

Richard Simon
and the Beginnings of
Old Testament Criticism

by

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PREFACE

Introductions to the Old Testament usually devote a little space to the history of Criticism. In these historical summaries there is sometimes found a passing reference to Richard Simon, a French Roman Catholic priest of the late Seventeenth Century, and more rarely, to his book, "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament".

Only in the most recent Introductions is it suggested that Simon had concerned himself with anything more than a few critical remarks on the composition of the Pentateuch. Beyond this little seems to be known of him.

To anyone sufficiently curious to enquire further into the work and importance of Richard Simon a very wide field opens. In this thesis, therefore, I have limited my subject to a consideration of his work on the Old Testament, with particular reference to his most important book, "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament".

In the earlier chapters, after outlining the scientific movement of the Seventeenth Century, in which setting Simon is to be seen, being as much a pioneer in

the new approach to the science of Criticism as many of his contemporaries were in other fields, I have given a brief résumé of his life up to the time of the attempted publication of his book and its suppression.

Simon was not especially influenced by any philosophic ideas except in so far as he, with so many others of the period, was given an impetus to enquire and examine by the teaching of Descartes. While his book is intended to be regarded as an answer to the views expressed by Spinoza on the Old Testament, Simon is not concerned with any other part of Spinoza's thought. The chapters on Simon's life until 1678 should serve to show how he was preparing himself for the task of producing his major work on the Old Testament, as well as to reveal his tremendous industry and extensive knowledge.

For the historical details of Simon's life until that time, and for the details of the suppression of the *Histoire Critique*, I must acknowledge my great indebtedness to the small but most informative book by A. Bernus, "Richard Simon et son *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*". This must still be regarded as the authoritative work for the historical details of this part of Simon's life, and frequent reference to it will be found in the text and footnotes. The fruit of painstaking research, it gives a very full account of the circumstances under which Simon's

book was suppressed. I have, however, been able to consult most of the sources for this material and where I have followed Bernus without having been able to corroborate the facts, due acknowledgement has been made.

Following these chapters, I have outlined the history of Criticism before Simon with particular reference to Capellus and Spinoza.

The central chapter, on the contents of the *Histoire Critique*, has, for the sake of convenience, been divided into sections. Here the method adopted has been to summarise, but in some detail, the views of Simon on particular subjects, with comments added and a comparison made, in some cases, with the modern position. It will be observed that his views do not have an uniform value, but for a true assessment of his work even those views which to-day seem wrong or even ridiculous must be included. I have not, however, considered it necessary to point out every case where such errors occur as they will be sufficiently obvious in themselves.

It has been the great defect of all discussions of Simon's work, I feel, that none has given a really full account of his book. Bernus, like the majority of earlier and later writers, has contented himself with an account of Simon's theory of the composition of the Pentateuch and a denunciation of it and dismisses the rest

of the book, the major part of it, in a few pages. F. Stummer has limited himself to a discussion of Simon's criticism of the Pentateuch, and has given a detailed account of it. I do not, however, altogether agree with his conclusions about the importance of Simon's work nor with some of his interpretations of Simon's views. These are discussed in the relevant places.


The controversies aroused by the *Histoire Critique* were also of very great importance and, in Chapter 7 I have given in greatest detail those with Le Clerc and Du Pin. These, in my opinion, are the most important. In them can be seen the emergence of other theories regarding the composition of the Pentateuch and in Simon's replies the interesting question arises of whether his own views on this subject were changing.

I have included a chapter which summarises the remainder of Simon's life and gives some idea of his other work, so that the extent and influence of his writing may be more readily seen.

Lastly, in the Conclusion, I have suggested answers to the questions which have arisen in the preceding chapters and I have given my estimate of his contribution to Old Testament Criticism.

In the Bibliography I have included only those books which I myself have been able to consult.

I wish to thank the many people who have assisted my work in various ways: particularly the Rev. Professor N. W. Porteous, New College, Edinburgh, for his constant help, advice, and suggestions; the Librarians and the Staffs at New College Library, the University Library, Edinburgh, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the British Museum, London; and lastly, my wife for help and encouragement at all times and in so many ways.



(William James Morris.)

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NOTES

Abbreviations: H.C.V.T. for Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament.

Sentimens, for Sentimens de quelques théologiens de Hollande.

Réponse aux Sentimens, Simon's own abbreviation for Réponse au livre intitulé, Sentimens, etc.

Défense, for Défense des Sentimens.

Réponse à la Défense, Simon's abbreviation for, Réponse au livre intitulé, Défense des Sentimens.

Names: The following forms are used throughout this thesis, forms found elsewhere being in parentheses:-

Capellus (Cappellus, Cappel.)

Peyrere (Peyrerius)

Le Clerc (Clericus, Leclerc.)

Turretinus (Turretin, Turretine)

Harlay (Harlai)

Massorah (Masorah)

The so-called 1854 edition of Oeuvres de Bossuet, is cited with the date of the particular volume, e.g. Vol. iii, 1846. The Déforis edition is a separate edition.

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING OF MODERN SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

"The Seventeenth century is notable in the history of science for the development of those ideas which distinguish its modern treatment from that customary in the ancient and mediaeval world, and for the recognition of the principle that scientific theories must rest on the result of observations and experiments." (1)

What was true of the sciences was true also of every sphere of learning. The great upsurge of ideas which developed with the revival of learning and the Renaissance now began to bear fruit in almost every field, and in the seventeenth century the urge towards enquiry and discovery was further influenced, particularly in France, by the writings of Descartes.

In this atmosphere and under these influences lived Richard Simon whose new approach to Biblical Criticism, if not some of his particular theories, is so widely paralleled

(1) W. W. Rouse Ball: European Science in the Seventeenth Century and the Earlier Years of the Eighteenth Century - in Cambridge Modern History. C. U. P. 1908, p. 766. Vol. V.

in other studies, and who has, for that reason, been often called the Father of Biblical Criticism.

What has been said of French Literature in the seventeenth century might have been said of Richard Simon. "In no other period have the distinguishing characteristics of French intellect and genius - method, logical sequence of ideas and lucidity of style - been so conspicuous."⁽¹⁾ The influences which brought about that situation in French literature were those of Montaigne, who began a searching analysis of ideas, of Descartes, thanks to whom writers developed careful ordered arrangement of ideas to produce logical argument, and Malherbe, whose contribution was that of plain, clear, concise language. Bossuet, probably the greatest preacher in France for most of the seventeenth century and destined to be one of Simon's most bitter opponents, himself came under these literary influences. His preaching was noted for its eloquence, vehemence and impetuosity but all were controlled by, and subject to, the discipline of order and method.

More important, however, than the influence of Descartes on order and method in writing was the impetus he gave to researchers in every field to doubt anything until they could prove it by an almost mathematical demonstration. This empirical spirit readily permeated all learning. It

(1) Emil Faguet. French Seventeenth Century Literature. Op. cit. p. 65.

was no longer satisfying to hold a principle because it had always been held or even because it could be deduced in a speculative theoretical fashion. Observation, experiment and description were the activities which this new spirit demanded. It was only natural that the Cartesian philosophy should be opposed and that official steps were taken to suppress it. It was even more natural, however, that it should overcome all such resistance and that it should lead to the most important discoveries in so many diverse spheres.

The effective dissemination of new ideas was immeasurably assisted by the development of printing, by a common language - Latin, and by freedom and ease of travel.

To see the contribution of Simon in its full setting it is necessary to remember how other spheres of study were being revolutionised in this period. At the close of the sixteenth century the invention of logarithms by Napier of Merchiston added greatly to the potentialities of numerical calculations. About this time algebra developed in its modern form thanks to workers like Vieta, Harriott and Gerard. Descartes himself devoted three appendices to his Discourse to Optics, Metrics and Geometry. He originated the customary use of literal symbolism for known and unknown quantities; his system of Analytical Geometry triumphed as a method of research over lesser systems such as that of Gerard. Even more important were the methods

of analysis developed by Newton later in the seventeenth century and more particularly the Differential Calculus invented by Ledwig.

Elementary principles of Trigonometry began to be worked out fairly completely and great advances were made in fields of Mechanics, thanks to Stevinius and Galileo who laid the foundation of Dynamics. In Astronomy the work of Copernicus and Tycho Brahe⁽¹⁾ was continued and developed by Kepler and great advances were made by Galileo with the aid of the newly invented telescope despite the opposition from theologians. The invention of the barometer also in the seventeenth century by Torrichelli opened up a new field in the study of fluids and the pressure exerted by them in which work Pascal, Guericke, Boyle and Mariotte took a leading part.

All these advances were paralleled by the work of Huygens and of Newton whose theory of gravitation was expounded in his "Principia", and Flarsteed, Halley and Bradley all of whom were associated with the development of observational astronomy. The study of hydrodynamics was

(1) When Jean Le Clerc (Clericus) compared Simon to Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, in 'Sentimens de Quelques Theologiens de Hollande, Amsterdam, 1685, p.92, it was with an insulting intent. Simon's views were as much based on imagination as theirs, only his could be disproved. Simon, in Réponse au Livre intitulé, Sentimens, etc., Rotterdam, 1686, p.66, is very anxious to refute the comparison.

started by Newton and he, like Boyle and Hooke, did tremendous research on the subject of Heat.

Similar advances were made in Chemistry by a long and illustrious succession of workers starting with Vesalius in the sixteenth century, who rebelled against appealing to authority and insisted on appealing to nature, and culminating in the seventeenth century in the discoveries of Harvey, Malphigi and Lower. In this list mention must be made of Boyle, Van Helmont, Silvius, and Stahl. Research into the working of the nervous system was carried out by Stensen and Glisson.

In all the natural sciences, discovery and classification kept pace with the advances being made elsewhere and towards the end of the seventeenth century great support was given to all these workers, who toiled almost independently of each other, by the establishment of scientific academies and societies in which they could meet and exchange ideas.

In France, Louis XIV's outstanding Minister, Colbert, had included in his multifarious interests the establishment of five academies - the Academy of Inscriptions and Medals, 1663, the Academy of Science in 1606, the Academie Française, the Academy of Architecture and the Academy of Music. Thus the idea of Academies which had started in the scientific world had spread to many other departments of learning and academies flourished all over Europe, in Naples, Florence,

Rome, London, Dublin, Paris and Moscow.

Such striking achievements in the scientific world are not any more memorable than the work which was carried on among the Arts, and particularly in the Church. Here too the advances were important.

In France, the Congregation of St. Maur, associated with the Benedictine Order, was the only rival to the Congregation of the Oratory which Simon joined, and under the leadership of Mabillon there grew up at St. Maur a worthy reputation for research into the writings of the Fathers of the Church and studies in Ecclesiastical History.

In an age when travel and exploration were at their height it was natural that an interest should be taken in studying the languages and customs of the East, and Simon profited by, and added to, a great many works on these subjects in which his main interest lay.

The work being done in Biblical Studies is described elsewhere.⁽¹⁾ While Simon was among the first in this field to show the effects of this new spirit of the age, in Catholicism and Protestantism and between the two there was a sufficient abundance of controversies to keep everyone alive to the need of having good and sound reasoning rather

(1) Chapter 5.

than rhetorical and allegorical statements which in so many cases had been the substitute for logical argument. It was left to Simon to give this good sound reasoning the foundation of exhaustive research and scientific enquiry.

All this activity Louis XIV surveyed with a benevolence which could express itself in practical support but which was tempered by his policy of centralisation and restraint whenever it seemed likely that complete freedom was being approached too closely.

Hence every new work had to receive his approval, given through various media. In the name of national unity and security anything new, anything different, was liable to suppression whether it was Protestantism, Cartesian philosophy, Jansenism, or the ideas of an almost unknown priest of the Congregation of the Oratory - Richard Simon.

CHAPTER 2

THE EARLIER YEARS

Richard Simon was born at Dieppe on 13th May, 1638, of poor parents, Joachim and Marguerite Simon, and was baptised four days later in the parish of St. Jaques. His father was a blacksmith.

