

Daniel, and (b) The twelve Minor Prophets—Hosea, Joel, Amos, etc. These twelve were counted by the Jews as one book, but they do not belong to one age, and they are not arranged in chronological order.

CHAPTER II.

THE PENTATEUCH

Its General Contents

The Pentateuch gives a history of the world from the Creation down to the death of Moses with special reference to the Jewish people, so as to show its peculiar place among the nations. Inserted in this history and forming its chief feature is the law, civil and religious, which regulated the whole life of the Jewish nation. Hence the collection of these books was most commonly known as the Law.

This law is still acknowledged as binding in all its details by the Jews, though owing to circumstances they are no longer able to offer sacrifices at Jerusalem as prescribed.

In all their later history at least, the law as given in the Pentateuch was regarded as fixed and unchangeable. It could be interpreted but not amended, though the interpretation often amounted to a real amendment. The most important work of Jewish literature outside the Bible, namely, the Talmud, consists largely of the interpretations given by noted lawyers for the guidance of the judges and for the instruction of the people on points that are not clearly provided for in the code of the Pentateuch.