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"On the Samaritan Text of the Pentateuch." By the Rev. Canon GARRATT, M.A.
Monday, March 21st, 1904.

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THE REV. CANON GIRDLESTONE, MA., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The following candidate was put forward by the Council and was elected :—

LIFE-ASSOCIATE —Rev. Arthur I. Birkett, M.A., C.M.S. Missionary, India.

The following paper was then read by the Author, entitled :—

No. I.

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

By **Rev. Canon GARRATT, MA.**

THE Samaritan Pentateuch is preserved at Nablous by the small remaining body of Samaritans in various MSS., some of unknown antiquity, greatly older to say the least than any MSS., either of the Old Testament or of the New Testament, and written not in that square Hebrew character with which we are familiar, but in the older Hebrew character, which is nearly that used by the Samaritans now, and closely resembles though not altogether identical with, that on the Moabite stone and in an ancient inscription found at Jerusalem in connection with the conduit which Hezekiah made. I do not say that it is exactly like either of these. All our present copies were copies made by Samaritans in the fifteenth century. The sight of the original MSS. is a privilege hardly ever granted in the present day, and the opportunity of examining them never. They have been to a certain degree tampered with by their guardians or perhaps I should rather say copyists; for some readings which were in them in Jerome's days are not in the copies which we possess.

These MSS. were well known in the fifth century to Jerome, who valued them highly. They were known to be very ancient MSS. when he saw them. Kennicott at the close of the eighteenth century proved in the *Dissertatio Generalis* at the end of his great Bible, that the Samaritan Pentateuch was the (p. 198) Pentateuch possessed by the Ten Tribes, that in fact it was the Israelitish recension as contrasted with the Jewish. Of course if that

is the case, if the Pentateuch as a whole existed in the time of Jeroboam, the consequences are very far-reaching. Three hundred years before, according to the higher critics, Deuteronomy was written, the whole of the Pentateuch was in the hands of the northern as well as the southern kingdom.

But how did it get into the hands of the Samaritans? In 2 Kings xvii, we read of a mission by the King of Assyria of a priest to teach the people whom he had brought from other conquered countries to take the place of the Ten Tribes whom he had carried away captive. The priest he sent was not a Jewish priest but an Israelitish priest: "Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should serve the Lord." Of course when he came he must have brought them the law of the Lord. Some of the prophets who prophesied especially to the Ten Tribes—Hosea, Amos, Micah are constantly blaming the northern nation for breaking the "law." Their acquaintance with the Pentateuch is always taken for granted. Their prophets could take it for granted that they knew all about the circumstances of Jacob's birth, his prayer at Bethel, which are mentioned as familiar facts in Hosea xii, 4, 5; the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the forty years in the wilderness, the coming up out of Egypt, and the existence of the ceremonial law (Amos v, 21-25; Hosea iv, 6); the history of Balaam (Micah vi, 4, 5). These Israelitish prophets accuse their nation of doing what the higher critics treat as an impossibility—having the law and not keeping it, as Hosea says (viii, 12); "I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted a strange thing." Therefore the Israelites had the Pentateuch. This was the law which the Israelitish priest brought to the Samaritans. After the lapse of more than 2,500 years we find them still in possession of the five books of Moses, and of these only. They have no Hexateuch. They have indeed *a* book of Joshua, but it is not the Book of Joshua which we know, and it is not, like these five books, written in Hebrew, but in the Samaritan language. They have also a translation of the Pentateuch into the Samaritan language, and sometimes these manuscripts are spoken of as the Samaritan version. They are nothing of the kind. They are Hebrew books written in the old Hebrew characters. If you look at them in what we call Hebrew letters you will find them the same books in the same language as your ordinary Hebrew (p. 199) Bibles. They are of course without points, as there were no points till long after they were written.

