

GUNKEL VERSUS DELITZSCH.

BY THE EDITOR.

ASSYRIOLOGY came prominently before the public when Professor Delitzsch delivered his lectures on Babel and Bible before the Emperor. It was an unprecedented advertisement for higher criticism and Biblical research in general, and many good Christians were in this way, for the first time in their lives, informed that a new conception of the Bible was all but universally acknowledged within the academic circles of theological scholars.

We have published Delitzsch's lectures on "Babel and Bible" because they are one of the most interesting publications of the present time and give us much food for thought. In order to enable the reader to form his own opinion, we incorporated in our edition the letter of Emperor William and the most significant criticisms of Delitzsch's position, partly entire and partly in extract. A few weeks ago we took occasion to notice a translation of Koenig's "Bible and Babylon," and now find that some anonymous scholar has ventured into translating Professor Hermann Gunkel's reply to Delitzsch, which appeared some time ago under the title of "Israel and Babylon." Gunkel is a representative theologian, well versed in both Babylonian religion and Old Testament theology, and if any man ought to be called upon to have his say on the subject, it is he.

The pamphlet as it lies before us is a painstaking and even pedantic translation of Gunkel's essay. The translator seems to be aware of the shortcomings of his labors. In the preface he says of his translation:

"In the first place it has been made to conform to the original as closely as possible. Hence what is to our eyes an unusually lavish use of italics and exclamation points. The long paragraphs have been interfered with but little, but occasionally it has been necessary to split some sentence into two or three. In the second place, remembering that the results of the higher

criticism are not very familiar to most persons in this country, many notes have been inserted (in square brackets) to explain references known usually to the expert alone."

In addition to the preface and the supplementary note, these insertions in square brackets, here referred to, are the only indications which we have of the position of the translator. Sometimes he applauds a successful argument of Professor Gunkel as if a second accompany the blows of his own champion with the shout, "Well hit!" Here are some instances:

"And most dogmatically it is by Delitzsch."

"The justice of the point made is unquestionable."

"Prof. Delitzsch's ignorance of the whole theory appears to be absolute."

Gunkel is sometimes hard on Delitzsch, but the translator is severe. When Gunkel chastises him with whips, the translator applies scorpions. When Gunkel blames Delitzsch for quoting a verse from the New Testament without reference to a critical edition of Mark, the reading of which differs from the current version, the translator speaks of "a blunder in quoting the New Testament that a German school boy should be ashamed to make."

When Professor Gunkel goes a little far in his radicalism, the translator softens his exposition by quoting more conservative theologians, among them Steuernagel and Driver are favorite authorities.

When Gunkel speaks of the old conception of revelation imbibed by Delitzsch in the circles from which he comes, as "rather mythological," the translator sees in this comment a disparagement of Delitzsch's father, the venerable theologian, Franz Delitzsch, and adds:

"The present translator feels bound to say that if Prof. Gunkel could have avoided this apparent insinuation, it would probably add to the good temper of all parties concerned. However, the reference was needed to emphasize his argument here."*

The translator does not conceal his delight at having found a man of Gunkel's learnedness who enters the lists against Delitzsch. He trusts that he has found the David who will smite Goliath. He introduces Gunkel as the champion of theology. But Gunkel's

*There is no evidence that Gunkel actually referred to Franz Delitzsch, the father. It is more probable that he thought of the general atmosphere which prevailed in theological circles in the younger days of Friedrich Delitzsch. Franz Delitzsch, although devout and reverent, was quite broad and also progressive for his time, and the son, Friedrich, simply continued to develop in lines laid out by his father. We do not hesitate to claim that the older Delitzsch would not have disapproved of the attitude editorially maintained in the columns of the Open Court.

theology is not the translator's theology and the latter will soon discover that he caught a Tartar.

Anyone who knows Gunkel's thoroughness will understand that he is serious in the application of science to religion. Delitzsch is a mere dilettante in the domain of Higher Criticism when compared with Gunkel.