His first studies were at the College of the Priests of the Oratory at Dieppe. L'Oratoire de France later played a considerable part in the affairs of Richard Simon and its influence on him may be estimated from the fact that his connection with it continued with hardly any interruption from his youth until 1678, when it was abruptly terminated.

L'Oratoire de France was founded in Paris in 1611 by Pierre de Bérulle, later Cardinal de Bérulle, partly on the lines of the Congregation of the Priests of the Oratory which had grown up in Rome a century earlier with Phillipe de Néri as its central figure.

The rise of L'Oratoire de France reveals in yet another

sphere the re-awakening of interest in learning and study of all kinds in seventeenth century France, and using new methods to explore new fields it enjoyed, for many years, an outstanding reputation. Its fundamental aim was to restore the clergy and the ideal of the priesthood to a position of prominence by gathering together a number of devoted priests with a strong sense of their vocation. As a result of this it was hoped that the advance of Protestantism would be blocked by the barrier of an active priesthood which was both itself enlightened and also dedicated to the education of others. "Il n'a d'autre esprit que l'esprit même de l'Eglise, d'autres règles que les saints canons, d'autres vœux que ceux du baptême et du sacerdoce, d'autres liens que ceux de la charité."⁽¹⁾

The composition of the Order and the life intended for it were well summarised in the Papal Bull which gave it authority - "... de prêtres pieux, spécialement appliqués à remplir avec toute la perfection possible les devoirs de la vie sacerdotale et se dévouant à toutes les fonctions qui appartiennent en propre à l'état de la prêtrise Vivre ensemble dans une société soumise à des règles, et dans un esprit de continuelle humilité, se conduire comme les

(1) Bossuet. Oraison funèbre du Père François Bourgoing. Oeuvres Complètes de Bossuet, ed. Louis Vives, Paris, 1854, vol. xi. pp. 170-184.

serviteurs du Tout-Puissant, en cherchant par-dessus tout à réaliser dans toutes leur actions la perfection de l'état sacerdotal, demeurer soumis aux évêques pour les travaux du saint ministère, s'appliquer à la formation des clercs et leur faire cultiver la science, moins pour la science elle-même que pour les services qu'elle permet de rendre aux prochains."(1)

The Order devoted itself with great zeal and ability to training candidates for the priesthood, and in addition to the numerous establishments where the Oratorians held direct control their influence was widely felt. No greater tribute to their efforts could be sought than in the long list of men, famous in many spheres, who were the products of the training of L'Oratoire de France.

By its nature, the Oratory presented a complete contrast to other religious Orders in its relation to the prevailing mode of centralised, impersonal authority. In the Oratory every individual was of importance and had a right to voice his opinions.

It was not surprising that such a body should flourish and branch out, and the second house of the Order to be

(1) L'Oratoire de France au XVII^e et au XIX^e siècle.
A. Perraud, Paris 1866, pp. 48 and 490. See Richard Simon et son Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament.
A. Bernus, Lausanne, 1869, p.11.

established was the one where Simon began his studies, at Dieppe. These Oratorians at Dieppe were responsible for the direction of the College at Dieppe which was later called Le College Communal. Here they taught the humanities, philosophy and theology, and in the time of Simon there were more than 4,000 students pursuing courses there.

Simon studied the humanities and philosophy here, Greek being his main interest. There followed a year of logic and ethics at Rouen under the Jesuits but his family's financial difficulties seemed likely to put an end to his academic career. On his return to Dieppe, however, his parish priest, Adrien Fournier, himself a priest of the Oratory, followed the practice of the Oratorians who selected likely students in the colleges which they directed, to recruit their own Institute in Paris. Fournier had already formed a high opinion of Simon's ability and persuaded the Oratorians to create a scholarship for Simon at their House in Paris.

Richard Simon entered the Congregation of the Oratory on the 8th October, 1658, and after an examination "took the habit" on the 22nd October. After a year as a novitiate and another examination he should have been received as a full member of the Oratory but during that first year he became discouraged by various unspecified

vexations and returned to his home.

His future was now uncertain. But at this early crisis in his career help was not long awaited in the person of Hue de la Roque, later Canon of Rouen and a senior official of the Chapter. Their friendship had begun in Paris and had greatly developed. Like Fournier, de la Roque expected great things of Simon and persuaded him now to return to Paris so that they could study theology there together and promising him the financial help required from his own means.

At the Sorbonne, Simon studied diligently and by himself learned Hebrew and Syriac, believing that, as most contemporary discussion was concerned with the Scriptures, it was essential for him to get back to the original sources of the text. This period of study finished in 1662.

Having now decided that he wished to spend further years in study and research he sought permission to re-enter the Oratory where the conditions would suit his interests. And so, on 2nd September, 1662, he re-entered the Institution in Paris and became a novice once more on 13th September, at the age of 24.

At this time the Superior General of the Order was Le Père Bourgoing, the third to hold the office. It was while he was in office that the building in the suburb of Saint - Michel was presented to the Order and became their

House of Institution, the "nursery" of the Order, as Bernus describes it, ⁽¹⁾ and this Simon now entered.

It was also while Bourgoing was Superior General that there was evidence of disturbance within the Order which reveals something of the nature of the Oratory and also gives warning of the kind of situation in which Simon was to find himself quite quickly. Bourgoing left a reputation for severity and austerity, being accused even of abusing his power, but even so, in his time there were several supporters of Jansenism among the Oratorians, who, though it was openly condemned by those in authority, adhered to their beliefs despite official opposition. In the same way the Cartesian philosophy, which had found a welcome resting place in the Oratory's young and vigorous atmosphere, was gaining in influence against the traditional scholasticism. As a result of such 'infiltrations', internal dissension in the Oratory was becoming not uncommon.

During Simon's first year, in 1663, at the Maison d'Institution, Bourgoing was succeeded by Le Pere Senault whose gentle and conciliatory approach was in complete contrast to that of his predecessor. Simon very soon came into close contact with him, thanks to the feeling of suspicion which the internal dissensions were beginning to

(1) op. cit. p. 14.

foster.

As a novice, Simon should have devoted his time only to meditation and spiritual exercises rather than to a course of studies. The Founder, de Bérulle, had desired this as an antidote to the profane study of classics and philosophy. Simon, however, obtained permission from the Superior of the Institution, Berthad, to dispense with this part of his training so that he could pursue his Biblical studies, on condition that he would assist with the public services of the Community. Berthad, like Fournier and de la Roque, had a great opinion of Simon's abilities, and not only gave him this permission but supplied him with many books to assist his study. He even started to spend an hour daily with Simon, during which time they would read the Bible in the original languages and the commentaries of the Fathers, especially those of Jerome, and works of Biblical Criticism. Simon himself now began to study Arabic.

The exception made in the case of Simon naturally attracted some hostile attention and when some suspicious colleagues noticed such unusual books as the London Polyglot and other English critical works in Simon's room they denounced the 'heretic' to Senault. The Council of the Order was immediately assembled but Simon, thanks to his friend Berthad, was able to emerge unscathed from the subsequent enquiry.

But such occurrences as these disturbed Simon's peace of mind enough to make him consider leaving the Oratory for the Jesuits, among whom he expected to find an atmosphere more congenial to his researches. It was again thanks to Berthad's good advice that he decided to remain in the Oratory, and although almost about to become a Jesuit novice he was made to realise that he would find the same difficulties in their society as among the Oratorians. Accordingly, he remained, armed with Berthad's warning that his abilities would rouse enemies anywhere. And so he completed his year of novitiate.

When his year of novitiate was completed in the latter part of 1663, Simon was sent to the college of Jully to lecture in philosophy. It was a high honour for so young a man. Jully was the foremost college which the Oratory controlled but Simon was not there very long. A year later, Senault recalled him to Paris to catalogue the oriental manuscripts and books in the library of the House in the Rue Saint - Honoré, the most important House of the Order, and the one which had had Senault for Superior before his promotion to Superior General.

For someone with Simon's interests this vast library was all that could be desired. Here he spent several years not only compiling the catalogue, which was a list of books

only, without comments, his first publication,⁽¹⁾ but especially indulging his passion for the study of the treasures around him. Also, while here, he gave instruction to people who were either famous, or about to become famous. These included Raphael Levy, whom he prepared for baptism, and Nicolas Malebranche and Le Cardinal de Noailles, later Archbishop of Paris to whom he taught Hebrew. Here also, he was visited by President de Lamoignon himself a great scholar. Simon made an immediate impression on the President who begged Father Senault to keep him in Paris.

The death of his father and lack of financial means necessitated his departure, however, and in 1668 he returned to Juilly for another year to lecture in philosophy. The following year he was ordered by Father Senault to prepare himself for ordination. Accordingly he was ordained on September 20th, 1670, in Paris, by the Archbishop of Paris, Hardouin de Péréfixe. Another version of his ordination is that it took place at Meaux by

(1) Catalogue des manuscrits hébreux et samaritains de la Bibliothèque Impériale 1866 No. 1295: *Catalogus librorum orientalium qui in Bibliotheca Oratorii Parisiensis asservantur, descriptus a cel. P. Ric. Simon.* See Bernus, op. cit., p.19.n.

Archbishop de Ligny because Juilly was in the diocese of Meaux. (1)

Also in 1670, Simon published a Factum on behalf of some Jews of Metz, accused by their 'parlement' there of child murder. (11) In this work the theological rather than the legal aspect of the case seems to have been stressed.

Simon had not, so far, become involved in open conflict with the Jansenists, although it was probably quite widely known that he had little sympathy with them. The main controversy on the Eucharist, particularly concerning

(1) This is the story given originally by Vigneul-Marville in "Les Melanges d'histoire et de littérature", vol. 1, page 244. He gives an imaginary conversation between Simon and his examiner, in which the latter is easily defeated. This is followed by Simon's nephew, Bruzen La Martinière, in his Eloge historique de Rich. Simon, contained in Lettres Choisies de M. Simon, new edition, Amsterdam, 1730, vol. I. The same story is also given by Nicéron in Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des Hommes Illustres dans la république des lettres, Paris, 1729 to 1731, vol. X, pp. 58 to 64. It is also repeated by Cochet in Galerie Dieppoise, Dieppe, 1862, pp. 333 to 335. Nicéron, op. cit., vol. I, p. 233, had originally said that Simon was ordained in Paris, and Cochet, op. cit., p. 335, admits that it is not certain that the ordination took place at Meaux, adding the testimony of an intimate friend of Simon that Simon was ordained by the Archbishop of Paris.

(11) Factum servant de réponse au livre intitulé: Abrégé du proces fait aux Juifs de Metz. Paris, 1670, 40. Reprinted in Bibliotheque Critique. Amsterdam, 1708. Vol. 1, pp. 109-131.

the belief of the Greek Church on Transubstantiation, had been carried on by the Port Royalist, Nicole, and the Reformed minister, Claude.

In 1669, however, Arnauld came to the support of Nicole with the publication of the first volume of his famous work on the Eucharist.⁽¹⁾ Simon's complaint with both the Port Royalists and Claude was that none of them exhibited a sufficient knowledge of original sources in their attempts to justify their views. In particular he criticised Arnauld's book because the original writings of the Greeks were not accurately reproduced.

These views he was willing to put into writing and to communicate them to Arnauld himself.⁽¹¹⁾ In later works Simon continued his opposition to Arnauld on similar grounds and developed his views on the beliefs of the Greek Church.⁽¹¹¹⁾

(1) La Perpetuité de la foi de l'Eglise Catholique touchant l'Eucharistie défendue contre le livre du Sieur Claude, par Antoine Arnauld, Paris, 1669.

(11) See Apologie pour l'auteur de l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament, contre les faussetés d'un libelle publié par Michel Le Vassor, Prêtre de l'Oratoire, Rotterdam, 1689, pp. 30 seq. Also Lettres Choiesies, 1730, vol. III, pp. 19 seq. This Apologie was probably by Simon. See pp. 271 to 272 below.

(111) See Chapter 8 below.

