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North American Review, vol. XIII, Frederick T. Gray (Publisher), 74 Washington Street, Boston, 1826, Samaritan and Hebrew Pentateuch. Pages 274-317a.

Art. II.-1. De Pentateuchi Samaritani Origine, Indole, et Auctoritate, Commentatio Philolgico-critica. Scripsit GULIELMUS GESENIUS, Theologiae Doctor, et in Universitate Literarum Fridericianna Professor Ordinarius. Halae, impensis Librarie Rengeriannae, 1815.

- 2. Jesu Christi Natalitia pie celebranda, Academiae Fridericianae et Vitebergenis consociatae Civibus indicunt Prorector et Senatus. Inest GULIEL. GENSENII, Theol. D. et P.P.O. de Samaritarum Theologia ex Fontibus ineditis Commentatio. Halae, in Libratia Rengerianna.
- 3. Anecdota Orientalia, edidit et illustravit GULIEL. GESENIUS, Philosophiae et Theologiae Doctor, hujusque in Academia Fridericiana Halensi Professor publicus ordinarius, Socirtatum Asiaticae Parisensis et Philosophicae Cantabrigiensis Socius. Fasciculus primus, Carmina Samaritana complectens. Lipsiae, 1824. Impersis Typisque Fr. Chr. Guil. Vogelii.

[Also entitled] Carmina Samaritana e Codicibus Londinensibus et Gothanis, edidit et Interpretatione Lantina cum Commentario illustravit GULIEL. GESENIUS &c. Cum Tabula lapidi inscripta. Lipsiae, 1824.

THE existence of the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, among the Samaritans, written in the pecular alphabetic character which they employed, and which differed much from the Hebrew square character, was known in very ancient times to such of the Fathers, as were acquainted with the Hebrew language. Origen, in commenting upon Numbers xiii.1, says, χαί τουτών μνημονδύςι Μώϋσής έν τοίς πεώτοίς τού Δευτερονομίον ά χαί αύτώ έχ τού Σαμαρειτών Εξραίχού μετεζάλομεν, and these things Moses makes mention of in the first part of Deuteronomy, which we have also transferred from the Hebrew copy of the Samaritans. Again, on Numbers xxi, 13, he says, χαί τοντών μέμνηται Μωΰσής έν Δεντερογονμίω, ά έν μόνοις τών Σαμαρειτών εύρομεν, these things Moses mentions in the book of Deuteronomy, which we find only in the Samaritan copy. Jerome, in his prologue to the book of Kings, says, Samaritani etiam Pentateuchum Mosis totidem literis scriptitant, figuris tantum et apicibus discrepretes. By totidem literis, he means as many letters as the Hebrews and Chaldeans used, that is, twenty-two; although the forms of the (page 275) Samaritan letters differed from those which the Jews employed. Again, in his Questions in Genesin, on chap. iv. 8, he says, Quam ob causam, Samaritanorum Hebraea volumina relegens, inveni &c.

These, with one or two more references of a similar nature in Origen and Jerome, constitute the evidence which we have that the Samaritan Pentateuch was known, in very ancient times, to such of the Fathers devoted themselves to the crititical study of the Hebrew Scriptutres. From the time of Jerome down to the first quarter of the seventeenth century, no traces appear, in the history of criticism and sacred literature of any knowledge among Christians, whether the Samaritan copy of the law of Moses was still in existence. In the year 1616, Petro a Valle bought of the Samaritans, at Damascus, a complete copy; which was sent, in 1623, by A. H. de Sancy to the library of the Oratory at Paris. J. Morin briefly described this copy, not long afterwards, in the preface to his edition of the Septuagint, A. D. 1628. Soon after this he published his *Exercitationes Ecclesiastice in utrumque Samaritanorum Pentateuchum*; in which he extols very highly the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch, preferring it above the common Hebrew text. About the same time, from the copy purchased by a Valle, Morin printed the Samaritan text of the Paris Polyglott, and from this Walton printed the Samaritan text in the London Polyglott, with few corrections.

In the mean time, between the years 1620 and 1630, archbishop Usher, so distinguished for his zeal in the cause of sacred literature, and for the knowledge of it which he himself acquired, had succeeded by persevering efforts in obtaining six additional copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch from the East, some of which were complete, and others incomplete. Five of these are still in England, deposited in different libraries; and one, which the archbishop presented to Ludovicus de Dieu, appears to have been lost.

