MUST WE RELEGATE DEUTERONOMY TO THE REIGN OF JOSIAH?

I

For professional and unprofessional students alike, the Book of Deuteronomy forms an excellent starting-point for the survey of Pentateuchal Criticism. The most orthodox recognize that it stands, in a sense, apart from the rest of the Pentateuch; the disintegrators of the Pentateuch since the days of De Wette (1805) have regularly placed it in a class and age of its own. Our conclusions on the subject of its date react directly on our view of other dates; and if we can arrive at anything like conviction on this question, we may feel greater confidence in tackling the much wider problems presented by the earlier books.

Though there are some modern critics who dissent from the more popular view—and their arguments are striking and formidable to their rivals—the great majority of modern critics hold that the Book of the Law, discovered in 621 B.C. during the reign of Josiah, was what we call Deuteronomy or, at least, parts—and there is great diversity of opinion as to these parts—of the book as we have it. The minor disagreements alluded to are completely dwarfed by one great cleavage in the so-called "consensus of modern scholars", to wit, the question: Was the book a deliberate forgery, or was it an intelligent attempt to bring earlier, and possibly Mosaic, legislation up to date?

As it is altogether undesirable to burden this article with scores of names, however illustrious, let us confine ourselves here to discussing the critical case as set forth by two exponents whose eminence no one is likely to dispute: Wellhausen and Driver. Both are dead; but their influence on scholars of their own day was immense, and it continues to show its strength everywhere even to-day.

Further, in order to escape from the danger, in a controversy so vast and complicated, of making it difficult to see the forest for the trees, it is proposed here to study only two of the prime arguments brought against the Mosaic authorship of D.—as we shall henceforward call Deuteronomy, for the sake of brevity—examining one as it is advanced with almost scornful assurance by Wellhausen, and the other as set forth much more cautiously

by Driver. It is fair to remark that Driver does not differ generally from Wellhausen in regard to the view of Israel's worship and D.'s place in it; but this opinion is set forth by Wellhausen with a completeness and confidence which make him a typical exponent of it and render criticism easy. Driver, however, differs radically from Wellhausen on the origin of the book; but he, also, commits himself definitely to certain propositions on the subject, and, as these cover rather less ground than the subject of the worship, we shall consider his argumentation first, leaving the other question to the end, where some considerations applicable to both schools may fitly be added.

It may be well at this point to remind readers of the general terms of the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis, which still dominates modern criticism of the Pentateuch so extensively in Britain. This Hypothesis, for which the way was prepared, philosophically and exegetically, notably by the earlier studies of Hegel, Vatke and Reuss, was launched in 1866 by Graf and consummated by Wellhausen in 1876, great assistance to their aims being rendered by Kayser and Kuenen. The Hypothesis was not accepted wholesale by such critical giants as Ewald and Dillmann; but it won its way, and the translation of Wellhausen's *History of Israel* into English by Robertson-Smith established it firmly among British scholars.

The development of our Pentateuch, according to this theory, may be roughly tabulated as follows:—

I. A history of Israel, based on records of all sorts, some of them far from reliable and deeply tinged with myth and legend, was composed in the course of the ninth century B.C. in the Southern Kingdom. This is known by the symbol J (Judah).

II. A similar history was composed, perhaps fifty years later, in the Northern Kingdom; this is known as E (Ephraim).

III. Not long after, these two were fused into one narrative (JE).

IV. Meanwhile writers of the prophetic school had been preparing, perhaps during the reign of Manasseh, another book, which was produced in 621 B.C. during the reign of Josiah. This is Deuteronomy, either in part or entire. Whether it was a downright fiction or a reconstruction of really ancient legislation, does not concern us for the moment; the general assertion is that the book was expressly meant to change the practice of national worship by centralizing *everything* at Jerusalem.

V. Possibly certain portions of Leviticus, known as the Law of Holiness (H.), may be earlier than D.

VI. During the Exile, under the inspiration of Ezekiel's vision, there arose a strong priestly movement to rivet the worship of Jehovah on the nation by an elaborate and inflexible system of ritual. To this end, an entirely fictitious account of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was drawn up, to give Mosaic authority to the new programme. The question: when this new matter appeared in written form, is keenly debated. Ezra is credited with making it popular, and it is known as the Priestly Code, or P. We are asked to believe that it appeared, presumably in instalments, either during the later years of the Exile or soon after the Return, and that it was gradually completed and finally united with the rest of the Pentateuch—or Hexateuch, including Joshua—about 300 B.C.

