

government of the external and invisible God." He insists upon the obvious fact that in great measure they are not religious records, nor do they teach us a theology; but must be considered as national traditions, "such as had been repeated for centuries in the tents and at the camp-fires of the tribes; deeply tinged with national pride, and exaggerated through the sacred feeling and the natural love of the marvellous." Looked at in this light, and regarded as objects of literary study, our author holds them to be profoundly interesting and instructive, but "not to be defended in regard to the authenticity of the accounts in all their marvellous details." He is careful to add, however, that "on the other hand, scepticism must not be carried too far." In the interesting chapter on the Parables and Gospel Narrative Prof. Bowen discusses the parabolic form of our Lord's discourses, in illustrating and enforcing the spiritual doctrine taught and the precepts enjoined, and endeavours to separate from these artless narratives their outer coating of fable and symbolic imagery, unessential to the hidden meaning and spiritual truth intended to be conveyed. In the two following divisions of his work, he deals with the Philosophy and the Poetry of the Bible, interweaved with its history, and shows how far these may be accepted, and how distinguished in their manifest presentations of divine truth. In this difficult task he is careful, however, not to sublimate the Word "into the idle fancies and poetical imaginings of mortal men," but to make clear the fundamental truth clearly taught in the successive revelations of God to His people that He rules and governs the world in righteousness. Let us quote the following under these twin heads: "The philosophy of the Hebrews is eminently spiritual and human. Through its pure and noble morality it touches

the feelings, wakens the affections, and guides the life. Even the Decalogue—broad, just and unerring though it be in defining the limits of right and wrong—is but a partial expression of the moral law; as a judicial system, aiming to define and establish the relations between the human and divine, and between man and man, it lays down only the duties of perfect and universal obligation, leaving the guidance of the humane affections for another portion of the code. Hence it furnishes only a foundation for ethics; it expresses the law of justice, but not as yet the law of love." . . . But the Bible has other and more continuous poetry than these ancient fragments of legendary song. About one half of the Old Testament is pure lyric poetry, mostly devotional and didactic in purport, all of it profoundly serious and majestic in tone. . . . Concerning this great body of Hebrew poems, my point is that with respect to their antiquity, to the amount of history which is wrapped up in them—many of the Psalms and all of the Prophets being semi-historical—and to their intrinsic poetical merits, they are at least as interesting and important to scholars, even in this exclusively secular aspect, as the masterpieces of Greek literature. A system of liberal education cannot be regarded as complete without much study of them. They pass through every mode of the lyre, and strike every chord of the human heart." In the final chapter, our author talks of the Bible history, and insists upon the fact which the higher historical criticism of the Hebrew Scriptures, he thinks, has not sufficiently considered or allowed its due weight, viz.: "That for at least one thousand years, beginning about 1600 B.C., the only continuous portion having any claim to genuineness and authenticity is to be found in the Books of the Old Testament." "These records," he adds, "purporting in great