We have called the attention of the philosophical public to the fact that theology has become a science of late,* and Gunkel is one of the best representatives of modern theology. We have further pointed out that modern theology employs a language of its own. It uses the old terms, "God," "Christ," "miracle," "revelation," etc., and fills them with a deeper and a more spiritual meaning. Every theologian does so, and he has to do so because the world is conservative. Those who are initiated into the craft understand one another perfectly, while the uninitiated are sometimes misled. We fear that the translator of Gunkel belongs to the latter class. Undoubtedly he has studied theology, but he must be very unsophisticated to play out Gunkel against Delitzsch.

Professor Delitzsch's lectures made a great stir not only in the circles of old conservative believers who were greatly astonished that the Emperor, well known for his sincere Christian convictions, could countenance these heterodox views, but also among the colleagues of the lecturer, among professors in theology, and representatives of the higher criticism, the cause of which Delitzsch himself had espoused.

The reason of this "storm in a tea-kettle" is not far to seek. Professor Delitzsch is an ingenious orator and his lectures are distinguished by their elegance of diction. They are calculated to be impressive for an unschooled audience, but they contain many mistakes and reflect much superciliousness. Obviously they were carelessly prepared, and the men who knew better felt indignant to see a number of statements become current which were obviously untenable and even indefensible.

The antagonism which Professor Delitzsch roused is very different in different quarters. There are, first, the conservatives who are opposed to what they consider the destructive character of Delitzsch's views. This party still holds to the idea of a special revelation in contrast to the natural development of evolution. In addition, there are scholars who have no fault to find with the principles of Delitzsch's scientific convictions, but who feel compelled to pro-

*See the author's article, "Theology as a Science," in *The Monist*, Vol. XII., p. 544. Vol. XIII., p. 24.

test against his lack of scientific thoroughness, and here he finds himself confronted with antagonists of every shade of theology.

Still further, a good deal of opposition is of a personal nature, being elicited by the attitude of Professor Delitzsch, in which the personal element is very prominent. The assured facts presented in "Babel and Bible" are the result of a generation of scholars, and are well known to all Assyriologists, but here they appear newsy as if they had been just discovered by the lecturer, whose enthusiasm for his special branch of inquiry seems to dwarf all other studies either to preliminary introductions or to mere side issues. Thus Delitzsch antagonizes at once his colleagues of other faculties, especially the Old Testament scholars, and those who believe in the specific mission of Israel, the *Eigenart* of the Jew, and God's revelation through Judaism.

There are rabbis who feel offended that the glory of Israel should be a mere reflex of Babylonian civilization, and Gunkel says: "He exalts the Babylonian, and debases Israel as far as possible."

"The impression might be created that the Biblical account, because dependent on the Babylonian, is *worthless!* In fact, Delitzsch himself has spoken of 'the purer and more original form' of the Babylonian traditions."

"Delitzsch actually wishes that the Babylonian origin and 'the purer and more original form of this story' should be imparted to the young as soon as they hear of the corresponding Biblical story!"

"We Old Testament theologians are accordingly admonished to learn from the Assyriologist when he teaches matters Babylonian, even when he explains the usages of the Hebrew language from the Babylonian."

"The Bible is disposed of, once and for all—Assyriology has proved that all its fundamentals are Babylonian."

Whatever be the merits of Assyriology, we cannot shelve the study of the Old Testament. Says Gunkel:

"May the Assyriologist, who wishes to speak on Old Testament matters, call the theologian into consultation if he does not feel himself absolutely firm in this subject! So Delitzsch, whom we prize highly as Assyriologist and Hebraic philologist, would have done well, perhaps, if he had used the advice of some expert and cautious specialist in the Old Testament before he offered his opinion on Old Testament religion to the general public."

Gunkel is a thoroughgoing modern theologian who knows that the specific nature of Israel's mission, which not even a secular historian will doubt, is due to the specific conditions under which Israel naturally developed. His God is the God of history, not of a portion of the human race, and revelation, according to Gunkel, is not limited to Israel.

The controversy on "Babel and Bible" has been less acrimoni-

ous in this country, but even here Delitzsch excited much antagonism through his sudden attack on Professor Hilprecht of Philadelphia, which was of a purely personal nature and was characterized by many impartial authorities as absolutely uncalled for.