There are differences of reading. In a thousand readings the Samaritan agrees with the Septuagint as against the ordinary Masoretic Hebrew, and in a thousand more with the Hebrew as against the Septuagint, and is therefore evidently independent of both. There are very important differences by which we are able to remove some apparent difficulties. But the vast majority of these variations are very minute differences from the ordinary Hebrew, being most of them differences of spelling Hebrew words, very much like the difference between "favour as we print the word in English, and "favor " as they print it in the United States—very intelligible variations between two branches of the same Israelitish family, the Ten Tribes and the Two having both the same mother tongue.

How is it that the fact of these two independent recensions has been lost sight of, and that the greater number of well informed and learned men are totally ignorant of, or strangely silent about, the whole matter?

At the beginning of last century, after some two hundred years' discussion, mainly as to the value of the Samaritan readings, it was supposed to have been completely settled by Kennicott. But when the higher criticism was introduced, the leaders of it saw that unless

they could get rid of these Samaritan MSS., they could not go on with it. So Gesenius, one of the main originators of it, on taking his doctor's degree, wrote a dissertation *On the origin, character and authority of the Samaritan Pentateuch*. From that day to this there has been hardly any discussion on the subject. You will find it sometimes referred to, as in Smith's Dictionary, 1861, where it is said that in 1815 Gesenius "abolished the remnant of the authority of the Samaritan Pentateuch." What the writer intended to convey to his readers I do not know. In the same article the same writer says: "Since up to this moment no critical edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch, or even an examination of the Codices since Kennicott, who can only be said to have begun the work, has been thought of. The treatment of the whole subject remains a most precarious task, and beset with unexampled difficulties at every step. It is, however, this same rudimentary state of investigation—after two centuries and a half of fierce discussions—which has left the other and much more important question of the *Age and Origin* of the Samaritan Pentateuch as unsettled to-day as it was when it first came under the notice of European scholars." (p. 200)

What do the higher critics say about a question which so much concerns them? I can find no reference to it in Wellhausen's *Die composition des Hexateuch*, nor in his *Prolegomina*. In his criticism in both these books, on 2 Kings xvii, a chapter in which it could not be forgotten, it is not even mentioned. Nor do I find any allusion to the subject in Driver's *Introduction*. Chancellor Lias says in *Principles of Biblical Criticism*: "This independent edition of the books of Moses is most characteristically ignored by the new Criticism." It is evidently not a welcome subject with modern critics. Bishop Herbert Ryle (now Bishop of Winchester) in his *Canon of the Old Testament*, is an honourable example of breaking through what I can only call a conspiracy of silence among the critics. He published a second edition of his book in 1895, and added to chapter iv an appendix on the Samaritan Pentateuch, and speaks of the importance of the subject as apparent to every thoughtful student, which makes the silence of the best known men of the modern critical school the more remarkable. "Important, however," he says, "as the subject is, it will be felt to belong more properly to the province either of an enquiry into the history of the Hebrew text, or of an investigation into the history of the Hebrew characters. But in recent years the evidence of the Samaritan Pentateuch has been loudly proclaimed to be the rock upon which the modern criticism of the Pentateuch must inevitably make shipwreck. Under these circumstances an apology is hardly needed for briefly touching upon the subject."

I will not enter on his attempt to represent the Pentateuch as having been brought by a renegade Jew to the Samaritans in the time of Nehemiah, in whose days he places the institution of Samaritan worship on Mount Gerizim. He supposes that events which Josephus places in the time of Alexander the Great really took place in the time of Nehemiah, who makes no mention of them, and that "at the time when the Samaritan worship was instituted, or when it received its final shape from the accession of Jewish malcontents, the Canon of the Jews at Jerusalem consisted of the Torah only."¹ This is from the first edition. To such straits is the most reasonable and candid higher critic driven to avoid shipwreck on the rock of the Samaritan manuscripts.

¹ Canon of the O.T. (2nd Edition, p. 93).