II

To introduce such a book as our Deuteronomy, hitherto —we are told—unknown, into a well established community, which had for centuries entertained very different notions of the Mosaic economy, must have been a portentous task. Some of the most obvious difficulties will be considered towards the end of this article; but for the present we proceed to consider the origin of the publication as conceived by Dr. Driver.

In his *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, Driver writes (p. 85), "The bulk of the laws contained in Deuteronomy is undoubtedly far more ancient than the time of the author himself," and, again, on the same page, "It is highly probable that there existed a tradition—perhaps even in a written form—of a final address delivered by Moses in the plains of Moab, to which some of the laws peculiar to Deuteronomy were attached."

After such ample concessions, what hinders Dr. Driver from admitting that D. is what it professes to be—the fifth Book of Moses? His objection is stated thus (*I.L.O.T.*, p. 80): "The legislation of Deuteronomy implies a more elaborately organized civil community than that for which provision is made in JE." Elsewhere he describes D. as "a revised and enlarged edition of the Books of the Covenant", i.e. the legislative portions of the so-called JE.; and, again, "a prophetic reformulation, and adaptation to new needs, of an older legislation".

Now we may admit that the strictest orthodoxy need not hesitate to believe it possible that the Holy Spirit may have allowed additions to be made to such books as D. without in any way obscuring its Mosaic origin and form. Inspired seers like Samuel, " the men of Hezekiah ", who edited some of Solomon's Proverbs, and others may well have been permitted by the highest of all authorities to add to such a book as D. explanatory notes or laws required by new situations without overlaying the authorship and original colour of the book. We need not affirm that this happened ; but it is surely possible.

But Driver's theory demands much more than this. According to him, D. is a law-book compiled expressly for the seventh century, even though it may embody elements much older. Now it is as certain as any axiom of Euclid that a code once formulated and at least once revised, in a community boasting a marked degree of civilization for centuries, will, every time it is revised, adapt, not only its matter, but its background and form, to the mind and outlook of the age for which it is being reformulated. The codes of England and other European countries illustrate this freely. Our own statute books contain elements traceable to Saxon and Norman times ; but the original form and background of these had been modified or lost by the time of Edward III. Tudor and Stuart legislation reaffirmed the most important elements of earlier laws, but naturally dropped entirely those that were obsolete, modified others and, in introducing new matter, inevitably adapted the background to congruity with the novelties. The same process has repeated itself ever since. A twentieth century law-book which retained a background of Anglo-Saxon, Gallo-Roman or Gothic civilization, reproducing terms and language peculiar to those epochs, would be the laughing-stock of Europe.

Let us therefore examine D. in order to see how far it reflects the habits of human legislators, if it be indeed the work of prophetic writers of, let us say, Manasseh's time, adapting matter of Mosaic origin to an age which had completely outlived primitive conditions, and resetting the background in a form congenial to the age for which they were devising a novel code.

In other words, let us set side by side the broad, distinctive features of the age for which D. is supposed to have been compiled, and the tone and general features of the book as we have it.

I A. Taking 650 B.C. as a mean date for the supposed compilation, Israel had been in Palestine, according to the latest date assigned to the Exodus, for fully five centuries; according to other estimates, for seven or eight.

B. D. uniformly treats Israel as a people *not* settled in Canaan, but waiting to enter it and requiring all sorts of instructions as to conduct during invasion and after conquest.

II A. The Israelites, in 650 B.C., had been governed by Kings for about four centuries.

B. D. regards monarchy as a quite possible institution, but as yet non-existent.

III A. For two-thirds of the monarchy period Israel had been divided into two Kingdoms.

B. D. addresses a united Israel, makes no provision for schism within the nation and does not hint at such a possibility, still less at its actual occurrence.

IV A. Quite recently—only seventy-one years before 650 B.C.—the Northern Kingdom had been destroyed by Assyria and the greater part of Israel deported.

B. To this frightful catastrophe, which, in 650, had just engulfed the larger portion of the Hebrew stock, and which must have fundamentally altered the outlook of every reasoning citizen and of every practical jurist, D. makes *no allusion whatever.*

V A. The general condition of the surviving Kingdom of Judah was politically and morally decadent and unpromising. Even good Hezekiah's reign had brought a prophecy of Babylonian exile.

B. The general outlook of D., on the other hand, is chastened, indeed, by very solemn warnings, but as a whole is definitely cheerful. It is full of the thought of territorial expansion—an idea which, in the middle of the seventh century, with the appalling disaster of 721 fresh in memory, savours of nothing less than insanity. At the end of the book is a great outburst of holy optimism and exuberant trust in God.