Professor Gunkel proposes to discuss the subject "with favor to none and with malice to none," and he does not hesitate to recognize the good in Delitzsch's lectures and to criticise what he deems mistakes or exaggerations. He enumerates several blunders which ought not to have been made by a popularizer of the results of Semitic scholarship. Delitzsch uses *Sheol*, the Hebrew word for Hell, in the masculine gender, while the Hebrew word is feminine. This is perhaps a mere misprint, or a *lapsus lingue*, but if the latter, it shows that Professor Delitzsch is not sure of his Hebrew grammar. Further, Delitzsch translates Genesis xii, 8, that Abraham "preached in the name of the Lord," while the original reads that he "called upon Yahveh." Gunkel adds:

"*Preached?* Preached to whom? In all good sooth, not to the Canaanites! The word in question means in that place, as all moderns will agree, not 'to preach' but 'to call on,' as in ancient worship."

Delitzsch's etymology of the Semitic word for God, *El*, as meaning "Goal," has been pointed out by almost all of his critics as a strange aberration, nor does Gunkel forget to mention it, and there is no question that Delitzsch's critics are right.

It would be similar if we derived the word God, because in German it is spelled and pronounced "*Gott*," from the verb "to get," and if we said that "God" means that which is to be got, or our aim and goal. No philologist would venture to uphold such a method of etymologizing.

The identification of the name Yahveh in the ancient Babylonian inscriptions with *Jahu Ilu*, which means "*Jahu is God*," is not impossible but doubtful, and Gunkel mentions it merely to condemn the confidence with which Delitzsch proposes a bold assumption as an assured fact.

The translator has been obviously attracted by Professor Gunkel's affirmation of the uniqueness of Israel's position in history, but we feel inclined to think that he misunderstood the statement. Professor Gunkel is a theologian and his specialty is Old Testament history. He knows very well that the religion of Israel is a most significant chapter in the history of mankind. As Greece is the classical country of art and the fundamental conceptions of science; as Rome is the classical center for the development of law,

so Palestine is the classical soil of religion. The churches of Europe are the direct lineal descendants of the religious institutions matured in Judea. Therefore, Israel's religion is a revelation that holds a particular and unique place in the development of mankind. Professor Gunkel says:

"What sort of a religion is it? *A true miracle of God's among the religions of the ancient Orient!* What streams flow here of all-overcoming enthusiasm for the majestic God, of deep reverence before His holy sway, and of intrepid trust in His faithfulness! He who looks upon this religion with believing eyes will confess with us: To this people God had disclosed Himself! Here God was more closely and clearly known than anywhere else in the ancient Orient, until the time of Jesus Christ, our Lord! This is the religion on which we depend, from which we have ever to learn, on whose foundation our whole civilization is built; we are Israelites in religion even as we are Greeks in art and Romans in law. Then if the Israelites are far beneath the Babylonians in many matters of civilization, none the less are they far above them in religion; *Israel is and remains the people of revelation.*"

It is obvious for the sake of passages of this kind, the translator espouses the cause of Gunkel against Delitzsch. All the mistakes of Delitzsch are only subservient to prove that while Delitzsch is a good Assyriologist, he is a bad theologian, and has no right to utter an opinion on either the Bible or Christian doctrine.

The translator says in the preface:

"As an Assyriologist his work can scarcely be questioned. The proper question is: Do his results in Assyriological study form a sufficient basis for his conclusions in theology? Not that this has been overlooked by any means—cf. Budde, especially—but the need was felt for a thorough scientist who should be at once a master of the Babylonian legends and a theologian of the first rank.

"For this reason the work of Prof. Gunkel appears most opportunely. Probably no one is better qualified to speak with authority on the matters involved. In his work 'Schöpfung und Chaos' (1895) he displayed a most perfect acquaintance with the theology and legends of Babylonia and his critical handling of the material was such as to mark an epoch in the study of this subject. In 1900 he published the first edition (second in 1902) of his commentary on Genesis (in the Nowack series), which, beyond all question, is now the authoritative work on this book. His mastery of Babylonian mythology and its influence on the religion of the Old Testament needs no further demonstration than that afforded by this work."

The mistakes of Delitzsch must be freely granted. We have never concealed them and do not hesitate to grant that most of the objections made by Professor Gunkel, although sometimes exaggerated, are well founded, but on the main point, which exactly appears to be the contention of the translator, Professor Gunkel

agrees with his adversary much better than may be generally assumed from the vigorous expressions of the controversy.

