

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### THE DATE OF DEUTERONOMY.

*To the Editor of The Open Court:*

Kindly answer in the earliest number possible of *The Open Court* briefly, directly, and without sending us to books:

1. If Deuteronomy was written in or about the days of Josiah, how comes it that Joshua, who lived eight hundred years before him, and Amaziah, who lived two hundred years before him, obeyed laws or directions which are found in Deuteronomy only?
2. Were not the prophets enemies of only immoral priests, and denouncers of rituals and festivals only when unaccompanied with right conduct, instead of being as you state (p. 159) "enemies of priests and denouncing the established rituals and festivals as immoral and ungodly"?

REV. DR. H. PEREIRA MENDES.

#### EDITORIAL REPLY.

It is impossible to give any satisfactory reply to the two questions of Dr. Mendes without reference to books; otherwise, the defense of De Wette's position would require the writing of a whole book on the subject. We can only repeat: the theory that Deuteronomy must have been written in the age between the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, viz., not in the days of Moses but some time before 621 B. C., may be regarded now as almost universally accepted. For a summary of the question, from a conservative point of view, see for instance President W. R. Harper's articles in the current numbers of the *Biblical World*. See also the Book of Joshua in the *Polychrome Bible*, page 44, edited by the Rev. W. H. Bennett, professor of Old Testament languages and literature, Hackney and New Colleges, London. In the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, XVIII., pp. 505-515, *s. v.* Pentateuch, Professor Welhausen sums up the belief of scholars as follows: "As regards Deuteronomy and the Jehovist there is tolerably complete agreement among critics. Some, indeed, attempt to date Deuteronomy before the time of Josiah, in the age of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4, 22), or even still earlier; but on the whole the date originally assigned by De Wette has held its ground."

We shall try, however, to satisfy Dr. Mendes and give an answer to his questions in concise outlines.

The institutions and religious views of Deuteronomy can easily be explained as a product of the time immediately preceding Josiah's reign. They were not established facts of history in the time between Moses and Josiah. They are utterly

disregarded by Samuel, Saul, and David and other prominent Israelites, on occasions when they ought to have been minded and mentioned.

The first question, how it is possible that Joshua, who lived 800 years before Josiah, could have obeyed the laws of Deuteronomy, is easily disposed of. The Book of Joshua, like the five books of Moses, is a compilation from mainly two ancient sources, viz., a Judaic (*J*), or southern and an Ephramitic (*E*) or northern, history of Israel. These two accounts, (*J*) and (*E*), were combined into one book, (*JE*). The combination of the two accounts was edited by a harmonising redactor, (*RJE*), and was supplemented by additions written in the Deuteronomic age, (*RD*), viz., the time of Josiah, about 621 B. C.<sup>1</sup>

The Book of Joshua as it now lies before us is a product of these influences and redactions. Accordingly, the portions of Joshua which show traces of the Deuteronomic spirit must be regarded as Deuteronomic additions some of which were made for the purpose of proving the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy.

In reply to the second question, I will gladly concede that the prophets objected to the established rituals, sacrifices, and festivals which were the main function of priesthood in the olden times, on account of the immorality connected therewith. But we cannot be blind to the fact that the prophetic denunciations are sometimes very uncompromising. The prophets do not limit their censure to the immoral features of the ancient forms of worship, but denounce the feasts and Sabbaths themselves, together with incense and oblations, as abominations and iniquity. Although sacrifices are a recognised institution of the Mosaic law, Isaiah says (i. 11-14):

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.

"When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

"Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

"Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them."

Jeremiah expresses the same sentiment: "Your burned offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me."—vi. 20.

Amos is still more emphatic in his condemnation of feast days, solemn assemblies, sacrifices, songs, and music. He says (v. 21-23):

"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.

"Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.

"Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols."

I publish the questions of Dr. Mendes because he means them as a protest against the theory of the late date of Deuteronomy, and thus wishes to indicate that he, a prominent rabbi and a Hebrew scholar, still holds to the doctrine of its Mosaic origin. I gladly comply with his wish, but I declare at the same time that it will be impossible for me to enter into a controversy on the subject. I am, after all, only a student of the Hebrew language and literature, not an investigator and

<sup>1</sup> The italicised letters in parentheses are technical abbreviations of the Old Testament scholars.

a scholar. I have come to the conclusion that the view of the late date of Deuteronomy, which I find almost unanimously accepted by Hebrew scholars, is based on sound arguments.<sup>1</sup> If our venerable correspondent desires to attack this position, he is kindly requested to attack, not me, but scholars of first rank, who hold this view. To refute me would have no effect upon the critical school of Biblical scholars. Yet should there be one among them who is willing to make an elaborate reply, I shall be glad to open the columns of *The Open Court* for a ventilation of the question.

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### COUNT GOBINEAU.

At first sight it seems strange that a Frenchman should become an object of enthusiasm in German circles; but such is the case with the Gobineau Society which counts among its members a number of aristocratic names, and even princes of distinction, in addition to professors, especially such as take an interest in anthropology, and a great number of employees of the German government. The secret probably lies in the revival of race interest, which is the main ideal of Count Gobineau.

Count Gobineau, a Norman nobleman born at Ville d'Avray in 1816, claims to be a descendant of Attar, one of the Norman invaders, who, banished from home in Norway, succeeded in seizing the country of Bray, where his family have remained in possession of large tracts of real estate to the present day.

Count Gobineau received his education in Biel, Sweden, and in Baden-Baden. He served as ambassador several times under Napoleon III. He was secretary to the French embassy in Bern, Hanover, Frankfort, and finally in Persia. To the latter country he was later appointed ambassador. When the fisheries question between England and France as to the right to fish on the Newfoundland coast had to be settled, he was appointed commissioner by the French government. In 1864, he was ambassador to Athens; in 1868, he went in the same capacity to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he became an intimate friend of Dom Pedro. In 1870, he temporarily withdrew from politics, and devoted his energies to the local interests of his home in Normandy, acting as Mayor of Tyre and member of the general council of his *arrondissement*. In 1872, he re-entered the diplomatic service, and accepted the position of ambassador to Norway and Sweden. In 1877, he withdrew definitively from politics, and devoted the rest of his life to a translation of the *Kushnam*, a heroic poem of Persia. In 1880, he became acquainted with Richard Wagner. In 1882, he died among strangers in Turin, while on a journey.

The characteristic work of his life is a book the title of which may be regarded as the key-note to his literary labors; it is entitled *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* (4 volumes, Paris, 1853-1855; second edition, 1884). The Count believes, and there is certainly a grain of truth in it, that race is of paramount im-

<sup>1</sup> See for instance the article "Deuteronomy," pages 1079-1093, Vol. I., of the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, edited by the Rev. T. K. Cheyne and Dr. J. Sutherland. The article is written by the Rev. George F. Moore, professor of Hebrew in Andover Theological Seminary, Andover, Mass., and as it is impossible to give even a meager summary of the arguments, we merely quote the following sentence: "Modern critics are, therefore, almost unanimous in the opinion that the law-book, the discovery and the introduction of which are related in 2 Kings, 22 f., is to be sought in Deuteronomy; and they are very generally agreed, further, that the book was written either in the earlier years of Josiah, or at least under one of his next predecessors, Manasseh or Hezekiah."