In 1621, another copy was sent to Italy, which is now in the Ambrosian library at Milan. About the same time, Peiresc procured three copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch; two of which are in the royal library at Paris, and one in that of Barberini at Rome.

To these copies others have since been added; so that Kennicott was able to extend the comparison of Samaritan manuscripts, for his critical collection of various readings, to the number of *sixteen*. Most of them, however, were more or less defective, in regard to parts of the Pentateuch.(page 276)

The external appearance of these manuscripts, in some respects, agrees with that of the synagogue rolls of the Hebrews; but in many others it differs. All the Samaritans in their synagogues make use of rolls, as the Jews also do. The letters in the Samaritan copies are simple, exhibiting nothing like the *litera majusculae, minusculae, inversae, suspensae,* &c. of the Hebrews. They are entirely destitute of vowel points, accents, or diacritical signs, such as are found in Hebrew and Chaldee. Each word is separated from one which follows it, by a point placed between them; parts of sentences are distinguished by two points; and periods and paragraphs by short lines, or lines and points. The manuscripts differ, however, in regard to some things of this nature. Words of doubtfuil construction are sometimes marked by a small line over one of the letters. The margin is empty, unless, as is sometimes the case, the Samaritan or Arabic version is placed by the side of the original text. The whole Pentateuch, like the Jewish copy, is divided into paragraphs, which they call \$\times \times Katsin\$. But while the Jews make only fiftytwo or fiftyfour divisions (one to be read each Sabbath in the year), the Samaritans make nine hundred and sixtysix.

The age of some of the Samaritan copies is determined by the date, which accompanies the name of the copyist; in others it is not. Kennicott has endeavored to ascertain the date of all the Samaritan manuscripts, which he compared. But he resorts to conjecture in order to effect this; conjecture supported by no well grounded rules of judging. The Codex Oratorii, used by Morin, he supposes to have been copied in the eleventh century; while all the others, except one, are conceded to be of more recent origin. One he assigns to the eighth century. On what uncertain grounds the reasoning of Kennicott and De Rossi about the age of Hebrew and Samaritan

manuscripts rests, need not be told to any one acquainted with the present sate of Hebrew literature.

The materials, on which the Samaritan manuscripts are written, are either parchment or silk paper. Ordinary paper has been used, in recent times, only to supply some of the defects in them.

The Christian world before Morin published his famous *Exercitiones Ecclesiasticae in utrumque Samaritanorum Penta*(Page 277)*teuchum*, (1631), had been accustomed to resort only to the Jewish Hebrew Scripture, as exhibiting the well authenticated and established text of the Mosaic law. From this remark may be excepted the few, who attached a high value to the Septuagint version, and preferred many of its readings to those, which are found in the Jewish Scriptures. But the publication of Morin soon excited a controversy, which, even at the present hour, has not wholly subsided. As the Samaritan copy of the law, in a multitude of places, agreed with the version of the Seventy, Morin maintained that the authority of the Samaritan, particularly when supported by the Septuagint, was paramount to that of the Jewish text. he labored, moreover, to show, that in a multitude of passages, which in that text as it now stands are obscure and difficult, or unharmonious, the Samaritan offers the better reading; that the Jews have corrupted their Scriptures by negligence, or ignorance, or superstition; and that the safe and only way of purifying them is, to correct them from the Samaritan in connexion with the Septuagint.

The signal was now given for the great contest, which ensued. Cappell, in his *Critica Sacra*, followed in the steps of Morin; but De Muis, Hottinger, Stephen Morin, Buxtorf, Fuller, Leusden, A. Pfeiffer, each in separate works published within the seventeenth century, attached the positions of Morin and Cappell. Their principal aim was to overthrow his positions, rather than to examine the subject before them in a critical and thorough manner.

Much less like disputants, and more like impartial critics, did Father Simon, Walton in his *Prolegomena*, and Le Clerc conducted themselves, relative to the question about the value and authority of the Samaritan Pentateuch. In particular, Simon has thrown suggestions, which imply for substance the same opinions on many controverted points, that the latest and best critics, after all the discussion which has taken place, have adopted.