In 1671, Simon published his "Fides Ecclesiae Orientalis seu Gabrielis Metropolitae Philadelphiensis Opuscula cum interpretatione latina et notis."⁽¹⁾ Simon,⁽¹¹⁾ in this book distinguished between two kinds of Greeks, those quite uninfluenced by the Latin Church and those who had studied in Italy, but who, nevertheless, retained their allegiance to the Greek Church on any points where the Greek and Roman Churches differed. One of the latter was Gabriel of Philadelphia, whose writings Simon now reproduced. These original texts made a most formidable contribution to the controversies between Catholics and Calvinists and this evidence was strengthened by the inclusion in the notes to Simon's book of extracts from the Eastern liturgies in the original with Latin translations.⁽¹¹¹⁾

Possibly Simon's spoken remarks were not altogether tactful, certainly some of his later writings were forthright enough, certainly his attitude to the Jansenists was

(1) Paris, 1671, 4o.

(11) See Cochet op. cit. p. 337.

(111) Quérard, La France Littéraire, Paris 1838, vol. 9, p.160 gives the following title of Fides Ecclesiae:-
Fides Ecclesiae Orientalis, seu Gabrielis Philadelphii opuscula, nunc primum latine versa, cum notis uberioribus, quibus nationum-orientalium persuasio, maxime de rebus eucharisticis, illustratur, praesertim adversus Claudii Calviniani responsum ad perpetuitatem. Parisiis, meturas, 1671, 4o. And adds this comment:-
Rich. Simon donna cet ouvrage comme un supplément au premier volume de la Perpetuité de la foi, dont il accusait les auteurs d'y avoir commis beaucoup de fautes, et d'avoir mal répondu au ministre Claude".

now known. In any case, from these early days there was born a hostility towards him among Arnauld and the Port Royalists and Simon found it difficult to defend himself from the charge of having had deeper motives than that of a desire for truth in publishing such works as the "Fides Ecclesiae Orientalis" which revealed Arnauld in a far from favourable light. Arnauld's Jansenist supporters within the Oratory did not readily forgive Simon.

Once more, in September 1671, Simon was ordered to return to Juilly where he lectured in philosophy and is believed to have acted as Tutor to the young Prince César d'Este of the House of Modena. In May 1672 he again returned to Paris to study and to assist the Librarian, F. le Cointe, at the House in Rue Saint - Honoré.

In 1673 the Oratorians held a series of conferences at their House in Paris. Four of the Oratorian Fathers, among whom were Simon and Malebranche, were concerned with the conferences on Holy Scripture. The Jansenist, Quesnel, and two others, were concerned with the conferences on Patristics.

In 1674, probably as a result of his connection with the House of Modena, Simon published a French translation of an Italian work by Leon of Modena. (1)

(1) Cérémonies et coutumes qui s'observent parmi les Juifs, traduit de l'Italien de Léon de Modène, par D. Recared Simeon, Paris, Billaine, 1674, 120.

Leon of Modena was a Rabbin in Venice. Here is one of the early examples of Simon's eccentric passion for pseudonyms.

In 1675, another translation by Simon appeared, also of an Italian work.⁽¹⁾ This translation was accompanied by critical remarks, not of the most flattering kind.

Meanwhile, in 1672, Father Senault had been succeeded as Superior-General of the Congregation of the Oratory by Father Abel Louis de Ste. Marthe. The theological differences inside the Oratory and the threatening attacks against it from outside made this task difficult enough. He was not helped, however, by his own personal quarrels with influential people such as the Archbishop of Paris, M. de Harlay, and by being unable to deny truthfully accusations of Jansenist sympathies levelled against him from various quarters. Unlike Senault, who had been able to exercise a firm though gentle control over all the affairs of the congregation, Ste. Marthe soon found that the disturbances beneath the calm surface of the Oratory were beginning to show themselves in no uncertain fashion. The struggle between the Jansenists and their opponents inside the congregation was aggravated by the open support

(1) Voyage au Mont Liban, traduit de l'Italian du P. Jérôme Dandini, par R. S. P. (Richard Simon, Prêtre) Paris, 1675, 120.

given to the latter by the powerful Jesuits and by the most powerful representatives of the Church and State, so that when, as sometimes happened, the anti-Jansenists had open differences with their Superior-General, he found himself unable to take the necessary firm action against them.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Simon, who in support of the truth as he saw it, was never silenced by fears of upsetting his superiors, should soon find himself in trouble with Ste. Marthe.

In 1675 he published a book ⁽¹⁾ in support of his friend, Father Verjus, also an Oratorian, brother of Verjus the Jesuit, and later Bishop of Grasse, who was 'grand vicaire' of the Prince de Neubourg, abbé de Fécamp, and who was having a series of differences with the Benedictine monks of the abbey. Simon showed himself very critical of these Benedictines in particular, and of the whole order in general, exposing the intrigues which he believed to be rife amongst them.

The result of this publication was that the Benedictines protested to Ste. Marthe who was already aware that his

(1) Factum pour le prince de Neubourg, abbé commendataire de Fescan, contre les religieux benedictins de la congrégation de St. Maur. Paris, 1675, folio. According to Nicéron it appeared first in 1674 and was reprinted in Bibliothèque Critique (Sainjore) volume 4, see p.287 below.

views and those of Simon were not in accord. He not only rebuked Simon on this occasion but sought to get him out of the way by sending him to Rome, but Simon refused to go. Already Simon had shown himself to be hostile to the Jansenists. Such occurrences as these only increased his hostility which was to have harmful effects later.

The work that Simon had been doing was a splendid preparation for his major publication, "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament". Before that, however, it involved him in the proposed publication of a new translation of the Bible which was being contemplated by the Reformed Consistory of Charenton, near Paris in 1676. Simon, despite his apparent antipathy to the Protestants, evidenced by the many scathing remarks about their abilities which he made in so many of his books, numbered some of their most able scholars among his friends. Among the leading spirits in this undertaking were Claude, Allix, and Henri Justel.

It was as a result of conversations between Justel and Simon about the work of the new translation that the Reformed ministers invited Simon to advise and assist them in their work. Accordingly, in a short time Simon had presented them with a detailed plan containing the method to be followed by anyone wishing to make a good translation of the Bible. This plan was not published then but formed the basis of the one that he included later in *Histoire*

Critique. (1)

Without giving more than a very brief summary here, we may note that Simon begins with guidance on establishing as far as possible the original Hebrew text. The Massoretic text must be regarded only as an excellent copy, and should not be trusted completely. The ancient copies and ancient translations must be consulted. (11) Different interpretations and Scribal errors are to be distinguished from true Variant readings. To do this, the translator must have recourse to the Septuagint, Vulgate, the Targumim and the Syrian translators, and judge, by critical methods, when they read differently from ourselves. He must compare the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Greek, Latin, Arabic, Syriac, Aramaic and other translations where it is obvious that these are based on Hebrew texts other than the Massoretic. He should be at liberty to make emendations with regard to vowel points and accents. Variant readings may be added as marginal notes. He should be thoroughly conversant with the Hebrew language and with the writings of the Rabbinic writers particularly the Bible Concordances and dictionaries. Here

(1) Book III, Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 352 to 363.

(11) Simon acknowledged that it would be difficult to consult ancient copies since, in his opinion, few of those extant are much earlier than 1000 A.D., and most of them have been influenced by the "Massoretic correction". See "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament". Rotterdam, 1685, p.354.

Simon estimates the relative values of such books. He must also have an equally good understanding of the language into which he translates, taking care that it fits, as far as possible, the original sense. He must not let his own literary style obscure the meaning of the original. Where technical terms occur whose meaning is not absolutely certain there should be notes to that effect, and there should be added to the translation a Dictionary of such words wherein the translator should give a fuller discussion of the meaning of the doubtful word. The same method should be followed with Geographical, Chronological and Genealogical difficulties, with tables set out at the end to clarify everything.

This scientifically designed plan was so far superior to anything that had so far appeared and which was the work of a man so greatly superior to the Reformed ministers in knowledge and ability, that they welcomed it with generous approval. Both they and Simon seem to have been sincerely desirous of producing a translation which could be used by Protestants and Roman Catholics alike, and for all their differences on other matters, they were prepared to work together on this with the greatest goodwill.

They, therefore, not only accepted Simon's plan but asked him to make specimen translations on the basis of it as a guide to those undertaking the main work of translation.

In addition to these Simon gave them his translation of the major part of the Pentateuch including some notes. The work of translating the Pentateuch had been assigned to Claude himself. Later, Simon also sent them the work he had done on the Prophets. This was not just a passing interest which Simon had in the project for as late as 1685 he was asked to review the work of the translation of the books of Job, Proverbs and the Prophets. Thus, as will be seen later, he was associated with it until the work ceased. (1)

At about the same time as this was happening in Paris some Reformed scholars in Geneva led by M. Turretinus, Professor of Oriental languages at Geneva, with F. Turretinus, Fabricius Burlamachus, and Benedictus Calendrinus, were themselves considering the publication of a new French translation of the Bible. They were assisted by a sum of 60,000 livres which had been donated by a M. Duillers of Pays du Vaud for a re-printing of the Annotated Bible by Des Marets (2 vols. Elzevir, Amsterdam 1669). Duillers, however, had been persuaded to support the work of Turretinus and his colleagues. Their work was intended to be a new

(1) De l'inspiration des livres sacrez avec une réponse au livre intitulé *Defense des Sentimens*, etc., par le Prieur de Bolleville, Rotterdam, 1687, pp. 77 and 78.

translation directly from the original texts accompanied by a revision of the Notes. Nevertheless it appears from the Project of their work which they published ⁽¹⁾ that they were content to revise simply the Des Marets translation. They sent this Project and specimen translations of Genesis iii and ii Corinthians V with Notes to the translators at Charenton inviting their comments and criticisms. The latter passed the Project, translations and Notes to Simon and asked for his criticism. ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ This criticism, which was returned to Geneva by the Charenton translators as being their opinion without Simon being named as the author, was fairly blunt and recommended Simon's method of translation as being far superior to the Genevan method.

No doubt the French translators at Charenton had hoped for some sort of alliance with their Genevan counterparts for the sake of the 60,000 livres, if nothing else, for they had no comparable financial backing for their own project. But when the Genevan party received their specimen from Paris with a criticism so unfavourable that it did not hesitate to describe their proposed allegorical Notes as

(1) Reproduced by Simon. Réponse au livre intitulé, Sentimens etc. pp. 22 to 24.

(ii) See extracts from these Notes in Sentimens de quelques Théologiens de Hollande etc. Le Clerc. Amsterdam 1685, pp. 30 to 34.

"rubbish", it is not surprising that they refused to co-operate any further with Charenton and any hope that Simon's acquaintances had of financial help was gone.

It was to this failure to secure a share of this money that Le Clerc traced the source of Simon's alleged hostility to the Protestants. According to Le Clerc, Simon undertook to assist the Charenton translators only on a promise that he would be paid 3,000 livres per annum for four years⁽¹⁾. Simon vehemently denied this story for which Le Clerc admittedly produces no evidence, and shows that while, from the very beginning of this episode, he had no high opinion of the Charenton group to deal adequately with such an undertaking on their own, his friendship with them continued long after their break with Geneva.⁽¹¹⁾ There is no mention of 12,000 livres being promised to Simon except in Le Clerc's story and certainly none of its ever having been paid.

In connection with the return of the Genevan specimen to the authors it is interesting to note that Simon, in a Preface to a New Edition of the *Histoire Critique*, in 1685, in which he is pretending to be a Protestant to disguise his identity, alleges that he was with Turretinus when the specimen was returned to Paris. He says, "We were quite

(1) Le Clerc. *Défense des Sentimens etc.* Amsterdam 1686, 8^o pp. 52 to 54.

(11) *Réponse à la Défense* pp. 77 to 79.

scandalised, he and I, when we read in the comments which had been made on the paper which was sent back to Geneva, remarks which wounded charity. There, the sacred Notes which had been taken from the Books of our Fathers and which are very edifying, were treated as rubbish."⁽¹⁾

Simon would go to any lengths to conceal his identity⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ since his book had been condemned by this time, and in fabricating this story he not only helped to achieve his own purpose but also drew attention to the dispute among the scholars of the Reformed Church in Switzerland and France.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

The work at Geneva appears to have ceased after this unfortunate reply from Charenton had been received. Simon says that the Genevan translation would have been published if the dispute between Charenton and Geneva had not arisen.