Bear in mind that admittedly there have been no new facts since Kennicott's days, and that Gesenius himself gives no (p. 201) reason why the Samaritan text should not have come down from Jeroboam's days, except that he does not believe there was any Pentateuch in those days. "We think," he says, "it must be taken for granted that the Pentateuch could certainly have passed from the Jews to the Samaritans, on the supposition that the Jews themselves had it in the form in which we now use it." Let us see what Kennicott, the last real investigator of the subject, says. These are the words in which he concludes his argument: "In the history of the Hebrew text . . . it was shown that the Pentateuch was placed by Moses by the side of the ark, and copies afterwards taken for the use of the priests all over Canaan. Nevertheless, in the reign of Manasseh, when idolatry pervaded the country of Judaea for fifty-five years, while some copies perished, the rest were carefully concealed. So that at Jerusalem the law was almost unknown, when Moses' own autograph (Heb. 'by the hand of Moses,' 2 Chron. xxxiv, 14) was found and publicly produced in the reign of Josiah. But copies of the law were preserved among the Ten Tribes. These were carried into captivity, but a Samaritan priest returned to teach the inhabitants the manner of the God of the land, which could not be done without the written law. From which time, about B.C. 714, the Pentateuch was preserved by these Samaritans for a thousand years, till the time of Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, etc., who often quoted it. After the lapse of one thousand two hundred years, manuscripts were found with a few poor Samaritan families surviving to-day" (that is, when Kennicott wrote)," in Palestine and Egypt . . . Lastly, the character in which the Samaritan Codices transmitted to our times are written seems to be more the original character than that in which our Codices are written . . . there are not so many errors in the Samaritan as in the Hebrew, because they have not been so often copied. How adorable is the wisdom of God, that Christians should have received the Pentateuch from these two nations, so hostile to one another for two thousand years that their hostility should have passed into a proverb."²

It is not only the Samaritans and the Jews who were at variance. The same thing was true of the Ten Tribes and the Two. No time can be named from Jeroboam's days when the Law has not been in the keeping of hostile nationalities, who certainly would not have accepted it from one another. Thus we trace the whole Pentateuch in two independent texts to a (p. 202) period nearly 300 years previous to that at which, according to modern critics, any part of it was written.

The question may naturally occur to some how we can collate the Samaritan MSS. without being able to read the character in which they are written and having access to the eighteen copies in Europe. The answer is that in Kennicott's great Bible all the variants are given in Hebrew characters on a page opposite to the text; and there is also a Samaritan Pentateuch in Hebrew characters, a handsome book, printed 1790 at the Clarendon Press.

We must now look at a few of the variations in the Samaritan recension. The number is very large indeed, but an immense number are simply variations of no more consequence than the difference in printing the word "favour" in England and in the United States. But there are many of very great interest, of which I can only give a few specimens. Time forbids my doing more.

² Kennicott, *Dissertations*, p. 60.

1. In Genesis ii, 1, there is both in the Septuagint and in the Samaritan a word not in the Hebrew. The Greek word is ετι, the Samaritan Hebrew עור - "Out of the ground *yet again* God formed every beast of the field, etc." The word implies a previous creation of animals, and couples the first and second chapters as inseparable and as consecutive.

2. The words Jehovah and Elohim are so frequently reversed in the Masoretic and Samaritan texts as to make any Elohistic and Jehovistic theory impossible.

3. In Genesis iv, 8, for "And Cain talked with Abel his brother," the Samaritan reads: "And Cain said unto Abel his brother, Let us go into the field," in which the Septuagint agrees with the Samaritan. The words cannot mean "talked with Abel his brother" as in the Authorised Version, nor can they mean as in the text of the Revised Version, "told Abel his brother." They can only mean what the Revisers have put in the margin: "Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go into the field." But this is in the Samaritan and the Septuagint, not in our Hebrew copies.

The Samaritan text sometimes explains quotations, showing what the Hebrew was in the time of our Lord and His Apostles.

4. In Genesis ii, 24, it is said in our Hebrew and English Bibles, "They shall be one flesh." But in Mark x, 7, our Lord Himself quotes it thus, "They *two* shall be one flesh." This is the Samaritan as well as the Greek reading. With this, Kennicott says, Philo and all the ancient versions agree. Of course this alteration must have been made while the Masorites had possession of the manuscripts. All the Hebrew MS. we have (p. 203) now either passed through their hands or were copies of them. For as Kennicott tells us, they would not allow any Jew to keep in his possession any copies not in accordance with their revisions. The consequence is that we have no manuscripts of any great age except the Samaritan MSS.