VI A. In 650, Jerusalem had been since the time of David—say, 350 years—first, the capital of all Israel, and even after the severance of the Kingdoms a point of unique importance in Palestine.

B. Despite the fact that Driver insists that D. is written "from the standpoint of Western Palestine" and that it is *meant*

to be an up-to-date code, Jerusalem is not mentioned once in the whole book.

VII. Israel's enemies.

A1. In 650 B.C., the supreme enemy is Assyria. Syria lies in the near past, Babylon on the horizon.

B1. To Babylon, still distant, there is no allusion in D. Of Assyria, ever threatening and often at the gates for 100 years round 700 B.C., there is in D. no single mention in word or hint. Syria *is* once mentioned, and this mention is exceedingly suggestive; for that country is named, precisely as in Genesis, as the home of *a kindred and friendly race*.

A2. Of races related (however distantly) to Israel, Moab, Ammon and Midian have sunk, in 650 B.C., into comparative insignificance. Edom, though eclipsed for the time, was remembered as a bitter enemy.

B2. In D. Moab, Ammon and Edom—all, be it observed, races bordering on the region where D. professedly originated—come in for special mention. They are dealt with in a manner congenial to the Exodus and Entrance period, quite meaningless for the seventh century. It is specially interesting to notice that Edom, an out-and-out national foe even by David's time, is in D. treated, despite manifest hostility, with a kind of brotherly forbearance which is in full keeping with the fraternal position in patriarchal times.

A3. By 650 B.C. the old Canaanites have been out of sight and out of mind as enemies for fully 350 years, since David wrested Zion from the Jebusites. Even these were only a sporadic survival; for as far back as the days of the Judges we see that Israel's foes are *no longer the nations they found in Canaan*.

B3. In D. the chief and only enemies of Israel are the Canaanites. The commands to destroy them and their cities are stern and detailed. Note incidentally the mention of Amalek as an active foe—meaningless since the time of Saul. Above all, note the reason given for Jehovah's unwillingness to allow the sudden wholesale extirpation of the Canaanites—lest wild beasts should increase too rapidly (vii. 22)!

It is a stringent rule of modern criticism to regard books like D. as written under the spell of their own environment. Let the above tabular comparison be used on this principle. In the *Journal of Theological Studies*, June 1903, the late Dr. Kennett adduced these same arguments as evidence that our Book of

Deuteronomy portrayed a state of national life and thought totally different from that of Manasseh's day. He did this in order ultimately to prove that D. belonged to a very late date—a view held by some advanced French critics. But his reading of the data is identical with ours to this extent, that they may be held to prove that whatever age they belong to, they *cannot* be appropriate to the seventh century B.C. A single detail like the allusion to wild beasts might reasonably be held to damn the hypothesis; but when such details as this are seen to be only the true extension of the greater conditions indicated, there is only one conclusion to be drawn—the theory is a hopeless misfit.

Driver's attempts to explain these glaring incongruities have a lamentable savour of forlorn hope. The language of D. about the monarchy is, he suggests, reminiscent of Solomon's weaknesses. To which it may be replied that Solomon had died about 300 years before and that there had been many worse kings than he since then, whose doings were far more pertinent to Manasseh's age than his. But, after all, what can be more futile than to oppose such vague conjecture to the book's plain statement that monarchy was still only a possibility in the womb of the future? And what of the caution about rejecting a king who might lead them back to Egypt? Could any counsel be less *à propos* in a code revised for times at least five centuries removed from the Exodus?

With the Canaanite problem his dealing is, if possible, feebler still. The injunctions are, he will have it, repeated from JE. as a protest against idolatry. The mere fact that such a defence has been raised by a scholar of Dr. Driver's standing is the one and only consideration on which it merits an instant's hearing. In order, forsooth, to inculcate the danger of idolatry—far more pungently illustrated by many more recent examples; or, if antiquity was to be invoked, by stories from the days of the Judges—Jerusalem was to have dinned into its ears, *in a professedly up-to-date code*, injunctions even ampler than those contained in JE. to wipe out enemies who had been forgotten for ages and to destroy cities which had been under Jewish dominion ever since then, until four-fifths of them had quite recently passed under the yoke of Assyria! *Quid plura?*

The theory that Deuteronomy was a sheer forgery—"artificial repristination" is a phrase used by Wellhausen in one of his less brutal moments to describe this type of fiction—has at

least the merit of being intelligible. But the idea that sane, earnest and learned men could set about reformulating ancient legislation and adapting it to the needs of their time in such a setting of irrelevant and almost incomprehensible archaism is scholarship in its dotage.