(1) *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*, par le R. P. Richard Simon, prêtre de la Congrégation de L'Oratoire. Nouvelle Edition et qui est la première imprimée sur la copie de Paris, augmentée d'une Apologie générale, de plusieurs Remarques Critiques, et d'une Réponse par un Théologien Protestant. Leers, Rotterdam. 1685. Preface pp. vi and vii.

(ii) For Simon's protestations that he was not the author of this Preface see *Réponse aux Sentimens* pp. 20 and 21.

(iii) For the controversy between Le Clerc and Simon about this Genevan translation, its authors, the return of the specimen, etc., see Preface to the *Histoire Critique* as above, *Sentimens* etc. pp. 28 ff, *Réponse aux Sentimens*, p.24.

Furthermore, in 1685, after the Edict of Nantes was revoked, the Charenton translators were unable to continue their work.⁽¹⁾ But it was not the end of Simon's interest in a new translation of the Bible, to produce which was his main ambition throughout his life and of which more will be said later.

(1) For the attitude of the Catholics to Simon's participation in the Charenton translation see Bossuet: Oeuvres. Revised Edition. Paris 1846. Tome iii, pp. 171 to 173.

CHAPTER 3

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE FIRST EDITION OF THE "HISTOIRE CRITIQUE DU VIEUX TESTAMENT"

By the end of 1677 Simon had published a number of writings on a variety of subjects. But these were almost in the nature of by-products while he was making the most of his opportunity to study in a way that was not open to most of his contemporaries. Over a period of years,⁽¹⁾ while so many of these minor works were appearing with considerable regularity, he was preparing his major work - "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament".⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

During this period, also, there was a growing hostility towards Simon. His opposition to Arnauld and his anti-Jansenist opinions were largely the reason for this. Although he was, as yet, far from famous, being known only to a fairly limited circle of scholars in Paris, they were

(1) According to Reponse a la Lettre de Mr. Spanheim, H.C.V.T. 1685, p. 667.

(ii) This work is considered in detail in Chapter 6.

some of the most influential figures in the Church. He had refrained, so far, from indulging in controversy in his writings but he had said enough to make the Port Royalists eager to revenge themselves on him whenever an opportunity might arise, the more so since Simon had managed to place them in an unfavourable light while his own prestige in Oriental studies was unassailable.

Such unconcealed opposition made Simon's position in the Oratory extremely delicate. The Superior-General, Ste. Marthe, already regarded with some suspicion and disfavour by the Court, thanks to the influence of the Jesuits and of the Archbishop of Paris between whom and Ste. Marthe there existed the greatest animosity, found that it was becoming increasingly difficult to retain in his own Congregation a priest who was the main enemy of his sole supporters. All the time the constant feuds and rebellious spirit of many of the other members of the Oratory added to the Superior-General's troubles.

It was while Ste. Marthe and Simon were in this state of mutual hostility and suspicion that Verjus, for whom Simon had written his Factum against the Benedictines of St. Maur (p.30), was dismissed from the Congregation. Simon may well have been fortunate to escape dismissal himself as his close association with Verjus brought him under suspicion also. But he benefited from this friendship

when Verjus, in 1676, procured for him the charge of the Parish of Bolleville in Normandy, one of the benefices of the Abbey of Fécamp of which Verjus was Vicar-General. Nevertheless, Simon did not go to Bolleville until 1678.

In March 1678, the *Histoire Critique* was printed except for the Title, Errata, Index, and dedicatory letter.⁽¹⁾ He had already secured the permission to print from the Superior of the Oratory and from the official censor which carried with it automatically the Royal 'Privilege'. In addition, Simon, possibly foreseeing that these would not be sufficient safeguards in the event of there being any opposition to the *Histoire Critique*, had decided that only by dedicating his work to the King himself could he be sure that everything would proceed without interruption. Two Jesuit priests, Verjus, brother of Simon's friend and ex-Oratorian, and La Chaise, confessor of Louis XIV, had undertaken to secure this favour for him.

Just when the way seemed clear but before the book could appear, Bossuet, Bishop of Condom, later Bishop of Meaux, and at this time Tutor to the Dauphin, obtained, almost accidentally, a copy of the Index and, later, of the

(1) *Lettres Choies de M. Simon.* Amsterdam 1730, Vol. iii, p. 107.

Preface. According to one account, ⁽¹⁾ the Chancellor, Le Tellier, obtained the copies of the Index and Preface and communicated the contents to Bossuet. The more reliable version, supported by the evidence of Bossuet himself, ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ is that Le Tellier's first knowledge of the matter came from Bossuet. Simon's printer, Billaine, had sent these copies of Preface and Index to various booksellers and a M. Toinard of Orleans, ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ took them to Renaudot who, in turn took them to Bossuet. Bossuet in his letter ^(iv) simply says that he was informed of the matter by, "un homme bien instruit", and that he received the Index and Preface from him.

Bossuet, it should be understood, was a figure of considerable authority both in the Church and State, the protector of tradition, merciless in striking down anything that was, in his view, sufficiently new to merit the brand

- (1) Gustave Masson - The French Oratorians - 1, Richard Simon. In the Journal of Sacred Literature. Ed. B. Harris Cowper, Vol. IX, London, 1866, p. 252.
- (ii) Letter to Malezieu, Chancellor of Dombes, 19th May, 1702; Oeuvres de Bossuet, Paris 1846, p. 69.
- (iii) Bibliothèque Critique 1708-10, Vol. 2, p. 447. Critique de la Bibliothèque des auteurs ecclésiastiques. Paris 1730 Vol. 2 p. 448.
- (iv) *ibid.*

of heresy. It is not surprising, therefore, that the table of contents of Simon's *Histoire Critique* provided surprises in plenty and caused Bossuet, after the first shock, to take the matter to higher authority.

He went immediately to Le Tellier, taking the printed sheets with him. Le Tellier, without any delay, ordered La Reynie, Lieutenant of Police, to prohibit the sale of the book and to seize two copies,⁽¹⁾ for examination.

Nicole received one of these copies from Bossuet with the instructions that he was to examine it. This he did together with his colleagues, Simon's most bitter opponents and the worst examiners who could have been chosen from Simon's point of view, as far as their feelings towards him and as far as their abilities to make the examination were concerned.⁽¹¹⁾

But they did not need Simon's vast knowledge to be able to see that here was a book that made a new departure from the traditional study of the Bible. Here was a book containing an examination of all that had been so long established and revered. Here, in fact, was another stage

(1) Letters of Le Tellier and La Reynie, Bossuet. *Oeuvres*, ed. Deforis Paris, 1772-90, Vol. X, pp. 507 and 508, see Bernus op. cit. p. 34. Letters of Bossuet to Malézieu, *Oeuvres*, 1846, Vol. iii, p. 69.

(11) Simon's Letter to du Breuil, Feb., 1679. *Lettres Choisies*, Vol. iv, p. 53. *Apologie contre Le Vassor*, p. 21. *Bibliothèque Critique*. Vol. IV, p. 63.

in the development of Biblical Criticism. Acceptance had given way to enquiry. Hardly anything, it must have seemed to these examiners, was safe if such questionings aided by such learning were to be permitted.

Bossuet's attitude may best be shown by his own words. The preface and index alone, he says (1) "me firent connaître que ce livre était un amas d'impiétés et un rempart du libertinage tout y était plein de principes et de conclusions pernicieuses à la foi les mauvaises maximes se trouvèrent répandues." Later he said of Simon and his writings (11) "... ces livres ... qui ... ne peuvent paraître que dans un pays où tout est permis, et parmi les ennemis de la foi ils contiennent une doctrine que personne ne veut approuver; c'est un air de capacité et de science, que de s'écarter des sentiments communs; et ceux qui ne songent pas qu'il y a une mauvaise liberté, louent les auteurs de ces livres comme gens libres et désabusés des préjugés communs. A toutes ces qualités, l'auteur, ajoute celle d'être critique, c'est à dire de peser les mots par les règles de la grammaire, et il croit pouvoir imposer au monde, et décider sur la foi et sur la théologie par le grec ou par l'hébreu dont il se vante."

(1) Letter to Malézieu, op. cit. pp. 69-70.

(11) Preface to Défense de la Tradition et des Saints Pères. Bossuet, Oeuvres. Paris 1846 pp. 279-280.

It was evident that the decisions of Bossuet and the examiners against the *Histoire Critique* would coincide. It was not simply that they disagreed with certain statements and opinions favoured by Simon. This was a clash between two completely opposed attitudes. Simon would sacrifice everything to truth. They would destroy anything to preserve tradition.

Simon had two conversations with Bossuet and Le Sallont, the Superior of the Oratory.⁽¹⁾ Bossuet appeared willing to consider the possibility of obliterating certain passages. But despite his regrets and protestations of sorrow, despite his sentiment that, "il faut toujours tenter les voies les plus douces"⁽¹¹⁾ the result of the examination was that "there was no means of saving the book".⁽¹¹¹⁾

Two others in addition to Simon found themselves in trouble as a result of Bossuet's discoveries. They were Piro, a doctor of the Sorbonne, who had given the official Approval and Ste. Marthe, who had given the approval necessary for any work published by a member of his Order. It appears obvious that neither had examined the book

(1) *Lettres Choies*, Vol. IV, p. 53.

(11) To Malézieu op. cit. p. 70.

(111) *ibid.*

properly. Ste. Marthe admitted this ⁽¹⁾ and was duly rebuked by the General Assembly of the Oratory. ⁽¹¹⁾ Pirot, however, did not make a similar admission so easily. He maintained that his examination had been carried out thoroughly, and that he had requested Simon to correct certain statements, but that so far from keeping his promise, Simon had added several passages after Pirot's examination. ⁽¹¹¹⁾ Simon, of course, denied these charges. ^(1v) He had certainly added the last four chapters containing a careful criticism of Walton's Prolegomena. ^(v)

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- (1) Letter to Le Tellier, 12th May, 1678, in *Mémoires domestiques*, (ms.) Batterel, part 3, Vol. II, Chapter 107. See Bernus, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
- (11) Bernus, *ibid.*, cites *Extrait des actes de la seizieme assemblée de la Congrégation de l'Oratoire*, Paris, 1678, 4^o p. 27.
- (111) Letters of Le Tellier, 15 and 28 April, 1678. *Ceuvres de Bossuet. Déforis* Vol. X pp. 510 and 511 and *Mémoire de la Reynie*, *ibid.* p. 513. Bernus p. 37.
- (1v) *Apologie contre Le Vassor* p. 27 ff.
- (v) *Réponse de P. Ambrun à l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*. Rotterdam, 1685, 4^o, p. 46. *Lettres Choieses*. Vol. 2. p. 275. These are the chapters referred to in the article on Simon in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1911) which wrongly calls them "a translation". E.M. Gray, *Old Testament Criticism*, New York, 1923, App. Y., p. 246, seems bewildered by this error.

Ste. Marthe, at this time, was considerably disturbed over the question of the continued existence of the Oratory. Its assailants, particularly at the Court, and the dissensions over Jansenism inside the Order, were becoming increasingly troublesome. Fearing that the scandal of Simon's offence might prove the culminating blow he wrote at once to Bossuet to free the Order from any association with Simon's ideas.⁽¹⁾ Bossuet replied in most encouraging terms⁽¹¹⁾ assuring Ste. Marthe that neither he nor the congregation had anything to fear.

On 28th April, however,⁽¹¹¹⁾ it was decided that the doctors, Goudin, Boust and Piroet, together with Bossuet^(iv) should make a further examination. The result, it seems now, could never have been in doubt.

But Simon was very optimistic. He had written, a *Memoire instructif touchant le livre qui a pour titre Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*,^(v) trying to rectify anything in the *Histoire Critique* that had caused offence.

