

continuous work which gathered up also the received traditions as to the national ancestry of the Jews, the episodes that blazoned the early days of their national history and the ideas that underlay their national religion. It claims furthermore that the sources from which these last are derived can also still be distinguished by their varying styles, especially in Genesis. It insists that these can be shown to belong to two well defined classes, one Jehovistic or prophetic and the other Elohist or priestly, often parallel to each other, but not always in agreement. The Pentateuch thus stands before us no longer as an original work, but as a mere harmony of previously existing traditions.

Space will not allow a discussion of this radical theory, nor does such discussion lie within the purpose of this article. It is being widely accepted by scholarly critics of the present time, and, certainly, something can be said in its favour. Of course if the evidence for it becomes clear, it will have to be accepted by all, and adjusted as best it can to other verities of the faith. But one cannot help remarking on the folly of proclaiming it as one of the certain conclusions of criticism, as is so often done. In this form it is not yet a generation old, and no one can tell how soon it may be replaced by some other theory even as it has replaced various predecessors. The traditional view is not free from difficulty, but this view is encumbered with no end of perplexities. Its advocates are by no means agreed among themselves as to details as yet, and it rests after all upon so many unproved suppositions, that some happy discovery or suggestion, some restatement of the old conservative view, might at any moment capture all its strong features, leaving it to collapse as completely as Strauss' mythical theory of the Gospels. The possibilities of the traditional view are by no means exhausted as yet. There are various directions in which it may be open for restatement so as to account more adequately for the facts that have been brought to light by the patient and thoroughgoing investigations of the past century. Thus for example, the question of the literary methods of Moses has not received as yet the attention it deserves. Many of the alleged difficulties arise from the supposition that being a continuous work the Pentateuch must have been written continuously, whereas it may have undergone repeated revision from Moses' own hand, and his own material, as well as earlier material, embodied in it in various ways. This would account for a good deal in the way of variety of style, and difference of