III

Our second main subject in the Deuteronomic controversy is the revolution in public worship with which the book is credited.

The allegation may be summarized thus: Whereas before, under the rule of JE., *every* kind of worship might be performed *anywhere*, D. demands that *no* worship shall be performed except at the central sanctuary, i.e. at Jerusalem. This policy is commonly described as the centralization of worship.

Let us be careful in the first place to clear our ideas about facts and terms.

We may readily admit that, in view of the gross idolatry permitted and practised by Manasseh, and in view also of the marked contraction of territorial Judaism resulting from the ruin of the Northern Kingdom, it may have been strongly felt, round about 650 B.C., that the cause of Jehovah worship would be strengthened by laying great emphasis on the importance of Jerusalem and all duties that should be performed there.

But the critical demand, as above shown, goes far beyond this. It is so widely held that there is no need to multiply quotations from Driver, G. A. Smith, Gray, McFadyen and others. A single sentence from Wellhausen's *History of Israel* (p. 22) puts the case in a nutshell:

"Throughout the whole of the earlier period of the history of Israel, the restriction of worship to a single selected place *was unknown to anyone even as a pious desire*." A second sentence deserves to be added (*ibid.*, p. 46), which tells us that, in the narrative of 2 Kings, the centralization of worship under Josiah "figures as a *new first step upon a path until then absolutely untrodden*." The italics in each sentence are ours.

Such a pronouncement, precise, comprehensive and domineering, backed by the erudition and fame of Wellhausen, has the power to shake the nerve of even highly trained scholars ere controversy starts, much as the very sight of Murat at the head of his cuirassiers is said to have shaken hostile squadrons into confusion before the actual charge. Yet the Name and standard

for which we profess to fight do not permit us to give place to the fear of man, and it is some comfort, in the face of such a challenge, to reflect that its very completeness and arrogance constitute its intellectual weakness. Here, at last, is one who has utterly burned his boats; he has risked so much that we may safely believe that he is not everywhere gambling on certainty.

Let us therefore systematically work back from the reign of Josiah in order to ascertain whether a central sanctuary, as conceived by Wellhausen, was altogether unknown to Hebrew legislation and experiment.

In the days of Hezekiah we are expected to believe that the rule of JE. was everywhere regarded as the true Mosaic prescription. This rule, summarized in the closing verses of Exodus xx., permitted the erection of earth or stone altars on the site of any theophany and the performance of sacrifices upon them. And here we are faced by a question which leads to a serious digression.

Followers of Wellhausen maintain with one accord that these local altars were identical with the "high places", Hebrew *Bámóth*. To concede this is utterly unnecessary, and, we believe, quite wrong. Exodus xx. ordains the erection of earthen or, with certain reservations, stone *altars* at any place in which Jehovah had revealed Himself. The general term, "high places," in no way suggests an equation, and for many reasons identity must be considered accidental and often culpable.

Let us review the circumstances of Israel's national life from the Exodus to the time of David. In Egypt the people had been first privileged, and later persecuted, settlers. In the wilderness they became nomads, fully capable, after their long experience in Egypt, of receiving and assimilating a complicated and deeply significant religious ritual, but tending more and more—especially after the ban on those who had rebelled—to lapse into a restless and rather aimless habit of life. The younger generation, though the promise of the land was theirs, could not fail to be affected by the apathy of their seniors. They were men and women fundamentally like those of other days, our own included, prone to enthusiasm when religion seemed to promise much, especially in things material, and even more ready to lapse into indifference when it appeared that a barely decent minimum of religious observance seemed to satisfy the demands of their condition. War, as we know, is an unsettling business, and the invasion of Canaan was not consummated in a day. The fighting men had to

be moved from point to point all over the country ; how did their spiritual life fare in those days ? Better, perhaps, than later. War is at least a stimulus, even at times to religious ardour ; success is often a blight. Who among us does not know the soporific effect of the feeling that the great strain is over ? Who among us, when the first thanksgivings have lost their spell, has not been tempted to fall away into a humdrum acquiescence in very lukewarm standards of life, whether social or spiritual ? Our Israelites came back from their epoch-making conflict to the spiritually far sterner test of land allotment. How fared their spiritual life then ? We have only to read the Book of Judges to find the answer —very ill indeed. Should we condemn them hastily ? Surely not.