We will let Gunkel define his position in his own words. He believes in revelation, but he objects to the antiquated view so vigorously attacked by Delitzsch. Gunkel says:

"The belief that the ancient Israelite religion has arisen not historically but *purely super-historically, super-naturally*, is defended by hardly a single evangelical German theologian. That is not unknown even to Delitzsch."

"Delitzsch thinks he has overthrown *revelation entirely* by proving 'revelation' in this sense to be impossible. 'Revelation' to him is nothing but the supernatural; he *does* know that another concept of revelation has existed among theologians for a long time; but he can regard this as only an 'attenuation' of the old ecclesiastical belief."

"Scientific theology of to-day believes it possesses a deeper understanding of revelation, according to which the divine and the human do not exist together in mere *external* relations, but are bound together internally. The history of revelation proceeds, therefore, among men, according to the same psychological laws as govern other human events. But in the depth of this development the eye of *faith* sees God, who speaks to the soul, and who reveals Himself to him who seeks Him with a whole heart. We recognize God's revelation in the great persons of religion, who receive the holy secret in their inmost hearts and announce it with tongues of flame; we see God's revelation in the great changes and wonderful providences of history. The faith of children thinks, of old and now, that God wrote the tables of the law with His own hand and passed them to Moses; the faith of the mature knows that God writes His commandments with His finger in the hearts of His servants."

"We acknowledge cheerfully and honestly God's revelation wherever a human soul feels itself near its God, even though that be in the most arid and strange forms. Far be it from us to limit God's revelation to Israel. 'The seed is sown on the whole wide land!'"

Delitzsch denies the belief in a special divine revelation; but (says Gunkel) he fights a man of straw, for there is hardly a theologian of standing left who still believes in a special revelation. Theology that is up to date believes in a universal revelation. Delitzsch regards the broadened view an attenuation, but Gunkel says:

"Now is that really an 'attenuation' of the concept of revelation, as Delitzsch thinks? No, we believe that that is a *spiritualization and deepening of it!*"

The new view of revelation is not only deeper, not only more spiritual, but is also based upon a nobler kind of faith, and it includes not only the history of Israel and the Old Testament but also the New Testament. Here Professor Delitzsch's position (according to Gunkel) is doubtful. Professor Delitzsch seems to re-

serve a special position for Jesus in history, while Gunkel boldly takes the consequence of his contention that God's revelation is universal. He says:

"Is our faith in God imaginable without the belief that this God reveals himself to man in history? Or does Delitzsch acknowledge in Jesus an absolutely supernatural revelation? We may perhaps assume so from the manner in which he speaks of Jesus, in any case it will be a great inconsistency if he admits an exception into his philosophy of the universe. For that and not details is the real question."

Gunkel contends that consistency in the philosophy that underlies our scientific labors is most indispensable and he complains of Delitzsch that, leaving one of the most significant problems unsolved, his work is "a very labyrinth of contradictions."

Gunkel may or may not be right in his contention, but he is here in the same boat with Delitzsch. He, too, uses sometimes expressions when speaking of Christ which are apt to make people understand that he still believes in Jesus to find a purely supernatural revelation. Further, Professor Gunkel goes too far when he claims to represent theology, not of today alone, not of Protestant countries only, but of Christianity. He calls his view "the Christian," implying that the old conception is purely "Jewish." "The fathers of the Christian Church," he declares (a view which is not tenable without great limitations), "saw in the great and noble heroes of Greek philosophers, bearers of the seed of the divine word, seed sown everywhere," and adds:

"Let us Christians likewise not* commit the impertinence of Judaism, which thinks to honor its God by despising and abusing all other religions."

"What are the national claims of Judaism to us?"