(1) *Mémoires domestiques*. Batterel, Chap. 106 acc. Bernus p. 38.

(11) Letter given in full by Bernus, Appendix 1.

(111) Letter of Le Tellier, 28th April, 1678, *Oeuvres de Bossuet*, ed. Deforis, Vol. X p. 511.

(iv) Letter to Malézieu, op. cit. p. 69.

(v) Réponse de P. Ambrun; *Lettres Choiesies*. Vol. 4 p. 52.

He sent copies of it to various influential people including Le Tellier, and still hoped that the support of the Duc de Montausier and La Chaise would see him through the crisis. He wrote to Ste. Marthe (1) on 7th May that he was prepared to alter the *Histoire Critique* in accordance with Bossuet's instructions or to write it in Latin as La Chaise suggested.

Ste. Marthe, however, was determined to save himself and the Oratory at all costs. Whatever Simon might say, it seemed certain to the Superior-General of the Oratory, that Simon and his book would be condemned. Accordingly he wrote to Le Tellier on 12th May a letter similar in its terms to that which he had sent to Bossuet. (11) As soon as Simon's fate was certain, Ste. Marthe summoned his three Assistants and Simon to meet him on 18th May. The result of this meeting was that Simon was excluded from the Congregation. The official record reads as follows: (111) "Le R.P. Général ayant déclaré en présence des trois pères assistants, au P. Richard Simon que M. Pyrot, Dr. en Sorbonne

(1) Mémoires domestiques, Chapter 106 acc. Bernus p.39.

(11) Mémoires domestiques, Chapter 107 acc. Bernus, *ibid.*

(111) From *Régistre des ordres et délibérations du R. P. General de la congrégation de l'Oratoire et de son conseil*, 20th May, 1678. In *Archives de l'Empire*, MM 582 folio p. 151. Quoted by Bernus *op. cit.* p.40.

et censeur des livres, se serait plaint de la mauvaise foi du dit P. Simon en ce qu'il aurait obtenu de lui par surprise une approbation pour faire imprimer son livre de l'Histoire Critique de la Bible et de ce que l'imprimé n'ayant pas été corrigé suivant la censure par le dit sieur Docteur sur l'original manuscrit, il se serait trouvé rempli de propositions fausses ou dangereuses desquelles plusieurs même n'auraient pas été soumises à la censure, il a été résolu que le dit P. Simon serait exclu de la congrégation, et le 21 mai le dit P. Simon ayant été appelé dans la chambre du conseil, l'ordre de son exclusion lui a été signifié." (1)

The Arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du roi announcing the suppression of the Histoire Critique did not appear until the 19th of June. (11)

It ordered "that all copies shall be suppressed, and prohibited from being hereafter printed, sold or retailed, even under the pretext of a change of title, correction or otherwise." The whole edition of 1300 copies was destroyed under the supervision of the Commissioner of Police,

(1) See also Mémoires Domestiques, Chapter 108, and Annales (ms) de la Congrégation de l'Oratoire. Paris, 1791, fol.; Archives de l'Empire, MM 624, p. 92. Referred to by Bernus op. cit. p.40n.

(11) Original ms in Recueil des Arrests du Conseil d'Etat du roi, des six premiers mois de 1678. Archives de l'Empire, E 1792, p.458. Quoted by Bernus, ibid.

Nicolas de la Mare. ⁽¹⁾

Appendix to Chapter 3

The destruction, however, was not as complete as the authorities believed. It is not certain how many copies survived because in the following list some may be duplicated. Barbier ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ names six; Quérard ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ mentions eight. This much is certain. Nicole received one from Bossuet. The Archbishop of Rouen requested one from Simon ^(iv) and probably received it. Simon gave two copies to Justel ^(v) for Lord Clarendon, and Henry Compton, Bishop of London. ^(vi) A copy was in La Maison d'Institution de l'Oratoire and later in la Bibliothèque Mazarine. Another, originally in la Bibliothèque du séminaire de Saint - Magloire, was later in la Bibliothèque du Conseil d'Etat and was transported to Fontainebleau in 1807. L'Abbé Rives ^(vii) bought

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- (1) Mémoires de la Reynie.: Oeuvres de Bossuet, ed. Déforis Vol. X, p. 513.
- (ii) Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes, 2nd edition, Paris 1822-27. Vol. 2, p. 65.
- (iii) La France Littéraire, p. 158.
- (iv) Lettres Choiesies, Vol. iii, p. 266.
- (v) Bibliothèque Critique, Vol. iii, p. 54 - Lettres Choiesies, Vol. IV, p. 58.
- (vi) Nicéron, Vol. 10, p. 69.
- (vii) Chasse aux bibliographes. Vol. 1, p. 497, acc. Quérard op. cit. p. 158.

one for three francs in a secondhand bookshop. This may be the same one which l'Abbé Coste, Canon of Nôtre-Dame, later possessed. M. Paris had one in 1791, bound in blue morocco, and Barbier had one. Simon himself had one ⁽ⁱ⁾ with corrections in the writing of Bossuet and Piro. As it does not seem to be among the books which he left to the Bibliothèque de l'église de Rouen, it may have been burnt along with many other books and papers belonging to Simon at Dieppe. Achille de Harlay, Conseiller d'Etat left another copy, bound in morocco, to the Jesuit College at Clermont. The history of this copy is interesting. It was sold in 1679 for 161 francs at the sale of M. Gaignat; in 1791, for 69 francs at the sale of M. de Saint-Céran; in 1803 for 133 francs at the sale of M. Duquesnoy; ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ then for 51 francs at the sale of M. Hérisson and probably with the library of Yemeniz in 1867. ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ It is now in the British Museum, London, and has been in the possession of the Duc de la Vallière and others.

This copy, and that of Saint-Magloire, ^(iv) contained in

(i) Lettres Choiesies, Vol. iii, p. 262.

(ii) acc. Quérard. *ibid.*

(iii) acc. Bernus, *op. cit.* p. 44n.

(iv) acc. Quérard. *ibid.* The first copy no longer has MS version of Arret. A long MS note hints that it had it at one time.



manuscript the extract of the registers of the Conseil d'Etat, dated 19th June, 1678, and signed, 'Colbert'. Huet, Bishop of Avranches left a copy to the library of the Jesuits of La Maison Professe de Paris and it went to La Bibliothèque du roi, later La Bibliothèque Impériale and again the Bibliothèque Nationale Paris. This copy bears the arms of Huet and has notes in his own writing ending as follows:—⁽¹⁾ "cet auteur a toutes les connoissances nécessaires pour bien traiter la matiere qu'il a entreprise. Il a de l'esprit, de la pénétration, du discernement; talents propres à faire un bon critique, si le jugement y respondoit. Mais il n'a pas veu les consequences des maximes et des propositions dangereuses qu'il a avancées. Son amour propre et sa présomtion luy ont fait traiter avec mépris les Auteurs qu'il a appelez à sa censure, dont la plupart valent mieux que luy: sans esgard mesme pour les SS. Pères et sans respect pour l'Escriture sainte, qu'il a tasché de despouiller de toute son autorité. Affirmatif sans preuves, décisif sans raison, et ne donnant pour argument que ses opinions: contrariant et mutin, plus propre à reprendre les défauts qu'à louer les vertus, et qui, n'estimant personne et blasmant tout le monde, a mérité que tout le monde l'ait blasme." Huet's own judgment may be

(1) Bernus op. cit. p. 43. Masson op. cit. p. 256.

regarded as unsound now but his opinions of Simon certainly found many supporters in 1679, the date which he has written on his copy.

This first edition has a Preface of 10 pages, Tables of Chapters in 4 pages, text 680 pages, containing, as in all editions, three books followed by a catalogue of principal editions of the Bible and a Catalogue of Jewish Authors and other little known Authors quoted in the *Histoire Critique*; with an index in seven pages. Some copies have a 'faux-titre' added later, "*Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*," and nothing more. Simon later made a Catalogue of the faults in this edition but this was not printed. (1)

(1) Réponse à la Défense des Sentimens, p. 109.
Lettres Choisies, Vol. 3, p. 107.

CHAPTER 4THE PUBLICATION OF LATER EDITIONS

With everything and everyone seemingly against him there was nothing for Simon to do but to leave Paris. As a result of the suppression of his book, even people who had never seen it raised a storm of protest and condemnation against him. So he took up residence almost for the first time at Bolleville, his own parish. He never gave any sign of being hurt or unduly worried by anything that was said against him. But he must have missed most of all the libraries in Paris and especially the library of the Oratory itself, in the Rue Saint-Honoré where he had spent so much of his time. However, he continued to visit Paris frequently and lived there again probably from 1683 to 1687 or 1688. (1)

Even when he was at Bolleville, parish work seems to have interfered but little with his studies and his writings.

(1) Cochet op. cit. p. 356.

He was glad to be away from Paris. As he said in a letter to his friend, Lecoqte,⁽¹⁾ he preferred to live alone in the country, than to live in a place where he would have no tranquillity of spirit. He still had a very good library of his own and he still had some friends, and their libraries were at his disposal. He also had a vast collection of notes and manuscripts which were the fruits of his years of study. Far from seeking rest, he continued to study and to produce with wonderful frequency works on various subjects and especially his *Histoire Critique du Nouveau Testament*.⁽¹¹⁾ Moreover, the constant attacks brought against him on account of the *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*, gave his controversial spirit no rest and a great amount of his time was taken up with answering these criticisms and replying to the replies.⁽¹¹¹⁾ It is a source of wonder that he managed to undertake so many tasks and to carry on so many controversies at the same time.

While there were many who had not read the *Histoire*

(1) *Lettres Choisies*. Vol. 2. p. 122.

(11) All these writings and his later life are treated in Chapter 8.

(111) These are further considered in Chapter 7.

Critique who attacked him once his book was officially condemned, there were many others who, as a result of the condemnation were all the more anxious to read it. There was no difficulty in getting it published in Holland and those who discerned a ready market for the forbidden work among the learned and curious alike, were quick to attempt to get an edition into print.

Simon, however, had not ceased to hope that he might still be permitted to have his work printed in France. He seems to have been willing to make corrections in it or to omit parts of it. It remains doubtful, however, exactly how far Simon was prepared to go in this matter. Neither he nor Bossuet is particularly reliable on this subject and the words of both frequently appear to have belied their thoughts and intentions. Bossuet, for his part, professed himself anxious to preserve a work which could give to the world the fruits of so much scholarship and research. According to Bossuet, ⁽¹⁾ Simon offered, in conversation with Bossuet to refute his work and, presumably, to make a corrected edition, and Bossuet was willing to help him as far as he was able, to obtain permission for its publication.

With this prospect in view, Simon was naturally anxious

(1) Oeuvres de Bossuet, Paris, 1846 Vol. 3. Letters to Malezieu, p. 71 and Bertin, p. 73.

that his cause should not be prejudiced by having the original published, even in Holland. In fact he records, ⁽¹⁾ that a Paris dealer, who had a copy of the original Edition, had begun to try to get it published in Holland, when Simon heard of it. He wrote at once to Frémont d'Ablancourt to stop the publication, and since the dealer was a friend of Allix, he was able to get the copy withdrawn.

Soon afterwards, Elzevir, the famous publisher in Amsterdam, wishing to reprint the *Histoire Critique*, persuaded a friend, M. Bigot of Rouen, to write to Simon for the general title of the work which had never been printed. Simon refused this request too, ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Elzevir, however, had obtained a faulty manuscript copy taken by the chaplain of La Duchesse de Mazarin on her orders, ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ from one of the First Edition copies which had been sent to London. ^(iv) He therefore printed this, reproducing all the faults of the manuscript. ^(v) A Latin translation and

- (1) *Réponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 20 and 21.
 (ii) *Réponse a la Défense des Sentimens*, p. 76.
 (iii) Quérard, *op. cit.* p. 159.
 (iv) See p. 50 *supra*. *Lettres Choisies*, Vol. IV, p. 59.
 (v) These are outlined by Simon in the Preface to the *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*, Rotterdam, 1865, pp. i and ii; see also *Réponse aux Sentimens*, p. 141.

an English translation were made from this faulty Edition. The Latin translation, according to Simon, ⁽¹⁾ has suffered even more errors in the course of translation, but while the English translation has its defects too they are not quite so noticeable.