5. In Genesis iii, 2, instead of "The woman said unto the serpent," we find in the Samaritan manuscript, "The woman said unto the liar." Was there not a reference to this when our Lord said (John viii, 44) of the devil, "He is a liar and the father of it"? If so this was the reading in the Hebrew copies in our Lord's time.

6. In St. Paul's quotation (Hebrews xii, 18) from Deuteronomy v, 22, there are four words, "fire," "darkness," "blackness," "tempest." In our present Hebrew there are only three, "fire," "cloud " "thick darkness." In the Septuagint there are only three, fire being omitted. But in the Samaritan there are four as there are in the Epistle, though not exactly the same four.

7. In Genesis xxvi, 18, the Samaritan text reads Elon the Hivite" for "Elon the Hittite"; and in xxxvi, 3, 4, 10, 13, 17, Mahalath for Bashemath. The daughter of Ishmael in Genesis xxviii, 9, whom Esau married, is called Mahalath, but in Genesis xxxvi, is called Bashemath in the Masoretic text, Mahalath in the Samaritan text. According to the Masoretic text in these three passages there is a contradiction. Here according to Wellhausen is "the most palpable contradiction in the whole of Genesis." He even goes so far as to say: "I do not shrink from expressing the alternative; either the whole critical literature of the historical books of the Bible is groundless and futile, or Gen. xxvi, 3, 4 *seq.*; xxviii, 8 *seq.*, originate from different sources," Gen. xxxvi, 1-5, 9-19 (*Die Composition des Hexateuch*, ss. 51, 52).

In the Samaritan text the contradiction disappears. There are two Elons, one a Hivite, and the other a Hittite, and a daughter of each Esau married. Esau had five wives—Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hivite; both of

whom were a grief to Isaac and Rebekah, and neither of whom is recorded to have had any children; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah; and Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael. These last three were the mothers of all Esau's children, Bashemath in the Samaritan being always in chapter xxxvi, in the genealogy replaced by Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael. With these variants the supposed contradiction absolutely vanishes. (p. 204)

8. There is a noticeable variant in Exodus xxi, 20, as to the punishment of a man who should smite his man-servant or his maid-servant with a rod if his servant die under his hand. In the Masoretic Hebrew text the law runs thus: "And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished.

Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two he shall not be punished; for he is his money."

With this the Septuagint agrees. "Punished" may here mean anything and it might mean death, but would no doubt be interpreted according to the discretion of the courts. He should be punished if death ensued at once, but if death did not ensue immediately there is no command for his punishment.

The command as it stands in the Hebrew and the Septuagint is a very considerable moral difficulty.

But the Israelitish Code as it appears in the Samaritan text is different: "If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod and he die under his hand, he shall die.

Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not die, for he is his money." And therefore it is not likely that he intended to kill him; it was homicide, not murder. "He shall not die," but any punishment short of death may in this case be inflicted.

There is a pathetic history recorded by Bishop Colenso about the effect produced by this text on his mind in consequence of the observations of a Zulu with whose help he was translating it into the Zulu language (*On the Pentateuch*, vol. i, 9). Had he been translating it from the Samaritan Codex he could not have been moved, as he unhappily was moved, by the Zulu's objection.

9. There is a curious historical variation in Gen. xlvii, 21. The reading in our Hebrew Bibles is "as for the people, he removed them from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof." But in what follows we learn that Joseph's purpose was to obtain a fifth part of the produce of the land for Pharaoh, and it would seem an extraordinary method of obtaining this to remove the cultivators of it from the land into the cities. But the Samaritan Text agrees with the Septuagint and Vulgate in changing the words into "he made bondmen of them," which, of course, was the Hebrew when the Septuagint was translated. The Samaritan has retained the true text.