But during the latter part of the last century, when the fierceness of controversy seemed to have been abated, Houbigant, treading in the steps of J. Morin, renewed it, in the *Prolegomena* to his Bible. With him other controvertists united. Kennicott, in various works, A.S. Aquillino, Lobstein, and Alexander Geddes, have all contended for the equal or superior authority of the Samaritan Codex. Houbigant was answered, in a masterly way, by S. Ravius, in his *Exercitationes Philologica* (Page 278) 1761. Recently, Michaelis, Eichhorn, Bertholdt, Bauer, and Jahn, have discussed the subject in question with a good degree of moderation and acuteness. But they have all inclined to attach considerable value to many of the Samaritan readings; although most of them consider the Samaritan Pentateuch, on the whole, as of inferior authority, compared with the Hebrew.

Thus the matter stood, when Gesenius entered upon the discussion of it in the treatise which is first named at the head of this article. The great extent of critical and philological knowledge which he had acquired, fitted him in a peculiar manner for the difficult task which he undertook; for difficult it would seem to be, to settle a question that had been so long disputed by the master critics, and still not brought to a termination. What those who best knew the talents of this eminent writer would naturally expect, has, for most part, been accomplished. He has settled the question, (it would seem forever settled it,) about the authority of the Samaritan Pentateuch compared with that of the Hebrew; or rather, he has shown, as we shall see by and by, the nature

of the various readings exhibited by the Samaritan Pentateuch to be such, that we can place no critical reliance at all upon them. They are all, nearly all, mostly evidently the effect of design, or of want of grammatical, exegetical, or critical knowledge; or of studious conformity to the Samaritan dialect; or of effort to remove supposed obscurities, or to restore harmony to passages apparently discrepant. On this part of the subject there can be little or no doubt left, hereafter, in the mind of any sober critic.

Gesenius has divided the various readings, which the Samaritan Pentateuch exhibits, into *eight* different classes, for the sake of more orderly and exact description. The first class consists of such as exhibit *corrections merely of a grammatical nature*. For example, in orthography the *matres lectionis* are supplied; in respect to pronouns, the usual forms are substituted for the unusual ones; the full forms of verbs are substituted for the apocopated forms; the paragogic letters affixed to nouns and participles are omitted, so as to reduce them to usual forms; words of common gender are corrected so as to make the form either masculine or feminine, where the word admits of it, (for example, it is always written it is feminine); and the infinitive absolute is often reduced to the form of a finite verb.

The second class of various readings consists of *glosses received into the text*. For the most part these exhibit the true (page279) sense of the original Hebrew; but they explain the more difficult words by such as seemed to be plainer or more intelligible.

The third class consists of those, in which there is a substitution of plain modes of expression, in the room of those, which seemed difficult or obscure in the Hebrew text. The fourth, of those in which the Samaritan copy is corrected from parallel passages, or apparent defects are supplied from them. The fifth is made up of additions or repetitions respecting things said and done; which are drawn from the proceeding context and again recorded so as to make the readings in question. The sixth, of such corrections as were made to remove what was offensive in respect to sentiment, that is, which conveyed views, or narrated facts, that were deemed improbable by the correctors. For an example, we refer to the famous genealogies in Genesis v. and xi. In which the Samaritan copy has made many alternations, evidently designed. In the antediluvian genealogy, the corrections are so made that no one is exhibited as having begotten his first son, after he is one hundred and fifty years old. Thus the Hebrew text represents Jared as having begotten a son at the age of one hundred and sixtytwo years; but the Samaritan takes one hundred years from this. In the postdiluvian genealogy, it follows a different principle of correction. No one is allowed to have begotten a son, until after he was fifty years of age; so that one hundred years are added to all those who are represented by the Hebrew text as having had an issue under that age, with the exception of Nahor, to whom fifty years were added. The effects of design are most visible in all these corrections; and equally so in the corresponding Septuagint genealogies, we may add, which, while they differ from both the Hebrew and Samaritan, bear the marks of designed alteration most evidently impressed upon them. Other examples of a like nature may be found in the Samaritan copy, in Exodus xii. 40. Genesis ii. 2. Genesis xxix. 3, 8. Exodus xxiv.

The seventh class of various readings consists of those, in which the pure Hebrew idiom is exchanged for that of the Samaritan. This has respect to many cases of orthography; to the forms of pronouns; to some of the forms of verbs, for example, the second person feminine of the praeter tense, which in the Samaritan has a Yodh paragogie; and to the forms of nouns etymologically considered.