Now for the first time there was official Protestant opposition to Simon's book. A Synod of North Holland condemned it ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ and it was suggested that the States of Holland should be asked to suppress it as being opposed to Protestant Principles, when it was pointed out that as the writer was not a Protestant anyway, he was quite at liberty to say whatever he pleased. ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

So far, at least, Simon's fears that the publication of his book even in Holland would prejudice his chances of having it published in Paris appeared to be unfounded. Bossuet was still willing to meet him and did so more than once. He kept his promise that he would do what he could to get the book examined by the Censor so that it could be

- (i) Preface to *Histoire Critique*, *ibid.*
- (ii) *Apologie contre le Vassor* p. 45, and *Lettres Choisies*, Vol. 3, p. 290.
- (iii) Preface to *Histoire Critique*, Rotterdam 1685, p. 2.

corrected and printed. The Chancellor, Le Tellier, appointed Pirot again to make the examination, and Bossuet, after reviewing the book himself, met with Pirot to discuss it. Pirot, also, seemed well disposed.⁽¹⁾ Bossuet wrote to Simon⁽¹¹⁾ saying, "I will not grudge the trouble I have taken to read myself a work of such consequence; I will confer with you about it willingly, and you will not find any more difficulties with me than with people with whom you are on the most familiar terms."

It would appear, however,⁽¹¹¹⁾ that Bossuet wanted more than slight alterations. Renaudot, who was present at these talks between Simon and Bossuet, says^(1v) that Simon, "avait réformé entièrement son histoire critique du Vieux Testament, sur les censures de feu de M. l'évêque de Meaux; il en avait retranché tout ce qui scandalisait les catholiques et même les protestants..... il était prêt à se rétracter publiquement par une nouvelle édition".

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- (1) See Renaudot's account of the discussion in a letter to Simon in *Lettres Choisies*, Vol. 3, p. 263.
- (11) *ibid* p. 264.
- (111) judging by his letter to Malezieu and Bertin, *Oeuvres de Bossuet*, Vol. 3, pp. 69 ff.
- (1v) *Perpetuité de la foi*, Vol. IV, Paris 1711, Preface; and Vol. V, Paris, 1713, p. 697.

But the conferences continued and there seemed to be no sign of any conclusion when suddenly after two years, Pirot announced to Simon that he would not give his approval to the book. Simon says (1) "he said to me, after having reflected on it, that if he gave his approval to my *Histoire Critique*, it would be surprising to see that he approved now a book which had been suppressed only on the report which he had made of it to M. le Chancelier; to which I replied that that being so he was not obliged to keep it for two years: I took back my copy, telling him that I had not sought his approval and that I had come to see him only by order of the Bishop of Meaux, to whom he had given his word". Bossuet expressed his regrets at this set-back and suggested that he find another examiner, but Simon refused the offer.

It seemed that there was no longer any reason for delaying the publication of the *Histoire Critique* outside France as he had received no encouragement to hope that he would be allowed to publish it in any form in France. Accordingly it was published in Rotterdam by Reinier Leers in 1685. This was identical with the First Edition which

(1) Letter to M. de Harlay, *Lettres Choisies*, Vol. 3, pp. 264 ff. See also Letter of Bertin to Bossuet, 8th June, 1702, in *Oeuvres de Bossuet*, ed. Vives. 1854 Vol. XXVI p. 489.

had been suppressed, except that it contained new Notes, a new Preface and everything that had been written about the *Histoire Critique* up to that time.

In the same year a counterfeit edition was published at Amsterdam as Leers had been unable to obtain the copyright from the States for his edition. But later again in the same year Leers produced yet another edition containing this time a "Réponse à L'*Histoire Critique* par un théologien protestant". Simon always denied that he had anything to do with the publication of these editions.⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless the majority of critics have no doubt that he was very much concerned with it.⁽¹¹⁾

Simon's hopes of publishing the *Histoire Critique* in France were raised again by the intervention of de Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, who had always regarded Simon favourably. Harlay decided, in 1692, that Simon's works should be printed in Paris. Simon's intention was to expand his *Histoires Critiques* of the Old and New Testaments, without any radical changes, to form a new work entitled, "*Bibliothèque*

(1) *Réponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 6, 20, 44 ff., 182, 256; *Réponse à la Défense*, pp. 76 and 109. *Sentimens*, pp. 25-28, 63; *Défense*, 48, 413; *Nouvelles Observations sur le texte et les versions du Nouveau Testament*, Paris, 1695, 4^o, at beginning of Preface.

(11) See Appendix for full discussion of this.

sacrée ecclésiastique et rabbinique", probably in four volumes. The Archbishop agreed with Simon's project and promised to authorise it. He also accepted Simon's suggestion that the official examiners should be assisted by Renaudot, Longuerue and the Dominican, Goudin, a personal friend of Simon.⁽¹⁾ Leers, however, the publisher in Rotterdam, had the rights of the *Histoire Critique* and would have needed financial compensation. The result was that despite the support of Archbishop Harlay, Simon could still not publish his book. It may be noted, in connection with this project of a larger work, that Simon appears to have regarded the *Histoire Critique* as an abridgement of a larger work on the Old Testament, which he intended to publish in Latin.⁽¹¹⁾ In 1684 Simon published a book on various editions of the

(1) *Lettres Choiesies*, Vol. 3, pp. 260 ff. Vol. 4, p. 241. *Biblioth. crit.* Vol. 2, p. 465 ff.

(11) See H.C.V.T. 1685 p. 667; *Histoire Critique des Versions du Nouveau Testament*, etc. Rotterdam, 1690, Preface; *Nouvelles Observations sur le Texte et les Versions du Nouveau Testament*, Paris, 1695, Preface; *Lettres Choiesies*, Vol. 1, p. 233; Bayle: *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*. Aug. 1684, p. 634.

Bible which may be regarded as a fragment of this larger work. (1)

Bossuet had not given up hope, either, of helping Simon to get his work on the Old Testament published. But it had to be corrected and altered to suit Bossuet's ideas on the subject. He wrote to Bertin, a friend of Simon, (11) concerning all Simon's critical writings and particularly regarding his own proposed corrections to Simon's Translation of the New Testament, to explain his plans. He would willingly indicate all the faults in all Simon's works because he had gathered them all together. His views of Simon's works as they were then, without these corrections was that "everything that makes him seem so learned, would seem to be only novelty, boldness, ignorance of the tradition of the Fathers". However, he claims that he "only wishes Simon well and to render his fine talents useful to the Church, talents which he has himself rendered suspect The whole Church will be delighted to see him turn his spirit to something better, and to show himself truly learned not by singularities but by useful researches

(1) *Disquisitiones criticae de variis per diversa loca et tempora Bibliorum editionibus.* Londini. 1684. 40.

(11) 19th May, 1702; *Oeuvres de Bossuet*, 1846, Vol. 3, pp. 72-74.

It must be said again that the matter can be executed in two very easy ways: one, that I write an honest letter to the author, in which I notify him of that which the edification of the Church demands should be corrected or explained in his critical books, commencing with the Critique du Vieux Testament and that he should reply by a letter of acquiescence. The other, that rousing himself to a revision of his works of criticism, etc., as above, and examining the proposals which will be indicated to him privately, there must be changes, corrections and explanations which the edification of the Church demands. This, then, is what will be able to be regarded as a worthy interpretation of Scripture, and not only of the New Testament but also of the Old, the translation of which has plenty of difficulties. To explain myself still further, it is not a question of rejecting all the Critique du Vieux Testament but only the parts which tend to weaken the authority of the holy books. As to the rest, there will be recovered whatever will be good and useful in the Critique du Vieux Testament, as for example, if I remember rightly, on the extent which he gives to the holy language, besides the rabbinic dictionaries by ancient interpreters and commentators. If there is some other fine principle which he has developed in his Criticism, I do not want to deprive it of the praise which it merits; and you see, on

the contrary, that no one is better disposed than I to do justice to him as soon as he will do it to the Church."

It is clear that Bossuet, despite his attempts to make light of the difficulties that such corrections would involve, was willing only to support the publication of a work, which, to suit his demands, would have to be radically changed. Anything which Simon had written which went beyond what Bossuet considered valid, he would oppose and attempt to destroy with all his strength and influence. If, however, Simon was willing to withdraw so much of what he had written, Bossuet, it appears, would have given him the fullest support.

It was, of course, too much to expect that Simon would retract the very beliefs which distinguished him from everyone else. The whole purpose of his book was to make these principles known and to justify them. Bossuet continued to hope that gentle persuasion would succeed where harsh condemnation would fail. But he would never compromise what he believed to be the Truth. At length, in 1702, Simon realised that he could hope no longer that Bossuet would relent.⁽¹⁾ The work that Bossuet was preparing in

(1) Letters of Bertin to Bossuet, 15th and 17th July; Oeuvres de Bossuet, ed. Deforis Vol. X, pp. 469 ff. and 495.

condemnation of Simon, "Instructions sur la Version du Nouveau Testament imprimée à Trevoux", and "Défense de la tradition et des saints Pères",⁽ⁱ⁾ showed no mercy to Simon. Gentle persuasion had failed. The "Défense" was not, however, published until 1753 when both Simon and Bossuet were dead.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Appendix to Chapter 4

The second edition was published by Elzevir and was quickly sold and he published two more editions before 1684.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ The first Elzevir edition was being printed in 1679,^(iv) but although there are references to an edition in 1681,^(v) and in 1683,^(vi) these may be mistaken references to the 1680 edition.^(vii)

- (i) Oeuvres de Bossuet, 1846 Vol. iii, pp. 75-709.
- (ii) See Chapter 8 for the development of the controversy between Bossuet and Simon which turned more upon Simon's *Histoire Critique* and Translation of the New Testament than on his *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*.
- (iii) Bayle: *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, Dec. 1684, art. XI.
- (iv) Pieters; *Annales de l'Imprimerie des Elsevir*, Ed. 2, Gand, 1858, p. 233n. Bernus op. cit. p.131.
- (v) Graf; in *Beiträge zu den theologischen Wissenschaften*, etc., Jena, 1847. Vol. I, p. 203. Bernus. op. cit. p.132.
- (vi) Georgi: *Allgemeines Europäisches Bücher-Lexicon*, Leipzig, 1742, Vol. Vter. Theil. p. 381.
- (vii) See Bernus op. cit. p. 132.

The 1680 edition has the title, "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament" par le R.P. Richard Simon, Prestre de la Congrégation de l'Oratoire. Suivant la Copie, imprimée à Paris, 1680. This was actually printed at Amsterdam.

The Avertissement au Lecteur covers six pages; the Preface by Simon, 17 pages; table of Chapters, five pages; Text, page 1 to 612. The copies to be sold in France placed the above title after the table of Chapters and placed at the beginning of the book this title:- "Histoire de la Religion des Juifs, et de leur établissement en Espagne et autres parties de l'Europe, où ils se sont retirés après la destruction de Jérusalem, écrite par Rabbi Mozes Levi.

A Amsterdam, chez Pierre de la Faille, 1680. (1).

The Latin translation was by Noël Aubert de Versé, who had been converted from Roman Catholicism to the Reformed faith and had been a minister in Holland but was suspended by the Consistory on the grounds of Socinianism. Later he returned to Roman Catholicism. (ii) This translation of the Histoire Critique was printed by Elzevir at the same time as the French Edition. Simon had a very

(1) Bernus p. 132, quoting Pieters p. 357; See also Barbier, op. cit. Vol. II, pp. 66 and 86; Querard op. cit. Vol. IX, p. 159.

