads "four." In a case like this, where a number had become illegible, the adoption of a wrong reading would sooner or later lead to other changes, designed to make the numbers add up. Either the total would be altered, or some other number would be changed. In the case of the first census, corresponding changes would also be made in the dependent passages.

A particularly interesting episode in the history of the numbers is furnished by the story of the fifty Gadites of· Num. i. 25. Our materials tell us of the time when the number of the Gadites was not 45,650, but (probably) 45,600. The number of the hundreds having become corrupt, there were two rival readings—500 and 600 respectively. The form

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[1] This would explain such a variant as that in 2 Chron. xiii. 3, where the received text has *four hundred* מאות ארבע, but one manuscript reads *fourteen,* ארבע עשר. Here it would seem that ארבע was followed by a letter which was variously read as the initial of " hundred " and of " ten."

45,600 is still found in three Hebrew manuscripts (Kennicott's, 6, 107, 150), two Greek manuscripts (Holmes's, 54 and 75), and the Georgian Version. But it is probable that No. 6 did not always have this reading, for the וש of ושש (and six) is written over an erasure. In view of the fact that another Hebrew manuscript (Kennicott's, 109) has וחמש (and five), it is possible to form a plausible guess as to the original reading of No. 6. Be that as it may, I think that once we get back to a text which omits the fifty, and also find that there was a variant " five " for " six," it is not difficult to see how our present text has come into existence. Obviously somebody who collated two manuscripts must have written וחמש—the variant he found —in the margin of a codex that read 600, and this was taken into the text and read as " and fifty." Then the total of the Israelites was altered by somebody who could add, and corresponding changes were introduced in most of the other passages. But not in all our sources, for in Num. ii. 15 two Hebrew manuscripts (Kennicott's, 110, 181) again omit the fifty.

Fully to understand the influences at work on the decaying text of the numbers, we must remember not merely that the scribes carefully studied the Bible and could perform arithmetical processes, so that sooner or later they would bring the interdependent numbers into harmony with one another, but also their natural bias in favour of the larger numbers. In an unhistorical age those figures would naturally appear truest which corresponded most closely to the contemporary numerical strength of the Jews. To the contemporaries of, say, Josephus, it must have seemed far more probable that the numbers of the Israelites at any given time were, say, 800,000 than 80,000, and therefore, if the texts gave them any choice, they would be certain to adopt the larger number. And considerations of probability might be reinforced by national vanity, which might operate in the direction of swelling the numbers where possible.[1]

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[1] It should be added that our materials prove a tendency to multiply numbers by ten even when the form of the Hebrew text was not graphically

Hence I think that our materials justify us in supposing that the inflated numbers of the Israelites in the Mosaic Age are due partly to palæographical peculiarities, which lent themselves readily to error, partly to the natural decay of a manuscript text, partly to the views conscientiously and (in the light of their knowledge) reasonably entertained by the scholars of an unhistorical age.

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Early Quaker Burial=Grounds.

By Canon J. VAUGHAN, M.A.

ONE of the problems which confronted the early Quakers was the disposal of their dead. A large number of them died excommunicated for the offence of not attending their parish church, while the children born of Quaker parents were unbaptized. Hence the parish churchyard was closed to them; or, at any rate, the Office for the Burial of the Dead, according to the rites of the Established Church, could not be used. They were, therefore, led to bury their dead in private grounds, in gardens, orchards, or fields. And this "privilege of burial," as it was called, was often accorded by individual Quakers to the families of other "Friends," with the result that, during the Commonwealth and the reign of Charles II., a number of private graveyards came into use throughout the country. Entries with regard to these private interments are not, of course, to be found in the parish registers; but nowhere is the methodical habit of mind which distinguished the followers of George Fox more conspicuous than in the careful records which they kept of the burials of their friends. In after-years, when the laws against Nonconformity were altered, public cemeteries were opened, and the private burial-grounds fell

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favourable. Thus, in Num. xxxi. 37-40 the Syriac has the following numbers, 6,750, 720, 610, 320, where the Hebrew has in each case one-tenth. Of these, 20 and 10 (to take the most obvious difficulties) are not the plurals of 2 and 1 respectively, 20 being in Hebrew the plural of 10.