The eighth class consists of those passages, where alterations have been made so as to produce conformity to the Samaritan (page 280) theology, worship, or mode of interpretation. For

example, where the Hebrew has used a plural verb with the noun אלהים Kelohim, the Samaritan has substituted a verb in the singular number (Genesis xx. 13. xxxi. 53. xxxv. 7. Exodus xxii. 9.) lest the unity of God should seem to be infringed upon. So in many passages, where anthropomorphism or anthropopathy is rested to by the sacred writer, in relation to God, the Samaritan has substituted different expressions. In Genesis xlix. 7, where Jacob, when about to die, says of Simeon and Levi, Cursed be their anger (ארור אפם), the Samaritan has altered it to lovely is their anger (ארור אפם). In the blessing of Moses, Deuteronomy xxxiii. 12, Benjamin is styled יד יד ידי the hand, the hand of Jehovah shall dwell &c. In a similar manner, euphemisms are substituted, in various parts of the Pentateuch, for expressions which appeared to the Samaritan critics unseemly or immodest. Finally, in the famous passage in Deuteronomy xxvii. 4, the Samaritan has changed Ebal into Gerizim, in order to give sanction to the temple which they built, not long after the time of Nehemiah, upon the latter mountain. Kennicott has warmly contested the Hebrew reading here, and defended the Samaritan; but in his Dissertt. Exeget. Philologicae, published in 1773, to the universal satisfaction, we believe, of all biblical critics.

Some of the classes of various readings here described are hardly intelligible, perhaps, to the cursory and general reader; nor will the difference between some of them, (for example, between the second and third class,) be plain to any reader, who does not consul the work of Gesenius, and compare the examples prposed. Under all the classes of various readings, he has produced a multitude of examples, almost to satiety, so as to remove all rational doubt as to the positions which he advances. Never before did the Samaritan Pentateuch undergo such a thorough critical examination; and never, perhaps, in a case that was difficult and had been long contested, was truth made more evident and convincing. Only four various readings in the whole Samaritan Pentateuch, are considered by Gesenius as preferable perhaps to the Hebrew text. These are the well known passages in Genesis iv. 6. xxii. 13. xlix. 14. and xiv. 14; all of little importance, and all, we are well persuaded, of (page 281) such a nature, that the probability is quite in favour of the Hebrew text. But this is not the proper place for a discussion of such a subject, and we forbear to pursue it.

The result of Gesenius' labors has been, so far as we know, to ruin the credit of the Samaritan Pentateuch, as an *authentic* source of correcting the Hebrew records; a result of no small importance, considering the thousands of places in which it differs from the Hebrew, and the excessive value which has been set upon it by critics of great note, in different parts of Europe. The biblical student will henceforth know how little dependence he can place on the Samaritan Codex, to help him out in any difficulties of lower criticism; and he will sincerely rejoice too, that the superior purity of the Jewish Pentateuch over that of rival records differing so often from it, is so solidly established.

Of the sixtyfour quarto pages, which the dissertation of Gesenius oocupies, about fourty are employed in exhibiting the classes of various readings which have been described. This is the most important and most satisfactory part of the work. About the merits of this, there can hardly be but one opinion, among all who are conversant with sacred criticism. According to the arrangement of the author, this constitutes the second part of his dissertation.

In the first part, he has discussed the difficult questions, which respect the *origin* and *antiquity* of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Here, also, we discovered everywhere the hand of a master in criticism; but we are not prepared, by any means, to accede to all the positions which he has taken. To examine them, however, and to state our reasons for dissent, is by far the most difficult part of the task, which we have undertaken. But as the subject is intimately connected with some

of the most interesting topics, which have lately been agitated in the critical world, we hope that at least one class of our readers will not be displeased to have it laid before them.

It is the opinion of Gesenius, that the Pentateuch did not receive its *present* form, that is, it was not regularly digested and arranged, until the time of the Babylonish captivity. Of course, the Samaritan Pentateuch must probable, from which to date the origin of the Samaritan Codex, when Manasseh, the son in law of Sanballat the Samaritan governor, and brother of the high priest at Jerusalem, went over to the Sama- (page 282) ritans, built a temple on mount Gerizim, by the aid of his father in law, and instituted the Mosaic worship there. Many of the peculiar readings of the Samaritan Codex, he thinks, can be accounted for by such a supposition; and at all events, we must suppose that Manasseh carried a copy of the Jewish law along with him.