(ii) Haag, La France protestante, etc. Paris 1846-59. Vol. I. p. 147 seq.

low opinion of it. ⁽¹⁾ Its full title reads as follows,
 "Historia Critica Veteris Testamenti, sive Historia Textus
 Hebraici a Mose ad nostra usque tempora, Autore R.P.
 Richardo Simone, Presbytero Congregat. Oratoriae.
 E Gallico in Latinum versa a Natali Alberto de Verse,
 S. Theolog. et Medic. Doct. Juxta Exemplar impressum
 Parisiis, 1681 in 4^o, ⁽¹¹⁾ This contained a Preface by
 the translator. There were also copies of this translation
 with a Latin translation of the 'faux-titre' as with the
 French edition. After 1685 the various writings of Simon
 and his opponents about the *Histoire Critique* which appeared
 in the Rotterdam edition were translated into Latin also
 and combined with some copies of this Latin edition of 1681
 purporting to be a new edition of 1685. ⁽¹¹¹⁾ Some copies,
 however, kept the date 1681. Other copies have the title
 of 1681 without the name of the translator and having an
 anonymous preface instead of the translator's preface. The
 letters of De Veil, and Spanheim, the writings of Vossius
 against Simon and his replies, all in Latin, are included.

- (1) Preface to *Histoire Critique*, Rotterdam, 1685:
Réponse aux Sentimens, p. 6, where Simon denies
 that he has seen it, and p. 141; *Lettres Choisies*,
 Vol. 4, p. 59.
- (11) again for 'Paris' read 'Amsterdam'.
- (111) Bernus p. 138 and note quoting Reimann Catalog.
Biblioth. Theol., p. 16. See also Walohius:
Bibliotheca Theologica Selecta. Jena. 1757-65.
 Vol. IV, p. 252.

These are the editions of *Franequerae*, 1698, 4o and pseudonymously, *Irenopoli*, 4o, 1700.⁽¹⁾

The English translation has the title, "A Critical History of the Old Testament. Written originally in French by Father Simon, Priest of the Congregation of the Oratory; and since translated into English, By a Person of Quality. London. Printed and are to be sold by Walter Davis in Amen-Corner, 1682". It contains a Translator's note to the reader in two pages; Errata, in one page; Text, Book 1, pp. 1 to 207, followed by a blank page; Book 2, pp. 1 to 180; Book 3, pp. 1 to 182; Catalogue of Editions of the Bible, pp. 1 to 26; Catalogue of Jewish and other authors, pp. 27 to 40. Simon comments not too harshly on this edition despite its faults, in the Preface to the *Histoire Critique*, Rotterdam, 1685. Bernus,⁽¹¹⁾ gives the Translator's name as R. Hampden, son of John Hampden. Gray,⁽¹¹¹⁾ gives John Hampden. This translation is the "English translation, made from an imperfect edition" referred to in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1911, and of which Gray had no knowledge. It is very

(1) Walchius *ibid.* Bernus p. 139 gives other references.

(11) p. 140

(111) *op. cit.* p. 104.

inexact, the errors increasing in frequency after the earlier chapters which are tolerably accurate.

There is another copy of this same English translation. The Title Page reads "A Critical History of the Old Testament In Three Books: The First treating at large concerning the several Authors of the Bible: The Second containing the History of the chief Translations of the Bible, made either by Jews or Christians: The Third laying down Rules whereby a more exact Translation may be made of the Scripture than hitherto has been. Written originally by Father Simon of the Oratory. With a Supplement, being a Defence of The Critical History, in Answer to Mr. Spanheim's Treatise against it. Both translated into English by H. D., London. Printed for Jacob Tonson, at the Judge's Head in Chancery Lane, near Fleet Street, 1682". Then follow three poems, "To his Friend the Translator of Father Simon", by R.D., "To the Ingenious Translator of the Admirable Simon", by N.L., and "To the Author and Translator of the following Book", by N.T. These are followed by "The Author's Preface", a Table of Chapters, and the Errata, with the same pagination and contents as the other copy. Then follows the title page of the other copy and the translator's Note to the Reader. The Text is exactly the same. After the two Catalogues and continuing the pagination, 41-91, comes "An Answer to Mr. Spanheim's

Letter, or a Letter of a Divine of Paris to one of his Friends, giving him an account of The Critical History of the Old Testament, supposed to be Father Simon's."

The fifth edition of the *Histoire Critique* was published in 1685, having the same text as the Paris (first) edition of 1678 which was suppressed. The title is:- "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament, par le R. P. Richard Simon, Prêtre de la Congrégation de L'Oratoire, Nouvelle édition, et qui est la première imprimée sur la Copie de Paris, augmentée d'une Apologie générale et de plusieurs Remarques Critiques. On a de plus ajouté à cette Edition une Table des matières, et tout ce qui a été imprimé jusqu'à présent à l'occasion de cette Histoire Critique". A Rotterdam, Chez Reinier Leers, 1685, 4o.

There is a new preface the "Apologie générale" of the title which points out the superiority of this edition to that of Elzevir, and criticises the Latin and English translations. It seeks to show that the Protestants have no reason to oppose the book, pointing out that the Protestants are divided amongst themselves in their views on the Bible and that those of them with the greatest ability have a high regard for Simon's book,⁽¹⁾ The last five pages deal with the Criticisms of the Author of

(1) Page 7.

"L'Examen des Méthodes proposées par Messieurs du Clergé de France" and of Dr. Salden of Utrecht. This Preface occupies 14 pages. The Preface from the former editions occupies 14 pages, with marginal notes added. There follows the table of chapters in nine pages and the text and the two catalogues exactly as in the 1678 edition are on pp. 1 to 546 also with footnotes added giving corrections and additions. These notes, like the preface, are attributed to the editor but are all probably written by Simon. Following the text there is the letter from Mr. De Veil to Mr. Boyle, published, according to the Imprimatur of the Bishop of London at the beginning, in 1678, (pp. 547 to 557); the reply in a letter from L. de Lisle, i.e. Simon, to Monsieur J....S. D. R. (pp. 557 to 562); Letter from E. Spanheim, written and published in 1678, "to a friend", containing a criticism of L'Histoire Critique, (pp. 563 to 622); Reply by "un Théologien de la Faculté de Paris, again Simon, written in 1679, (pp. 623 to 667).⁽¹⁾ Next there is the Avertissement, which was at the beginning of the Elzevir edition, in four pages, and lastly an alphabetical index in 41 pages. Quérard,⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ mistakenly says that also included are, *Opuscula Critica adversus Vossium* and Hieronymus Le

(1) All these writings are considered in Chapter 7 below.

(ii) op. cit. p. 159.

Camus judicium, both by Simon. These are certainly in the volume containing Simon's Réponse aux Sentimens and Réponse à la Défense des Sentimens, but not in this edition of Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament.

We have Simon's own judgment on this text, "j'ai aussi suivi cette édition dans mes citations, parce qu'elle est plus correcte que les autres".⁽ⁱ⁾ Whether he meant this edition or the Seventh Edition must remain uncertain as both were published within a short time of each other in 1685. But as will be seen later the text is identical in both.

Simon never admitted that he had anything to do with the publication of this edition.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ But the publisher, Leers, has said,⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ that he received the copy of the original on which he made this edition from Simon. Simon maintains that Leers bought a copy. When the States of Holland refused Leers a 'privelege' for this Edition, Simon attributed this refusal to a Mémoire against the Histoire Critique written by Frederick Spanheim, Professor of Theology, Leyden.^(iv) Simon wished to send a challenge to

(i) Avertissement to Réponse aux Sentimens, 1686.

(ii) See page 35 supra.

(iii) Défense des Sentimens, p. 48; c.f. Réponse à la Défense, pp. 75 and 76, also p. 109.

(iv) Sentimens pp. 26 and 27, also Défense des Sentimens p. 48, and Réponse à la Défense, p. 76.

Spanheim to refute publicly the *Histoire Critique* rather than carry on an attack in secret. This active interest in the fate of this edition, which is further shown in the help he gave Leers to defeat the publication of the counterfeit edition of Amsterdam, ⁽ⁱ⁾ suggests that he was more closely associated with this Edition than he was willing to admit. Nor does he deny, ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ that he is the author of the reply to De Veil in this edition. But this was never printed and it seems likely that Leers must have had it from Simon himself. Later, Simon describes, ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ how "his publisher," Leers, visited him in Paris in 1686 seeking and receiving advice on an important publication. Leers also published most of Simon's later works on the New Testament, and other books of his. Moreover the style and manner of argument in the new Preface is so like his that it is not surprising that it is generally accepted that he is the author of the preface and of the notes and that he was responsible for its publication.

6th EDITION:

Just after Leers had published the Rotterdam edition of the *Histoire Critique*, a counterfeit edition was published

(i) *Sentimens*, p. 456; *Lettres Choiesies*, Vol. 2, p. 218.

(ii) *Réponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 32, 38 and 211.

(iii) *Lettres Choiesies*, Vol. 4, p. 186 ff.

at Amsterdam by a group of publishers who had taken over the business and stock of Elzevir. With the publication of the Rotterdam edition, so much better than Elzevir's edition, it became impossible to sell the latter. Since Leers had been unable to obtain the 'privilége' for his edition, these publishers were able to obtain a copy and issue an identical edition themselves. ⁽¹⁾

This has the same title as the Rotterdam edition but following the title, instead of "A Rotterdam, Reinier Leers", it has, "A Amsterdam, Pour la compagnie des libraires". It has the same date and is a volume of the same size, i.e. 4o.

It follows the text almost exactly, ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ though Le Clerc says, inaccurately, that the Rotterdam edition is, "plus ample". ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

7th EDITION:

After the Amsterdam group began to publish their counterfeit edition, Simon, at the request of Leers, wrote a criticism of a French translation of Le Concile de Trente de Sarpi, which the Amsterdam group had published. This criticism was printed in Nouvelles de la République des

(1) Sentimens, p. 456; Défense des Sentimens, p. 48.

(ii) Bernus, p. 135, note 3.

(iii) Sentimens, p. 456.

Lettres, Oct., 1685. (1)

While Leers could not obtain the copyright of the *Histoire Critique*, he did obtain the copyright for a short work which he included in a new Edition of the *Histoire Critique*. The title of this short work is, "Réponse de Pierre Ambrun, Ministre de Saint Evangile, à l'*Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*, composée par le P. Simon de l'Oratoire de Paris, A Rotterdam, chez Reinier Leers, 1685, avec privilège." This is also 4o and has 48 pages. Having the copyright for this and including it in a new edition, Leers hoped to be able to affect adversely the sale of the Amsterdam counterfeit edition. This seventh edition has the same title exactly as the Rotterdam edition but after, "de plusieurs Remarques Critiques" are inserted the words, "et d'une Réponse par un Théologien Protestant". On the reverse of the title page there is an "Avertissement au Lecteur, Contenu dans une Lettre écrite à Mr. * * * par le Docteur Protestant qui a procuré la Nouvelle Edition de cette *Histoire Critique*". This begins by saying that the writer deserves the thanks he has received for getting a 5th Edition of the *Histoire Critique* which is so much superior to the preceding editions, (i.e. of Elzevir). He expects further thanks for this 7th Edition because it not only

(1) See also *Lettres Choisies*, Vol. 2, p. 218.

contains everything that was in the 5th Edition, but has besides, "une pièce très curieuse et très-importante" a summary reply by one of our Theologians. As this "theologian" has been informed by friends of Simon about Simon's design in the composition of the Histoire Critique, he is able to give enlightenment on several points, and is furthermore a great help to Protestants in answering questions raised in the Histoire Critique on matters that concern them. He ends with a warning against counterfeit editions, saying that he recognises as good and legitimate only that edition which has the signature of Reinier Leers on the reverse page of the Title. That signature, in manuscript, follows.