Can we not figure the too frequent course of events ? Here are a score of families settled, let us say—to take well-known names —at Ramoth-Gilead in Gad or at Megiddo in Issachar ; at smaller places the pressure of circumstances would be greater, not less. After all the marking out, quarrelling, unpacking, etc., connecting with settling are over, they begin to take thought for the things of God, which have long—it is no unkindness to suggest it—received very third-rate attention among all but a very few. Here and there are communities, either inspired by general feeling or dominated by some whole-hearted leader, whose impulse and action are definite and loyal. They make a clean sweep of everything that stands for heathenism. Idols are destroyed, shrines burned, groves cut down, temple areas desecrated ; and Jehovah's altar is erected in some place untainted by all these associations. But how often did this happen in an era when every man did that which was right in his own eyes ? It is easy to conceive various degrees of compromise. Here is a place where a loyal, but not too firm, Jehovist takes counsel of his lieutenants. One of them, bolder than the rest, says, " There is only one place here for a sanctuary—yon Canaanite Bámah. It's a pity there is no other worthy of such a purpose. Couldn't we, etc. ? " His rede prevails ; the work of destruction and desecration is honestly carried out, but Jehovah's altar is raised upon the ill-omened site. For a time things go rightly ; then, after a year or two, some unstable soul—influenced, perchance, by contact with some of the heathen who were not rooted out—raises the question, easily born in superstitious hearts amid such surroundings : " Is it *quite* safe to ignore

entirely the *numen* of the Baal who once held sway here ? May not our disregard for him be the explanation of this or that—drought, cattle disease, infant mortality, or the like ? " And so, *facilis descensus Averno*.

In many cases the compromise would be less cautious, the descent swifter, and the change in the end radical. Jehovah would be first supreme, then reduced to half rights, then barely tolerated, and finally displaced by the triumphant Baal. Even at times of restoration, it would be usually on the Bámah that Jehovah was reinstated. " The high places " became soon the recognized resort of worshippers, and the old associations were always potent and often victorious. From time to time seers of real vision would discern the inherent vice of the system ; and the later writers who finally edited the Books of the Kings with all the facts before them would recognize, and at every point mark, the fatal consequences of leaving the " high places ", unceasingly the seed-bed of idolatry, to beguile and corrupt the worshippers of Jehovah.

This may seem a long digression ; but the identification of the Bámóth with the local altars of Jehovah is so important to modern criticism that it seems to us equally important to show as clearly as possible that the identification of the two was in history accidental and improper and has therefore no value whatever as a basis for Wellhausen's argument.

Wellhausen himself observes (*H.I.*, p. 27), " It is also possible, moreover, that the Canaanite origin of most of the Bámóth, which is not unknown, for example, to Deuteronomy, may have helped to discredit them."

The turn of expression is interesting and characteristic. Wellhausen is quite aware of the Canaanite origin of most of the Bámóth ; is it conceivable that the Israelites were less so ? Yet Wellhausen touches this practical certainty as something merely " not unknown ", and airily suggests that, in a rampant crusade against every sort and source of idolatry, this matter of common knowledge " *may have helped* to discredit them ". The vital relevance of the fact to his own argument he studiously disregards.

One more word on this subject. Though the identification is originally false, yet it must easily, even within a hundred years of the Conquest, have established itself in popular language. Such developments are not uncommon. Our English word " priest " is really the Greek word πρεσβύτερος and means " elder "

but, owing to centuries of misinterpretation, it is to-day (unhappily) the only word we have to render the Greek ἱερεύς. Thus we may read *passim* of Jehovah's worship being performed at a Bámah—which may, of course, mean one that had never been defiled by heathen practice,—while writers who could look over the whole history back from the Captivity know only too well that the Bámóth, properly so called, had been from the first nurseries of idolatrous growths. In earlier days the term might be loosely applied without discrimination; later historians saw matters without such confusion, and it is most important that there should be none in our minds.

We may now revert to the story of Hezekiah's reign. In 2 Kings xviii. 4 we are told that "He removed the high places and brake the images and cut down the groves . . . (5) so that after him was none like him among all the Kings of Judah." In this passage let us note three points:

(1) Hezekiah is said to have done precisely what we are told was, in Josiah's day, absolutely without precedent and never even thought of or hoped for—i.e. abolished local sanctuaries.

(2) The writer conceives these "local sanctuaries" as connected with idolatry, not with Jehovah worship. It matters nothing that the Rabshakeh speaks of them as Jehovah's altars (v. 22); he is speaking from a polytheistic standpoint—just as the Philistines (1 Samuel iv. 8) describe Israel's Deity as "gods" —whereas the writer of 2 Kings speaks as a Hebrew with inside knowledge.