It must be quite apparent, indeed that if the Jewish Pentateuch did not receive its present form until the Babylonish exile, the Samaritan Codex must have originated still later; and no time of its origin is more probable, on this ground, than that which Gesenius has assigned to it. But that the Jewish Pentateuch had a much earlier date than is here assigned to it, is what we fully believe. To state all the reasons of this, and to examine all the objections made against by recent critics, would require a volume, instead of the scanty limits of a review. We shall merely advert therefore, in the first place, to some of the leading reasons why we believe that the Hebrew Pentateuch, with the exception of a very few isolated passages, came from the hand of Moses; next, examine briefly the reasons which are alleged against this; and then endeavor to show why a more ancient date is to be assigned to the Samaritan Pentateuch, than Gesenius gives it.

That the Pentateuch, as to all its essential parts, came from the hand of Moses, appears to be probable from the following considerations.

1. The Pentateuch itself exhibits direct internal evidence, that it was written by Moses.

Thus, in Exodus xvii. 14, after an account of the contest between Israel and Amalek, it is added, And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in the book, (בספר) with the article, not בספר [From the copyist vowels not shown in Hebrew words], that is, as the meaning seems obviously to be, in the book already begun and in which other things were recorded, in the well known book. So in Exodus xxiv. 4, 7, after the law had been given at mount Sinai, it is said, that Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and then, that he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people. Afterwards, when many more laws had been added, the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words, Exodus xxxiv. 27. If it be said, All this has respect only to laws or statutes; the answer is easy. In Numbers xxxiii. 1, 2, it is said, that Moses wrote the goings out [of the children of Israel] according to their journeys, by the commandment of the Lord. This, it will be recollected, was (Page 283) at the close of their wanderings through the desert, after they had come to the plains of Moab, and were consequently on the very borders of the promised land. The close of the book of Numbers declares, that these are the commandments and the judgments which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses. To what can these refer, but to the written contents of the preceeding book? Finally, in Deuteronomy, which exhibits a repetition of the most important laws for the Jewish nation, this law, the words of this law, and the book of this law are frequently adverted to. So in Deuteronomy, xvii. 18, the future king of the Israelites is enjoined to write our for himself a copy of this law, that he may learn to keep all the words of this law (v. 19); in chapter xxx. 10, mention is made of the statutes written in this book of the law; in xxxi. 11, Moses commands that this law shall be read before all Israel in their hearing, that (v. 12) they may observe to do all the words of this law. Particularly worthy of note are the two following passages; Deuteronomy xxviii. 61, where every plague not written in this book is threathened, in case the Israelites are disobedient; and Deuteronomy xxxi. 9-13, 19, 22, compared with xxi. 24-26, from which it appears not only that Moses wrote some things in the preceding book, but that he wrote until *the whole was completed or finished*, and then deposited the book in the side of the ark of the covenant.

It were easy to add other testimony of the like nature, from the Pentateuch itself; but it is superfluous. The fact, that the Pentateuch itself, as a whole, claims to be written by Moses, cannot reasonably be doubted, until it can be shown that it existed, in former days, in numerous distinct volumes, so that a passage in one, which has a reference to its composition by Moses, can be reasonably supposed to relate to nothing farther than the single parcel or small roll, in which such passage is found. But this has never been shown, and never can be. All the evidence before us is of a different nature, inasmuch as it all goes to establish the belief, that the Pentateuch, from time immemorial, has been recorded only as *one* volume.

2. The remaining books of Scripture ascribe the Pentateuch or Jewish law to Moses as its author.

The book of Joshua, although reduced to its *present* form in later times, was undoubtedly composed, in respect to its essential parts, at a very early period. In this book, frequent references may be found to the *book of the law*. For example, Joshua is (Page 284) commanded *to do according to all which the law of Moses commanded;* and it is enjoined upon him that *this book of the law should not depart out of his mouth,* Joshua i. 7,8. Joshua, in taking leave of the people of Israel, exhorts them *to do all which is written in the book of the law of Moses*, xxiii. 6; and he recites, on this occasion, many things contained in it. When the same distinguished leader had taken his final farewell of the tribes, he wrote the words of his address *in the book of the law of God*, xxiv. 26. In like manner, it is said, Joshua viii. 30 seq. that Joshua built an altar on mount Ebal, as *it is written in the book of Moses*, and that *he read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings to all that is written in the book of the law*. These references, in a book the substance of which is confessedly of very early date, are of great importance in the investigation of the question, whether the Pentateuch is to be assigned to the time of Moses, or set down, as Gesenius has set it, to the time of the Babylonish exile.