10. There is a much more important difference. On this I am afraid it would take too long for me to enter. I can only state the fact. There is a difference, or, rather, several minute (p. 205) differences between the Decalogue in Exodus and the repetition of it in Deuteronomy. It is difficult to understand any difference between statements as to words spoken by God Himself and written with the finger of God on tables of stone. Of this difficulty the higher critics have taken every advantage. Now I am prepared to show that by collating the Samaritan with the ordinary Hebrew and the Septuagint, that is to say, comparing three sets of MSS.—the MSS. of the Synagogues, from which our English translations are made, the Hebrew MSS. existing in the time of Ptolemy, from which the Septuagint was taken, and the Samaritan manuscripts, we arrive at a common text in

which no difference remains between Exodus and Deuteronomy, but the Ten Commandments in both one and the same without the difference of a letter.

Differences in the Ten Commandments in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

Dr. Driver and the Bishop of Winchester both dwell on these differences. Driver puts them in parallel columns to show how different they are. I do not deny the difficulty of supposing words actually spoken by God in the hearing of the people being repeated by Moses in different forms. But I venture to say that a more careful study removes the difficulty altogether.

In the first place, the most apparent difficulty is removed by Bishop Ryle himself. He observes that the reasons assigned in Exodus and Deuteronomy for the observance of the fourth commandment are not part of the commandment but "explanations of the commandment." The same thing is true of the phrase: "As the Lord thy God commanded thee," in the commencement of the fourth and fifth commandments in Deuteronomy, evidently not a part of them, but a reminder by Moses when repeating them on different occasions.

Bearing this in mind, let us collate the Jewish, Israelite, and Septuagint records of the ten commandments in Exodus and Deuteronomy. The Greek is evidently translated from different MSS. from either of the two others.

The first difference in the commandments themselves between Exodus and Deuteronomy in our A.V. and our ordinary Hebrew copies is that in Exodus we have "Remember," in Deuteronomy "Keep" ; but in the Samaritan it is the same in both—"Keep."

In both Exodus xx, 10, and Deuteronomy v, 14, the necessary words "in it" are inserted in our A.V. in italics, because not (p. 206) found in the Jewish text. But "in it" is found in the Samaritan.

In the fifth commandment, the words "that it may go well with thee" are in Deuteronomy not in Exodus, in both the Jewish text and the Samaritan. But in the Septuagint they are in both alike, and no doubt were so in those Hebrew MSS. from which the Septuagint was translated.

In Exodus xx, 14, we read, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and in verse 15, "Thou shalt not steal," and in verses 16 and 17, the same form is used. Whereas in Deuteronomy v, it is slightly varied by the insertion of the Copula, which changes "Thou shalt not" into "Neither shalt thou." But in the Samaritan it is in Deuteronomy as in Exodus, "Thou shalt not."

In Exodus xx, 18, we read, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife." But in Deuteronomy v, 21, it is "Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field." The Samaritan is identical in Exodus and Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, and thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, his field," which removes the discrepancy. But the Septuagint appears here to be more correct than either. Like the Samaritan it is the same both in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, nor his field," the order being in both the more probable.

It is not difficult to see how the mistake arose. The word for "field" would be undistinguishable from a word for "wife" in the Samaritan MSS., and in all Hebrew

MSS. before the Masoretic corrections, the two words being only distinguished in Masoretic Hebrew by the difference between Shin and Sin.

Collating all three, and placing in parentheses the explanations in the fourth and fifth commandments, which are not part of them, there is absolutely no difference of a word or a letter between the ten commandments as recorded in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

"Sanctify " and " keep holy " are merely different renderings of the same Hebrew word. So are "mayest live long" and "days may be prolonged."

In the Samaritan Codex there is no difference in Deuteronomy between "desire" and "covet." It is the same word as in Exodus.

We have really three Codices for collation—the Jewish or (p. 207) Masoretic, the Israelitish or Samaritan, and that from which the Septuagint must have been translated, and by comparing these we can draw out the exact form of the Decalogue and show it to have been the same both in Exodus and in Deuteronomy.