(3) Hezekiah's aspiration and performance are put, not merely on a level with, but actually above those of any King *after* him. His reformation is therefore considered as at least equal to Josiah's in aim and method.

How does Wellhausen treat a passage so flatly contradictory to his uncompromising enunciation? Thus (*H.I.*, p. 25): "King Hezekiah is said to have even then made an attempt to abolish them (Bámóth), but the attempt, having passed away without leaving any trace, is of a doubtful nature."

Worse reasoning is hardly conceivable. What happened after Hezekiah's death is exactly paralleled by what followed Josiah's. Jeremiah and Ezekiel both show that Jerusalem reeked with idolatry, though Josiah's campaign against everything idolatrous was carried out with a thoroughness that spared

nothing. And by no one is this tragic relapse more pointedly marked than by Wellhausen himself: "After Josiah's death we again see Bámóth appearing on all hands, not merely in the country, but even in the capital itself" (*H.I.*, p. 27). Thus Josiah's reformation "passed away without leaving any trace". By what logic can Hezekiah's reformation be discredited while Josiah's is considered beyond dispute?

We move back now to Solomon's Temple. That this Temple was an "all-Israel" venture is perfectly clear from such passages as 1 Kings v. 13; vi. 12, 13; viii. 1; viii. 41-3; ix. 3. Whatever such a term as "Central Sanctuary" implies in matter of detail, the Temple built by Solomon, prepared by David and foreshadowed by the Shiloh Tabernacle, was as much a centre of worship to Israel as Rome is to the Roman Catholic community. Wellhausen himself uses language which goes far to admit this. Speaking of the days following the fall of the Northern Kingdom, he writes (*H.I.*, p. 24), "If the great house of God upon Mount Zion had always overtopped the other shrines in Judah, it now stood without any equal in Israel." Also (p. 20), "It is indubitable that in this way (i.e. by the building of Solomon's Temple) political centralization gave an impulse to a greater centralization of worship also." What becomes of the violent assertions that centralization was never even thought of before Josiah's reign? But an even more fatal admission is made on page 19, where Wellhausen remarks (quite correctly), "No king after Solomon is left uncensured for having tolerated the high places"; i.e. the Books of Kings, which writers of the G.-W.-H. school hold were written under direct "Deuteronomic" influence, make it perfectly clear that the building of Solomon's Temple made the use of Bámóth improper once and for all. Is not this a case of a house divided against itself, if ever there was one? We may fairly reckon it as a second colossal blunder in Wellhausen's reasoning.

It is most important to observe at this point that these admissions of Wellhausen's relate to a period when the sanctions of JE., above explained, are supposed to have been dominant. Even on Wellhausen's hypothesis, therefore, we see signs of a dual system; and we, who adhere to the traditional view, shall see more and more clearly, as we work backwards, that the real explanation of the whole problem lies, not in a mutually exclusive claim for local or central sanctuaries, but in a dual system of

which one side or other occasionally dwindled in prestige and required rehabilitation.

From Solomon's Temple we move back to the Tabernacle or Tent of Shiloh. The most typical period of its existence is, of course, the time of the Judges, after which the Ark moved towards Jerusalem.

Was this Tent in any sense a Central Sanctuary? Wellhausen will have it that (page 19) "Any strict centralization is for that period inconceivable, alike in the religious as in every other sphere." But that Shiloh *was* a Central Sanctuary is clear enough for any who read the Old Testament with open mind.

(1) Jeremiah vii. is a chapter to which modern criticism appeals with great confidence to prove that P. was not known to Jeremiah. We believe that such a claim overreaches itself entirely; but this question is beside the mark here. What concerns us now in this notable chapter is the prophet's argument in vv. 12-14, which deserve to be quoted in full:—

"But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh."

Observe, in the first place, the very important phrase: "where I set my name at the first". It is exactly the language of Deut. xii. 11, on which so much is made to turn.

There is no room whatever for honest doubt that to Jeremiah —supposedly such an ardent "Deuteronomist"—Shiloh was the full and exact counterpart of Solomon's Temple. "All that the Temple *is*", he might have said, "Shiloh for the time being *was*." The equation is perfect.

(2) And what was Shiloh to those of its era? Unquestionably, "*the* house of God", a central sanctuary for all Israel. Many texts tell us so plainly—Judges xviii. 31 and xxi. 19; 1 Samuel i. 3; ii. 15; ii. 18; ii. 29; iii. 3. The significance of the placing there of the Ark of God is equally cogent (1 Samuel iv. *passim*); where could such an embodiment of all that the national religion meant be deposited save at a unique centre?