In other historical books, to which the finishing hand was not put until the time of the captivity, but the principle parts of which existed in records of a much older date, the law of Moses is referred to in a similar way. David, on his dying bed, exhorts Solomon, in all things to conduct himself agreeably to what *is written in the law of Moses*, 1 Kings ii.3. In 2 Kings xiv. 1-6, it is related that Amaziah slew not the children of those, who had murdered his father; and that he spared them according to *that which is written in the book of the law of Moses*; a passage of which is then quoted, from Deuteronomy xxxiv. 17. In 2 Kings xxii. 8, Hilkiah, the high priest, is represented as having found in the temple a book, which is there called *the book of the law*; in xxiii. 2, *the book of the covenant*; and in 2 Chronicles xxxiv. 14, *a book of the law of the Lord, given by Moses*. In 2 Kings xxiii. 21-23, Josiah is said to have given orders that the Passover should be kept, *as it is written in the book of the covenant*.

In Ezra and Nehemiah frequent references are made to the same book. But as these books were written after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish exile, we will not insist upon their testimony. Gesenius would admit that the Pentateuch was reduced to writing about the commencement of the exile; and therefore he might except to any citations from books written after this period and appealing to it, as proof that the Penta- (Page285) teuch was early committed to writing. But there is one circumstance, in the frequent appeals made to the law of Moses in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which is not easily explained on the ground which he takes. This is, that the appeal is everywhere made to the book of the law, as a book which came

from the hand of Moses; which was sanctioned by his authority; which was unhesitatingly and universally admitted to be such by the Jews; and which no one therefore would venture to contradict or call in question. How could the whole Jewish nation be made to believe this, if the Pentateuch had been forged only some half a century before? It cannot be contended that there were not many enlightened men among the Jews, at the time of their return from the captivity. To mention Zorobabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi, is sufficient to prove this; if we say nothing of many others, who might be added to these. Were not these men, too, honest, as well as enlightened? And if so, how can we suppose them to have palmed the Pentateuch upon the Jewish nation as the work of Moses, when they must have known it not to be so, if it had been composed near, or during, the time of the exile?

In like manner, we might appeal to all the earlier prophets, in confirmation of the idea, that the Pentateuch was, in their day, substantially what it now is. Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micha, and Isaiah appeal to the precepts of the Mosaic law, and to the facts which are related in it; and they appeal to it as a book of paramount authority, which ought to settle every dispute, and to repress every transgressor. The appeals, moreover, which they make, are not merely to particular statues comprised in the Pentateuch, but to various matters both historical and perceptive, taken without distinction from *all* the present books of Moses.

To produce instances of all these appeals, would occasion too long delay on this part of our subject. We must be content with referring any who may doubt what is here stated, to Rosenmueller on the Pentateuch, (third edition, 1821, *Prolegomena*, page 11,) where he will find a synoptical view of references by the early prophets to the Pentateuch; or to Jahn's *Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament*, where, in his discussion respecting the age of the Pentateuch, ample references may be found to passages quoted by the different writers, during the ages that followed the time of Moses.

We omit also the very numerous and decisive appeals in the (Vol. XXII. –NO. 51. 37) (page 286) New Testament , to the Pentateuch as the work of Moses; not because we doubt that they are conclusive in respect to the fact itself, for this all must admit, who regard the writers of the New testament as under divine guidance in the composition of their works; but because such an appeal would probably be one, the force of which he would dispute, we have appealed only to those writings which preceded the captivity, or were composed either during this event, or so near it, that the authors must have known whether the Pentateuch was a recent book. We are willing to risk the whole question on the appeals which have been made, if they may be judged of by the same rules, which critics every day apply to the decision of questions that have respect to the Greek and Roman classics, or any other ancient writings.