The apparent differences only begin with the fourth commandment, and here is the resulting text in both Exodus and Deuteronomy:—

"Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant nor thy maid-servant, thine ox nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

"Honour thy father and thy mother, that it may go well with thee, and that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

"Thou shalt not kill."

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

"Thou shalt not steal."

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, nor his field, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's."

Thus collated there is no distinction between the Decalogue in Exodus and in Deuteronomy—not the distinction of a letter.

Conclusion.

What I consider myself to have proved is this: that about 350 years before (according to the " higher critics ") any part of the Pentateuch was written, the whole Pentateuch in two Recensions existed in the two nations of Israel and Judah, and are both in our hands to-day; and that, therefore, the whole theory connected with them vanishes like the unsubstantial fabric of a dream.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—It is not often that we have the privilege, in this room, of listening to an octogenarian, and it is very encouraging when we find that members of the Victoria Institute are not only able to live till eighty years of age, but that they are also able to produce such a paper as we have heard this afternoon, and we may (p. 208) hope that when Mr. Garratt becomes a nonagenarian we may have the privilege of hearing him again and seeing how the subject is getting on. He has opened a rich mine which has remained more or less closed. The subject has been touched on, as we hear, by Bishop Ryle and Mr. Spencer. But it is a puzzle. All questions of the various readings of the Hebrew Bible are puzzles; but investigations are being made of the MSS. in the Bodleian Library. I saw two of them in 1860, one supposed to have been written by Aaron's

grandson, I think; but it does seem a phenomenon that up to this time there should be no possibility of collating it. I am always afraid of somebody else bringing up this and substituting something for it. It is everyone's interest to keep it safe; for that and a few other such MSS. are most valuable. There may be something which we have not yet found, and it may be that God, in His providence, is keeping it against the time it will be needed.

Rev. F. E. SPENCER.—I think we are very much indebted to Canon Garratt for introducing this subject, especially if it should lead to an unprejudiced investigation of it. I have looked into several of the written introductions and the current treatment of the subject, and it seems to me to be quite superficial, and to come, mostly, by way of casual allusion to it, perhaps with a reference, thrown in, to a Latin essay of Gesenius: this essay, I believe, cannot be got at the British Museum.

The AUTHOR.—Yes, I have got it there.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think it is in Zion College also.

Rev. F. E. SPENCER.—Acquaintance with it does not encourage confidence in its finality. But not sufficient allowance has been made, I think, by the author of the paper for the extreme complexity and real difficulties of the subject, indicated, for instance, by the Essay of Emanuel Deutsch, in Smith's 1st Edition, which is quoted. The best notices known to me on the subject, outside Deutsch, are those of Konig, 1893, and Hengstenberg (*Dissertations on the genuineness of the Pentateuch*, 1847), of which last Moller says, "It is quite incomprehensible how individual objections of criticism can be brought forward, again and again, as if no answers had ever been made to them." The subject of the Samaritan Pentateuch seems to me to be involved in prejudice, misunderstanding and inherent perplexity. I should like to sum up, briefly, what I have to say on these points. First, I cannot help thinking, with due deference (p. 209) to the author of the paper, that as a final and satisfactory *Argumentum ad hominem* the "short and easy method" of the "higher critics," so called, of the Samaritan Pentateuch, fails. There is no such perspicuous evidence as would rebut the possibility that, if the Pentateuch *did* arise, as Wellhausen and Kueuen say it arose, the Samaritans *might* not have adopted it in the Hebrew form which it eventually reached. Hengstenberg himself shows that the Samaritans were heathens, with little, if any Israelitish blood; that they are, and were, constitutionally, liars; and that there is evidence of the percolation of both Hebrew and freethinking, if not Alexandrian ideas amongst them. The Samaritan character in which the Pentateuch is written is not, in itself, a decisive proof of age, for it was probably used by those whom the Talmud calls idiotic, long after the Babylonian script came into fashion with the correct Hebrews.