Those who claim a unique revelation for Israel in the sense that they would exclude the human element and especially the Babylonian influence, find no support in Gunkel's theology, who proposes faith in the "God who reveals himself in history," not in the God who reveals himself to one people only. Gunkel declares that we must submit to the facts revealed in science, for the facts of history are footprints of God. Gunkel says:

"Does not faith in God's revelation fall away if we find Babylonian elements in this religion? Orthodox opponents of Delitzsch have answered these questions affirmatively and have striven with all energy against the assumption of Babylonian elements in the Bible. But the extremists on the other side are of the same opinion also, and for just that reason are rejoicing over the downfall of the Bible and religion. What then is our position to be as opposed to this? A faith—we must say—that is worthy of the name

*The translator here writes "not likewise" instead of "likewise not."

must be *brave* and *bold*. What kind of a faith would that be which is afraid of facts, which abhors scientific investigation! If we really believe in God, who reveals Himself in history, then we are not to dictate to the Highest what the events are to be in which we find Him, but we have only to kiss humbly His footprints and to revere His dealings in history. If we have to alter our views of God's ways in history, because the facts teach us, well, we simply have to do so!"

Gunkel and Delitzsch are here on common ground. Gunkel praises Delitzsch for having "avowed the results of the modern Old Testament study; he had, for instance, designated as a scientifically irrefragable and enduring fact the assertion that the Pentateuch is composed of literary sources very different in kind. He had asserted a primitive Babylonian origin for some of the most familiar portions of the traditions of Israel—in especial for the narratives of creation, the deluge, and even of Paradise—and accordingly declared himself of the opinion that these stories are to be regarded as myths and legends, but not as objective descriptions of real events. The Sabbath, likewise, is of Babylonian origin, and for monotheism itself an analogy is to be found there."

Gunkel freely concedes the paramount influence of Babylonian civilization. He grants that Hammurabi's laws are "a code embodying refined and developed distinctions, which, in part, were far more civilized than those of Israel in the so-called Mosaic code."

Gunkel declares:

"The Babylonian individual also followed the precept: 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.'"

"The story of the slave Hagar, who so became a mother and exalted herself over her mistress, is a striking example of Babylonian law."

"And this law was codified about 2250; it comes from a time a thousand years before there were any people of Israel at all. It is as far removed from Moses as we are from Charlemagne!"

Gunkel further recognizes the significance of the correspondence that was discovered in Tell Amarna in Egypt. He says:

"In that place the archives of Amenophis IV. were excavated, and in them was revealed the correspondence of the Pharaohs with the kings in Babylonia, Assyria, Mesopotamia, Cyprus and with the Egyptian vassals in Canaan. From this international correspondence, which was carried on in the Babylonian language, it was seen that Babylonian was then the international diplomatic language of all hither Asia. The petty kings of Canaan themselves, who then lived under Egyptian suzerainty, wrote to the Egyptian lord not on Egyptian material, i. e., papyrus, nor in the Egyptian language, but on Babylonian material, i. e., on stone tablets, and in the Babylonian language! Let us consider what the predominance of a foreign language in diplomatic communications must mean for the entire civilization. Syria and

Canaan must then have been subject to the influence of Babylonian culture, in much the same way, perhaps, as in the eighteenth century the whole refined world—and the diplomats as well—spoke French! This correspondence, however, which displays an extension of the Babylonian civilization as far as Canaan, dates from the time 1500-1400. Canaan was, as concerns its culture, a Babylonian province, before Israel had forced its way into the country."

There are many Babylonian notions preserved in the Bible; the sacredness of the number "7," the idea of the seven arch-angels, and the speculations which we choose to term agnostic. In addition we have inherited from the Babylonians many methods of mathematics and metrics. We still follow Babylon when we divide the zodiac into twelve signs and the circle into 360 degrees. We still call the seven days of the week after the seven planet gods of the Babylonians. The Babylonian names were translated into Latin, and among the Germans and Saxons into their native speech. Still we must concede that they came originally from Babylonia.

Gunkel's views of the Sabbath will certainly not support the interpretation that is current in the Christian churches of English-speaking countries, and Gunkel fondly imagines that the ancient Jews celebrated the Sabbath, not in the Anglican fashion, by abstaining from work or "avoiding certain transactions," but in the Continental fashion as "a joyous holiday." Gunkel says:

"The ancient Babylonians observed the Sabbath as a fast-day, on which certain transactions should be avoided. The ancient Hebraic Sabbath contains nothing of such ideas, but was held as a joyous holiday."

"Jesus boldly transgressed the Sabbath law, and the Apostle says: 'Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days.' (Colossians II, 16.) The Christian Sunday is not a transference of the Sabbath, but something new and different."

