

Kuenen. There we find that the general consent on which so much stress is laid is already assumed as a basis of argument. It is, we are told, "universally admitted" that in chapters xviii.-xxvi. in Leviticus there is a difference of idiom and style.¹ Ewald, it must be acknowledged, has some qualifications for the task of analysis he has attempted. But as his conclusions regarding style and date altogether differ from those of the later school, the question of literary analysis is touched by them with a delicate hand. Indeed, Wellhausen admits, with something approaching to a sigh, that Hebrew critical knowledge is in its infancy."² But if so, it might be wise to wait awhile before taking anything for granted. We may, at least, very reasonably doubt whether it is safe to build any very decided conclusions upon so unsure a foundation. There is a yet more pressing reason for reserving our opinion. It is more than possible that the propositions Kuenen tells us are "universally admitted" may have been accepted not, as is professed, on critical grounds, but on the ground which has met with general acceptance on the Continent, that documents which relate to supernatural events must needs have been written at a considerable distance from the time when those events are said to have happened. If we in England do not accept the premises, we are certainly entitled to distrust the conclusion.

The subject will be resumed in a subsequent paper. Meanwhile it may be well to state that there is no desire to approach the question in a narrow or retrograde spirit. The fullest and freest discussion is not only a necessity, but a duty. Nor is it denied that there is at least an element of truth at the bottom of the arguments of the new criticism. It may very fairly be admitted—

1. That the author of the Pentateuch may possibly not be Moses himself.
2. That the author, whoever he was, made use of documents or of oral tradition in something approaching to a fixed and literary form.

¹ Kuenen, *Religion of Israel*, chap. vii. vol. 2. His investigation of the whole question in the *Theol. Tijdschr* of 1870 consists of 26 pp.

² "The study of the history of languages is still at a very elementary stage in Hebrew."—*History of Israel*, p. 390.