Yet, secondly, for all that, the subject is of great interest, and I cannot help feeling that there is something at the bottom of it. After all that has been said by prejudiced and unprejudiced witnesses there remains, the impression that at bottom both in the Samaritan Pentateuch and the LXX version, an independent text and an old text underlie them, though to reach it seems a matter of much difficulty. The subject is complicated in the Samaritan Pentateuch by two considerations: (1) In 2,000 places the Samaritan agrees, it is said, with the LXX. That has been investigated by some gentleman and he puts it down as 2,000.

The AUTHOR.—It agrees with the Septuagint in 1,000 and 1,000 in the Hebrew.

Rev. F. E. SPENCER (continuing).—Pardon me, I think this gentleman says it is 2,000; but against this are set a considerable number of divergences—"Quite as often disagree," says Deutsch. Of these divergences and agreements no satisfactory explanation has been made. (2) The Samaritan text has clearly been modernised and made smoother. It has a considerable number of euphemisms, toning down, as they thought, the coarseness of the original. It has a certain amount of alterations in a doctrinal interest, softening supposed anthropomorphisms and introducing the ministry of angels, as well as the well-known alteration of Ebal in Dent, xxvii, to "Gerizim and God has chosen, for God will choose." But that there is an underlying independent ancient text seems probable by (p. 210) the fact of the differing numbers of the Patriarchs' Ages, the LXX, Samaritan and Hebrew, perhaps by the differing lesson portions, and perhaps by the readings indicated by the reader of the paper. (3) I have never been able to attach importance to the difference in Deuteronomy, where Moses is explaining the law, from its form in Exodus. Moses is engaged in enforcing the spirit of the Ten Commandments, and the slight changes are all significant of their intention. But there is an intention parallel in the variants of our Lord's republication of the spirit of the law, showing that the spirit and not the bare letter prevails over mere literal sameness.

Rev. JOHN TUCKWELL.—May I be allowed to ask the last speaker if he will kindly favour me again with the reference he made to the period when the Hebrews are supposed to have adopted the Babylonian script? I wrote down, as I understood him to say, "long after the Babylonian script came into fashion with the Hebrews." Whose words were those and upon whose authority was that statement made?

Rev. F. E. SPENCER.—You will find it in Deutsch's article where he quotes from the Talmud.

Rev. JOHN TUCKWELL.—My reason for asking the question is that there is not even the slightest foundation for the belief that the Hebrews at any time ever adopted the Babylonian script. The Babylonian script is cuneiform, as we know; and from the time the Hebrews came into possession of the Promised Land there is not a single trace that the Hebrews ever made use of the cuneiform. We find abundant evidence of the use of the cuneiform in other parts of the East, and we find indications of the use of the cuneiform prior to the supposed period when the Israelites entered the land; but that I believe is a most gratuitous statement and one without foundation.

Mr. MARTIN ROUSE.—I should like to say, having carefully perused the article in the *Imperial Bible Dictionary* on that point, I am convinced that the Samaritan letters, as we find them in the text, are the earliest forms; and that, after that, follow the monumental letters found on coins and inscriptions, and the present square Hebrew letters are derived from the latter.

Rev. JOHN TUCKWELL.—May I add to what I said just now, that there is not the slightest indication that the Babylonians ever wrote alphabetically; so it seems impossible that any letters in use (p. 211) amongst the Hebrews could be derived from the Babylonians. The Babylonian letters certainly form 500 or 600 combinations of wedges, each standing for a syllable or entire word. The Babylonians, for a thousand years, were utter strangers, apparently, to anything like alphabetical writing. I state that to show upon what false grounds that higher criticism, as it is called, rests.

Mr. H. SEFTON JONES.—With reference to the passage from a Targum quoted by the previous speaker, the allusion to the "Babylonian writing" still used by the "unlearned,"

this must obviously refer not to the cuneiform scripts but to the Phoenician (early Aramaic) characters commonly in use in Mesopotamia from before the exile onwards. The tablets in the British Museum with the text inscribed in cuneiform, and bearing docketts or titles on the end or edge in these Phoenician characters, were familiar instances of the contemporaneous use of both scripts.