In all things that make Delitzsch heretical in the opinion of old-fashioned theologians Gunkel agrees with him absolutely. Gunkel says:

"We, therefore, agree absolutely with Delitzsch, when he assumes the dependence of the Biblical account of the flood upon the Babylonian; indeed, we regard it as no small merit of Delitzsch that he has been courageous enough to announce in the presence of that illustrious assembly this result of research and, at the same time, to acknowledge without reserve his adherence to the modern criticism of the Pentateuch."

In many respects Gunkel goes far beyond Delitzsch. Gunkel admits the enormous influences of Babylon upon the Jews in post-exilic times. He says:

"The Judaeans again came under Babylonian influence when Nebuchadnezzar deported all 'the officers and the mighty of the land' to Babylonia and so brought them into the immediate sphere of Babylon. Post-exilic Judaism is completely subjugated by the influence of this civilization in all domains of the external life. In the centuries following the exile the people had actually forgotten its native tongue and adopted the Aramaic language, which was then ruling in the whole culture of the Semites. It has become finally in this way a completely different nation, which to the old Israelite people is bound by only a slender thread."

Consider the fact (not here specially mentioned by Gunkel) that the religion of the ancient Israelites was replete with pagan beliefs and pagan institutions and that the Temple of Jerusalem was filled with pagan paraphernalia down to the date of Josiah's Temple Reform in the year 622 B. C. Consider further that the historicity of this Temple Reform itself is discredited, and that at any rate the redaction of the Canon was made either in the Babylonian exile or in the post-exilic days and you will better appreciate the concession here made by Gunkel.

We have no information as to the manner in which Babylonian civilization affected the religion of the Jews, but we happen to have positive information on one point which touches not the least significant doctrine, the belief in resurrection. Gunkel says:

"The ancient Babylonians and Hebrews agreed in the belief that the soul after death enters into the dark under-world [She'ôl], from which there is no rescue for ordinary men. The belief in the resurrection does not yet belong in general to the Old Testament, but arose first in the post-canonical times and in any case not under the influence of the *old* Babylonian religion."

Summing up Delitzsch's views on the higher criticism of the Old Testament, Gunkel says:

"We may adopt this reasoning of Delitzsch most properly, even if we must make exception in some particulars. We hail Delitzsch as a colleague in the battle against the delusion of assuming that the Old Testament is verbally inspired."

"But," adds Gunkel, "this colleague comes somewhat late." He regards Delitzsch's rationalism as antiquated, for modern theology is radically changing. Gunkel continues:

"The theologian who knows the history of his science knows that such polemics against supernaturalism have existed for two centuries, and often have been uttered with much greater material than the scanty store that Delitzsch has hastily raked together. And these century-old polemics bore their fruits years ago. The opponents whom Delitzsch combats exist no more—at least not in academic circles; and the doors he breaks apart with such beautiful zeal have stood open for years. Theology has on all sides dropped that orthodox belief in inspiration, and dropped it long ago."

Let us look closely at one of the differences between Delitzsch and Gunkel.

Delitzsch tends to appreciate what he calls "the purer and more original" traditions of Babel, while Gunkel extols the later Israelitic versions because they are religiously more serious and decidedly monotheistic. Here the difference between Delitzsch and Gunkel must be regarded as a purely personal equation. It is a matter of taste and depends on the purpose which we have in view, whether we prefer the Babylonian epoch (which was a poem pure and simple, not records of a dogmatic religion), or the Jewish legend rationalized on the ground of the belief in one God.

Delitzsch points out that the Babylonian hero of the deluge expresses his compassion for the terrible fate of the drowned people, and so he thinks that the Babylonian version is more humane. Gunkel replies that this feature of the Babylonian epoch "is perchance pleasing to modern sentimentalism," but he adds, "the narrative of the Bible which founds the deluge on the sins of mankind is entirely too earnest to know pity for *justly* punished sinners." Gunkel sums up his views as follows:

"Accordingly the Israelite tradition had by no means simply adopted the Babylonian, but on the contrary it transformed the story with the utmost completeness; a true marvel of the world's history, it has changed dross into gold. Should not we then as Christians rejoice, that in these primitive Babylonian recensions we have found a line to measure how much nearer the God in whom we believe was to ancient Israel than to the Babylonians?"