Wellhausen, though determined to represent "centralization" as quite unthinkable during such an era, here presents us with a third colossal blunder. On page 129 of his *H.I.* he remarks: "An independent and influential priesthood could develop itself only at the larger and more public centres of worship but *that of Shiloh seems to have been the only one of this class*" (italics ours). It is hard to watch so pre-eminent a scholar sawing off the branch on which he sits, and be quite unmoved to mirth; but the tragedy is greater than the absurdity.

If Wellhausen himself allows that Shiloh was, not only a large and public centre of worship, but apparently the only one of the kind, tradition may regard the plain record of the sacred text with double confidence.

We have asked, *What* was Shiloh? We proceed to ask, *Whence* was it?

Here, again, the Old Testament is ready with a plain answer. In Joshua xviii. 1 we read: "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there." Note the expressly national character attributed to the action—exactly what we should expect in the case of an institution which even Wellhausen admits stood alone in the political and religious economy of Israel. Further, there is nothing in the verse out of harmony with what goes before and after; it is a statement apart, describing an event of unique importance, but not incongruous. How does Wellhausen treat this verse? His *H.I.* closes with a list of verses or passages quoted and discussed, and these number almost exactly 600. And this verse—an explicit statement of a most important kind—is not among them! Is this honesty?

Wellhausen has, of course, made up his mind that the Tabernacle, as described in the later part of Exodus, is a pure fiction, projected into records of antiquity by shameless priestly forgers in order to give their new invention a Mosaic claim. Nevertheless, to ignore entirely a positive statement which is the actual link between two stages of the traditional view is neither decent nor rational.

Before moving backwards again to the last stage of our investigation, we should not fail to notice how the language of Judges and 1 Samuel establishes the conclusion which we drew from the later language about Solomon's Temple. In the days

of the Judges, we are told, the rule of JE., as given in Exodus xx. 24, was all that mattered. Yet the books just named make it clear that there was one sanctuary to which periodical visits had to be, and were, made. Do we find this conclusion borne out by the record of the earliest legislation ? Yes, we do.

Exodus xx. 24 describes to us a type of altar which might, in places, attain to some dignity proportionate to the distinction of the site or of some theophany connected with it ; but which might equally be the simplest and humblest heap of earth or stone. The majority of these could in no sense be described as " a house of God ", still less as " *the* house of God ". This last expression, in particular, must mean something entirely distinct from the local altars, whether these are planted on Bámóth, Canaanitish or untainted, or elsewhere. Does such an expression occur in the " Book of the Covenant ", as modern criticism terms Exodus xx.-xxiii. ?

In xxiii. 17 we read : " Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord thy God." This passage is clearly interpreted by xxxiv. 23 and 24 (also JE.), where we read : " when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year." This language gives exactly the same sense as some of the passages above quoted from 1 Samuel : these " appearances " were statutory pilgrimages to a central sanctuary.

Again, we read in xxiii. 19 : " The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God." The significance of this last expression we have already seen ; it is used everywhere later on to mean a sanctuary which all the people had a common obligation to visit and maintain. For the Israelites in the wilderness, so far as they had then any produce to bring, it could mean only the Tabernacle ; looking forward to their sojourn in Canaan, it could only be understood as the sanctuary equivalent thereto, i.e. first the Tabernacle itself, as it eventually stood at Shiloh, and later on the House built by Solomon.

Such a dual system was surely inevitable ; and it is only the overwhelming prestige of names like Wellhausen and Driver that blinds men to the absurdity of expecting any other system to be workable. For, even when Israelite worship was restricted to the two tribes that survived the disaster of 721 B.C., could any sane legislator for a moment expect success from laws which compelled everyone in Judah and Benjamin to perform no act

of worship save at Jerusalem ? A glance at the map provides an immediate answer.

The general principles of religious life everywhere are a sufficient guide to a reasonable solution of the rival claims, in Israel's case, of local and central worship. We, too, have private prayer and domestic prayers on the one hand, with public worship on the other. And, though our circumstances do not necessitate yearly gatherings—definitely called for in Canaan to maintain the political and religious solidarity,—yet with us, too, there are occasions when our own local and parochial worship is supplemented by central gatherings of one kind or another.

