

seem to be so very similar that we find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that the work of these reformers must have covered one and the same period. The evils denounced are the same in both, viz. : the intermarriage with heathen women, the non-payment of tithes and neglect of the Temple, and the degeneracy of the priests. Nehemiah, it is true, makes mention only of the corruption of the high priest, and that in connection with the evil of heathen intermarriage (Chap. 13 : 28, 29), but at the same time the remissness of the people in the payment of their tithes which he condemns would seem to point to a general negligence on the part of the priesthood such as we find in Malachi. It is true also that Nehemiah does not make specific mention of divorce, but here again his references to the heathen marriages no doubt presuppose this. But apart from these variations—in which there is nothing, so far as we can see, which is contradictory—a careful examination of the two books reveals a remarkably close correspondence in the condition of the people both social and religious. A comparison of the following passages will show how true this is :

Neh. xiii : 23-27 with Mal. ii : 10-16

Neh. xiii : 10-12 with Mal. iii : 8-10

Neh. xiii : 29 with Mal. ii : 8

It seems to us that the balance of evidence is very strongly in favour of the later date. We fail to see why the fact of the book being Deuteronomic in its language should necessarily preclude the possibility of a date subsequent to the acceptance of the priests' code. We doubt, indeed, if it can be shown that there is no reference in the book to this code. Some of the references are at least doubtful, and even Geo. Adam Smith finds in the prophet's command regarding the giving of tithes a closer agreement with the priests' code than with the Deuteronomic. To us the whole book seems to breathe the atmosphere of the new code and to indicate a familiarity with it. Its emphasis upon purity of worship, the sanctity of the race, the holiness of the community, seems to reflect its influence. Then, too, its Messianic conception is priestly. The old dream of a world-wide monarchy has no longer any place.