Note here Gunkel's use of the word "marvel," which is here introduced in a similar sense as in another passage quoted above, the phrase, "a true miracle of God's." It goes without saying that the miracles of which Gunkel speaks happen daily before our eyes, and should Goethe change the old folk-legend of Faust into a grand philosophical drama, he also is inspired of God, his work is a marvel, and a miracle, and he changes "dross into gold." Gunkel is right that all depends upon "the manner in which the subject has been transformed." Gunkel says:

"Our great German poets have adopted repeatedly old material for their greater creations: Goethe's 'Faust,' for example, rests as everyone knows on an older German legend. But who thinks that Goethe's poetry becomes of less worth if we have pointed out to us the book of folk-lore as the source of 'Faust'? On the contrary, his power is seen for the first time when we observe what he has made of the uncouth material. And so it is with the Biblical and Babylonian stories of the deluge."

The difference between Delitzsch and Gunkel is not a difference

in the recognition of facts themselves as it is in the manner of their exposition. Gunkel insists that in spite of all that can be said in favor of Babel, Israel remains a peculiar people with an idiosyncrasy or *Eigenart* of their own, just as the Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians, etc. They are not mere Babylonians, and while Delitzsch calls the Babylonian report of legends "the purer because older tradition," Gunkel insists that the Hebrew version has to be regarded as the nobler because based on a higher and further developed monotheistic view. Gunkel says:

"The religion of Babylon is, on the other hand, indubitably polytheistic, and, in fact, it has a thoroughly crass, grotesque pantheon. If then in Babylon something should be found that savors of monotheism, that is the exception. The great historic effect which results from it is, in this point, not due to Babylon, but to Israel."

Gunkel grants that traces of monotheism can be found also in Babylonia. He says:

"Babylonian priestly wisdom, at a certain point of history, has recognized that the different deities are at the bottom manifestation-forms of the same Divine Essence, a view which the Greek popular philosophy held also at the time of Jesus."

On the other hand, Gunkel does not deny that there are traces of paganism in the Bible. Gunkel says:

"Even in the Old Testament there are occasionally marked anthropomorphisms, but these are in no way as crass as is customary in Babylon; that J' eats and drinks never was said by historic Israel. Such downright anthropomorphisms are in the Old Testament *archaisms*, which have remained in the primeval legends of the Deluge and of Paradise, but which have been surmounted by the advancing religion."

Gunkel adds:

"We have in no way the need of finding everything noble and fair in Israel. The Jewish monotheism, for example, this we frankly admit, is frequently sullied by a hate, and often a blood-red hate of the heathen, a fact that we may understand historically from the miserable condition of the continually oppressed Jews, but one which we in no case wish to adopt into our religion; a bigot may defend the prayer 'pour out Thy wrath upon the heathen' but not so we."

While Professor Gunkel grants that the Babylonians have achieved much that is grand and noble, he ranks Israel's religion incomparably higher than "all other religions of the ancient Orient." He says:

"The fairest possession of Israel, however, is the theme of her prophets, that God desires no offering or ceremonies, but piety of the heart and justice

of deeds; this most inner connection of religion with morality is before all the reason through which Israel's religion mounts exalted above all other religion of the ancient Orient! This is Israel's power over man and it remains so, even if Judaism has become again untrue to this mighty idea."

"The prophets of Israel in the exile felt themselves high exalted above the religion of Babylon, which they had before their eyes, despite the pomp and parade with which it was clothed, despite that these gods were the gods of the world-kingdom, despite that Judah was thrown in the dust. They certainly have not judged it *justly*, even as is wont to happen in the strife of religion, but fundamentally they were right. Bêl boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, but through the millenniums resounds the joyous shout of the Singer of Israel: 'Who, O Yahwè, is like Thee among the gods?' The gods of the Babylonians passed away when their time came; to the God of little Judea the hearts of the heathen turned when the time was fulfilled. This most mighty historical event, under whose influence the whole world-history afterwards is developed, must have had a most mighty cause; and what is this cause, what else can it be than the decisive pre-eminence of this religion over the other?"

We do not propose to deny that "this most inner connection of religion with morality" is indeed "the fairest possession of Israel," but when we praise the Hebrew prophets, we need not disparage the other Oriental religions. Does Gunkel not know that Buddha and Lao Tze soared to the same height?