It is quite natural that, in Josiah's time, the need for emphasizing the *special* claims of the Central Sanctuary should be prominent, and these claims would be brought into sharp relief by the abolition of hundreds of sanctuaries that had too long enjoyed a tolerance which their tainted origin should have rendered impossible from the first. There may well have been great zeal on the part of both king and people to do their very utmost to interpret as amply as possible the special claims of the great Sanctuary which so properly represented the general enthusiasm—too soon, alas, to fade away—for abolishing the many vile practices of which the Canaanitish Bámóth had been the fountain-head and focus. But a royal edict which made all local worship illegal, and compelled men to come distances of twenty, thirty or forty miles over broken and dangerous country to perform the smallest sacrifice would have been far more likely to produce an all-round provincial revolt than to leave a record like that of 2 Kings xxii. and xxiii.

There is, indeed, a further argument of the most stubborn kind against the modern hypothesis. According to this, the JE. practice had been hallowed by at least five centuries of unquestioning faith and obedience. That is to say that, though men might start aside and follow Baalim, one rule was known and recognized as Mosaic, and that was the rule of JE. If men broke it, they did so, not because they understood the Law of Moses otherwise, but because they loved idols better than Jehovah. Under Josiah, according to Wellhausen, they were presented with a new path hitherto untrodden and unthought of, and yet Mosaic ! It matters little whether the name of Moses was fraudulently used, or stood for a genuine old tradition ; the dilemma remains the same. How, in the name of common

sense, could king, priests, prophets and people be persuaded to accept with enthusiasm the nonsensical proposition that a system unknown for hundreds of years was as genuinely Mosaic as one which, also indubitably Mosaic, it flatly contradicted ?

And so we find ourselves drifting back to a question so elementary that the resonant pronouncements of modern criticism have led some to regard it as unimportant or to accept without thought the critical answer. What was the real mainspring of Josiah's reforming zeal ?

As a type of the answer we are expected to accept, we may take the judicious phrasing of Kittel (*The Scientific Study of the Old Testament*, p. 80) : " Still more decidedly in favour of its being the book of Deuteronomy, or some code closely resembling it, is the fact that the reforms appointed by King Josiah, in accordance with the contents of the newly discovered code, are based on an innovation in which the lawgiver of Deuteronomy was closely interested, viz. the centralization of worship in the capital and the abolition of the local sanctuaries."

Now, we have studied the history of local sanctuaries and the central sanctuary on lines which do not lead to acquiescence in either the definitions or conclusions suggested by this quotation ; and we are forced back to asking whether any such reading of Josiah's reformation is really correct. A simple test, often tried by the writer, may help to clear the ground. Let any reader himself study, or ask a class to study, the record in 2 Kings with a really open mind, and then answer the question : What was the king's central preoccupation ? It is long odds that the immediate answer will be : The damnable prevalence of idolatry and the dire need for vehement and thorough action against it ; or something to that effect.

Such an ambition was wholly in keeping with all that was highest in all Israel's history, Pentateuchal and subsequent. Under such a banner king, priests, prophets and people might well unite. Compared with an appeal so strong and deep, so time-honoured and yet so everlastingly fresh, how almost ridiculous is the elevation to pride of place of a manœuvre in religious economy devoid (according to Wellhausen) of any historical sanction and calculated to create schism on every side !

And as for the argument, often put forward, that the part of our Pentateuch by which Josiah seems to have been moved was our Deuteronomy, why should it be otherwise ? Should we

expect a monarch on such an occasion to be startled into conviction of sin by the tenth chapter of Genesis, by the list of the dukes of Edom, by the details of the wandering in the wilderness, or even by the instructions for the composition of the Tabernacle? Deuteronomy is not only the last of what many ages have called the Five Books of Moses: it is infinitely the most impressive on the national and personal side. If it is a code in parts, it is above all a code within a sermon; as a sermon, after the preamble, it begins, and as a sermon it movingly and gloriously ends.

As an innovating Scripture, D., on the Graf-Wellhausen presentation, could do nothing but raise insoluble problems and promote violent schism. Read as the coping-stone of Moses' work, it would be seen in its relation to the rest and intelligently interpreted; and the nation, suddenly roused from long oblivion, would respond as one man—though it were but for a score of years—to the trumpet-call of their dying Law-giver's inspired appeal to serve Jehovah their God and Him alone.

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For the benefit of any readers who care to study the subject systematically, I may recommend, for a start, a few books—advisedly few, as nothing is to be gained by making choice difficult.

On D. alone: *The Problem of Deuteronomy*, J. S. Griffiths; S.P.C.K.

Also, the relevant parts of

The Problem of the Old Testament, James Orr; Nisbet.
Old Testament Critics, Thomas Whitelaw; Kegan Paul, etc.
Did Moses write the Pentateuch after all? F. E. Spencer; Elliot Stock.
Are the Critics Right? Môller; R.T.S.