With regard to the point raised by the interesting paper just read regarding the variations in the text of the Decalogue, a very remarkable variant had recently been published, obtained from a Hebrew papyrus fragment found in Egypt. Mr. Stanley A. Cook, in a short paper on this fragment (*Soc. Biblical Archaeology*, November, 1902), pointed out that the order of the Commandments agrees with that quoted by Our Saviour, as recorded in Luke xviii, 20, and not as given in our Old Testament. This interesting point tended to show that too much stress should not be laid upon identical wording.

Professor LANGHORNE ORCHARD.—I think not this Society, only, but all Bible students are indebted to the learned authors of the papers which have been brought before us. It is deplorable that the obscurantism of the "higher critics" has so long been successful in ignoring or neglecting the Samaritan Pentateuch. The rejection of evidence which conflicts with a favoured hypothesis is neither scientific nor philosophical. There can be no question, after what we have heard this afternoon, as to the great importance and value of these Samaritan MSS. Any attempt, such as was made by Gesenius, to destroy their authority, whilst leaving unsettled their age and origin, is doomed to failure. With regard to age and origin the Samaritan Pentateuch appears to have been a copy from the Hebrew original of the Mosaic era. As pointed out by Kennicott, copies were, no doubt, taken for the use of the priests (p. 212) all over Canaan; others would come into the hands of Jeroboam's priests and be the Israelitish recension of our (Jewish) Pentateuch.

Here, as in all other cases, progress of research and knowledge is found to issue in vindication of the Bible. Does it not teach us that God may permit difficulties to exist in order that we may trust Him with regard to them and so glorify Him? We may see no rift in the clouds, but if we wait, they will part and the light will stream through.

Rev. G. F. WHIDBORNE.—We are, I am sure, very grateful to Canon Garratt for having given us this paper, and I only hope he will give us another before he is ninety! I know he is well stored with subjects.

I would say that it seems to me, quite apart from discussion on the Babylonian script, that we have got a most difficult question for the "higher critics" to settle in the mere fact of what Canon Garratt has brought before us that the Samaritans, soon after the time of the destruction of Samaria, had the Pentateuch, and I cannot understand how the "higher critics" are going to reconcile that with their views.

There is one point of Canon Garratt's paper upon which I should like to make a remark. He says, "In Genesis ii, 19, there is, both in the Septuagint and in the Samaritan, a word not in the Hebrew. The Greek word is $\epsilon\tau\iota$," and then he gives the Samaritan, "out of the ground *yet again* God formed." This word, $\epsilon\tau\iota$, conveys the words necessarily, I think, in a reiterative sense, and if it is so in the Samaritan that "out of the ground God still formed every beast," it implies, as the author says, a previous creation.

Rev. CANON GARRATT.—I think Mr. Spencer referred to a point in Deuteronomy treated of by Gesenius, that the Samaritan text appeared to be a softening of the original as if, according to Gesenius, it was made even more grammatical, and that, all together,

many difficulties were removed. He mentioned that as an objection. But I think it should be borne in mind that, supposing the view I have taken is right, at the time of the separation of the two kingdoms it was in the northern kingdom that this recension, that seems to be a softening and an improvement in some respects, took place.

I cannot quote a text to show it, but the whole aspect of the history seems to show that the northern kingdom was more cultivated, and that if the scholars got the recension into their hands (p. 213) they would be extremely likely to remove any difficulty they could, and the great probability is that while it was in the hands of the Israelitish scholars, they removed whatever they thought not to be quite grammatical.

The CHAIRMAN.—That is interesting. I am sure I may thank Canon Garratt in all your names for his address this evening

I will now ask Canon Hammond if he will be so kind as to read his interesting narrative concerning the Samaritan Passover of the year 1861.

The Chair having been vacated by Canon Girdlestone and taken by Rev. John Tuckwell, the following paper, entitled "The Samaritan Passover of the year 1861," by Rev. Canon Hammond, LL.B., was then read by the Author :—

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**Comments on this section from the Editor of theSamaritanUpdate.com**

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