Gunkel upbraids Delitzsch pretty severely for the comment, that "mankind does not deserve a special revelation." The Bible tells us that God wrote the law upon stone tables with his own finger, and yet Moses broke the writing, and made God do the work over again. And where are the tables now? Think of it! Here we have God's own handwriting and the original is lost! It has not been preserved and the copies made of it exhibit most lamentable variations. If we had indeed been in possession of God's own handwriting, what gross irreverence, what carelessness not to keep them and preserve them at any cost!

Delitzsch's intention is obviously to point out that God never wrote the law with his own finger. The Biblical account is not history, but legend. Gunkel blames Delitzsch for not explaining "the history of religion," and he adds in a note:

"How much higher is the standpoint of the old folk-legend, which represents the anger of the hero of Israel at Israel's sin as so great that he threw the Divine tables to the ground in blinding wrath. What would Michael Angelo have said if he had known of this remark of Delitzsch's?"

Delitzsch of course wants to point out that we should not believe in the letter of the Bible, but that we should be allowed to interpret it as folk-legend, and on this point Professor Gunkel and

Professor Delitzsch agree thoroughly, only Professor Delitzsch points out the impious behavior of Moses on the supposition that the legend be true, while Gunkel scorns the rationalistic interpretation and appreciates the beauty of the ancient venerable tale as "old folk-legend."

Gunkel declares that in academic circles the old narrow orthodoxy has died out. Not quite! for even in the German universities there are a few venerable relics of it left, and outside of the academic circles the fact that there is a new theology is not sufficiently known, neither among the clergy engaged in practical church work, nor in the circles of the laity. If they had been so well established as Gunkel assumes, Professor Delitzsch's lectures would not have created such a stir, nor would our translator have ventured to translate Gunkel. The truth is that Delitzsch's statements were new to the Emperor as well as to the large masses of the faithful Christians, and Professor Gunkel knows it very well, for he says at the conclusion of his articles :

"There remains, we must fear, a mistrust in wide circles of the church which has, alas, so long ignored theological science and its assured results."

We conclude. The Babel and Bible controversy has stirred up once more the old *furor theologicus*, but how much milder in its virulence than formerly! The controversy has been bitter on both sides and much that is small has flown in—envy, vanity and rancor. How human we are—even those of us who move in the ethereal heights of divinity and science. Yet in spite of the personalities that occurred, the thunderstorm in the realm of Biblical science has cleared the air, and the oppressive sultriness of the atmosphere is gone. We may grant the statement that :

"Delitzsch's lectures, which neither have added new material nor have been able to say anything especially novel in theology, will soon be forgotten by the public; and future histories of science will hardly mention them."

We may grant that theology has broadened and has been a genuine science; yet we do not grant that the fact is generally known. Delitzsch said nothing new, but it was new to the multitudes of the Christian world, and if we collect the statements on which, tacitly, or confessedly, the most prominent champions of both sides agree, we may grant that Delitzsch was mistaken in many details, but that no one has contradicted him in the point which excited the surprise of the laity, which is on the one hand the denial of revelation in the old sense as a literal inspiration of the Scriptures, and on the other a recognition of the universal revelation of

God in the appearance of truth, wherever it may be, among all the nations of the earth.

We know now that God does not reveal himself after the fashion of a human monarch by dictating his proclamations to special secretaries; God has revealed himself to Israel as he did to Greece, to Rome, to the Brahmans, to the Chinese, to ancient Iranians, etc., everywhere differently yet in the selfsame way; and God is still revealing himself not otherwise than of yore in Israel. God speaks to us wherever truth, or duty, or justice find recognition.

God spoke not through Moses alone nor through Jesus alone. He spoke also through the mouth of Luther, and not less through Goethe, and Schiller, and Shakespeare, and today through inventions and scientists—nay, God does not speak through great men alone, He reveals Himself also in the weak and the humble. He is present wherever a man, even in the common walks of life, attends to his duty. He is present in the nursery, where the children are reared under a mother's care, and even the most trivial household affairs need His affections and consecration. God is present wherever we witness effort upward, or justice trying to do right, or love and forbearance with those that go astray, or patience and charity with those that are lost.