Apart from the "Réponse de P. Ambrun", and the addition to the title and the insertions in the first six pages of the preface, the contents are exactly the same as those of the 5th Edition. The "Réponse" was added at the end of the book. It has, from its first appearance, been widely accepted as being the work of Simon, despite his denials, because of the style and the spirit which pervades it; and furthermore on account of the various references to details of the suppression of the First Edition which only Simon was likely to have known. As Le Clerc says wittily, if not kindly, but with some truth, "on voit bien qu'elle ne vient que d'un homme qui estime infiniment le P. Simon, et qui découvre des qualitez en lui, qui ne sont bien connues qu'au

P. Simon lui même".⁽¹⁾

OTHER COPIES:

(a) Sometimes the Réponse de P. Ambrun was added to copies of the 5th Edition. They were also sold separately. The Réponse was counterfeited by the Amsterdam publishers despite the copyright. Only instead of "A Amsterdam" there were substituted the words, "Suivant la copie imprimée à Rotterdam, chez Reinier Leers, 1685, avec privilège". It is unlikely that any of the counterfeit copies of the Histoire Critique would be sold without the Réponse once Leer's 7th Edition was published.

(b) S. I. Curtis,⁽¹¹⁾ had a copy of the Histoire Critique with the title page of the counterfeit Amsterdam Edition, ("A Amsterdam Pour la Compagnie des Libraires, 1685") of the Histoire Critique with no reference to the Réponse in the title. All the groups of page numbers, xl + 667 + xlv, correspond to the Amsterdam editions but he adds a group of pages at the end numbering 48. This must mean that the Réponse was included although he does not mention it.

(1) Sentimens p. 456; See also Réponse aux Sentimens, p. 256, and Réponse à la Défense, p. 199.

(11) Sketches of Pentateuch Criticism - II in the Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. 41, London, 1884, p. 664, note 3.

Neither does he mention the letters of Veil and Spanheim and the Replies though they are obviously included in the 667 pages. If this is so, then there were Amsterdam editions without any reference on the title page to the Réponse.

(c) Nicéron, ⁽¹⁾ gives the title with "et d'une Réponse par un Théologien Protestant" added. This volume was published at Amsterdam. Quérard, ⁽¹¹⁾ cannot understand this difference of title and "Amsterdam" and has obviously not known of the counterfeit edition. Bernus, ⁽¹¹¹⁾ assumes that it is a conflation of the 5th, 6th and 7th Editions. But it may well be another Amsterdam edition, in which case, of those containing the Réponse, some mention it on the title page and some do not. Nicéron's correction, "à Rotterdam et non pas à Amsterdam, comme je l'ai mis par inadvertance", ^(1v) may only have resulted from his following La Martinière who would naturally give the Rotterdam edition in his list. ^(v)

(1) op. cit. Vol. I, p. 235.

(11) op. cit. p. 159.

(111) p. 135 and note 4.

(1v) op. cit. Vol. 10, p. 70.

(v) Eloge Historique de Richard Simon. Bruzen La Martinière in Lettres Choiesies. Vol. I, Amsterdam, 1730.

(d) There are copies of the 7th Rotterdam Edition with the reference to the Réponse in the title, the Avertissement and the signature, "Reinier Leers" in manuscript on the reverse side and with the references to the Réponse in the preface but which do not contain the Réponse itself. Apart from this serious omission they are identical with the usual 7th Editions. The one which I have seen has the ordinary title page and the date 1685. On the 'spine' of the volume, however, is the title "Simon Hist: Crit: Du V. et N. Test. Tom. I. Tom. II is the "Réponse de Pierre Ambrun", and the other volumes contain Simon's work on the New Testament. There is no indication of the date of this binding, so it cannot be said definitely if it is common or otherwise.

CHAPTER 5THE TREATMENT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
BEFORE RICHARD SIMON

We must not think of Biblical Criticism as an activity which suddenly began at a comparatively late date, nor can we accurately point to any individual as the first Biblical critic. The study which we call Biblical criticism, with its two main branches, for so long called 'higher' and 'lower' criticism, and with all its modern developments, is only the latest stage of a very long development.

It is true to speak of the "beginning" of this criticism in the post-Reformation centuries only in the sense that in that period there has been an ever increasing emphasis on a scientific approach, on the objective examination not only of older theories, but of the material itself, and the development of this science has been aided by the parallel advances in other sciences.

To give a thorough and complete picture of this development from its earliest beginnings it would be correct to go back to the Old Testament itself, which contains both

the subject-matter of criticism and some primitive criticism of part of its contents.

From such small and far distant origins the history of criticism might be traced, with a survey of the gradual development of the Canon and the discussions upon it from time to time; the history of the Versions and of the state of the Text; the variations in manuscripts; the development and importance of the Talmud; Origen's critical work, particularly in his Hexapla; and the work of the Massoretes.

Even a summary of these and kindred subjects would necessitate a work in itself, and they form now the subject-matter of criticism. The work of many individuals from the earliest centuries of the Christian era contains considerable material for a complete history of criticism. Apart from this approach to the interpretation of the Old Testament as revealed in their commentaries, we can find sometimes their own views and sometimes references to views of others on questions of authorship, authenticity, and date.

Among such writers in whose works these views are recorded are John Damascenus, the writer of the Clementine Homilies, Josephus, Epiphanius, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, Theodoret, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Junilius Africanus.

Throughout the mediaeval period Jewish writers made an immense contribution to the study of the Old Testament,

especially with commentaries, grammatical works, and lexicons. Especially we may mention Saadia, Maimonides, Juda Ha-Levi, *Usually Karo* Kara, Rashi, Joseph and David Kimchi, and as an exegete, Nicholas de Lyra.

While it is impossible here to do more than mention the names of some of the more important figures, we may here refer in more detail to Ibn Ezra (1088-1167) since we shall have to refer to his comments on the Pentateuch, particularly in connection with Spinoza and Simon. He refers to a certain Isaac, whose identity remains doubtful and who is variously supposed to have been Isaac of Toledo, or Isaac ben Suleimann, who dated Gen. xxxvi, 31, in the reign of Jehoshaphat. Ibn Ezra, while condemning Isaac, himself used a very ambiguous style and is assumed to be prudently veiling similar views. He notes in his commentary on the Pentateuch, difficulties to be found in Genesis, but adds that there is a mystery which should not be divulged by those who understand it. On Deuteronomy he gives a more certain opinion. The words 'beyond Jordan', (which the English A.V. has not followed), in Deut. 1, 1, he feels could only be written after the crossing of the river, but adds, "You will understand the true sense of this when you grasp the secret of the twelve...Moses wrote the Law...the Canaanite was then in the land...In the mountain of the Lord it will be revealed...His bed was a bed of iron." These dubious

references are left to a later writer to develop.

We may also notice briefly Isaac Abrabanel, born in Lisbon in 1437, who emphasised the necessity of considering the political and social background, in any treatment of the Bible. His commentaries are prefaced by introductions discussing the character of each book, the date and the author's intention. His theory of the composition of certain books is that they are based on earlier State annals. (Preface to Joshua). It is this idea which Simon adopts and develops in his own criticism of the Pentateuch.

The Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries saw a new impetus given to the study of the Scriptures. The bare statement of the fact scarcely gives a hint of the change effected in the nature of Biblical Criticism by the invention of printing, the Renaissance, and the Reformation. Interest was renewed in the study of languages, not only of the Classics, but also of Oriental languages and kindred studies. New vistas had been opened to students of the Bible by men such as Johann Reuchlin who, in 1506, published the first combined Hebrew grammar and lexicon. In an age when translations of the Bible were abundantly produced, when printing gave greater opportunities to an ever widening public for reading the Bible, an increasing interest in its contents was inevitable.

In connection with this we may here refer to the first

printed editions of the Hebrew text, the Psalms at Bologna in 1477 and the Pentateuch in 1482. The first complete Bible was printed at Soncino in 1488, followed by editions in Naples in 1491-3, and Brescia, 1494. Bomberg's first Rabbinical Bible, edited by Felix Pratensis appeared in 1516-17 and was followed by a second Rabbinical Bible edited by Jacob ben Chayim, 1524-5. He included the Massorah in the margin and revised his text according to it. Unfortunately the manuscripts at his disposal were late and faulty, but his text became to a large extent the basis of the text of later editions. (1) The Polyglot Bibles will be mentioned later.

Since it is our purpose here only to give an idea of the work of some of the outstanding predecessors of Simon, to whom he makes reference in the *Histoire Critique*, a fully detailed account of all the work in Hebrew Studies cannot be given here. (11)

Luther's critical views are not of very great importance but they are worth mentioning here. They were much more liberal than any that had been expressed before him. He found discrepancies in the accounts which made it difficult

(1) See Kahle. *The Cairo Geniza*, London, 1941. pp. 70 seq.

(11) For a fuller account see *The Legacy of Israel*. ed. Bevan and Singer, Oxford, 1927, pp. 283-367.

to posit one author for each book. Hence he regarded Isaiah, Hosea, Jeremiah and Ecclesiastes as works which had been re-edited and added to before they reached their present form. The question of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is, for him, a matter of indifference. The book of Job is not to be regarded as historical but as a literary composition. "These questions of authorship and date troubled the Reformers but little; they had to battle against the Vulgate for the original text and popular versions, and for a simple grammatical exegesis over against traditional authority..."⁽¹⁾

At the same time, Carlstadt ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ denied the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch on the grounds that the diction and style does not change in the narrative of events after his death. Linguistic style is hardly mentioned hereafter as an argument against traditional authorship until we come to Richard Simon.

Calvin regarded the traditional authorship of many of the books as doubtful because they contain accounts of events later than their supposed authors. He did not accept David as the author of all the Psalms or as the editor of the

(1) General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture.
C.A. Briggs. Edinburgh. 1899. p. 248.

(ii) Libellus de canonicis scripturis. Wittemberg. 1520.

Psalter in its present form, but believed that this was the work of Ezra or another. To Ezra also he ascribed the prophecy of Malachi.

In 1574 Andreas Masius published his Commentary on Joshua.⁽¹⁾ Because of various additions and insertions in the Pentateuch he finds it difficult to say what part is due to Moses and what has been written by Ezra or by other inspired men based on historical records. Hebron and Dan, for example were not so called until after Moses' day. Though these men may not have been responsible for more than insertions into the Pentateuch, he believes that they compiled Joshua, Judges, Kings and other books. Despite his assertion that these writers also were inspired, and that if we believe that God is the author of both the events and the accounts of them, human authorship is not important, he was attacked by Roman Catholics and Protestants alike. In addition, Masius printed the Hebrew and Septuagint versions of Joshua with critical notes.

Benedict Pereira, a Jesuit, in his Commentary on Genesis published at the end of the Sixteenth Century, does little more than repeat the conclusions of Masius. Another Jesuit, Bonfrere, in his Commentary on the Pentateuch, 1625,

(1) *Josuae imperatoris Historia, illustrata atque explicata.*
Antwerp. 1574.

considers that the Genesis references to Canaanites, Kings of Israel, Dan and Hebron betray a later hand, and suggests that these are additions rather than align himself with those who hold that these are 'prophetic' utterances of Moses. Another supporter of this idea was Episcopius (d. 1643) who in his *Institutiones Theologicae* suggests that the last six verses of Deuteronomy have been added by Joshua or Aaron's son, Eleazar; that Ezra is responsible for several additions in other books, especially verses praising Moses or those containing place-names unknown in Moses' day; that Joshua or a contemporary wrote a kind of diary which Ezra probably edited to bring it into its present form; that Samuel or, more probably, Ezra had added the last five verses of Joshua.

We now come to a most important controversy which began in the first half of the Sixteenth Century but which was of very long duration. The renewed interest in Hebrew and kindred subjects has been mentioned already. Not only was it the object of scholarly research but it became common for many of the clergy to learn to read it. Both as aids and stimuli to study, therefore, books on Hebrew grammar began to multiply and were widely read, and the increased activity in this sphere had its immediate repercussions on the course of Old Testament criticism.

In 1538, a Jewish scholar Elias Levita, published his

Massoreth Ha-Massoreth. This book attacked one of the traditional ideas about the text of the Old Testament. Extreme variants of the idea were that the vowel-points and accents in the text had been revealed to Adam or to Moses. The general opinion, though not so extreme, was that the points had a great antiquity, and were as old as the rest of the text. But Levita, though believing that the pointing was the work of inspired men, held that they originated in the school of Tiberias, probably in the Sixth Century, A.D. It should be noticed that Ibn Ezra had denied that the vowel points were of the same antiquity as the consonantal text.

For some time this view was widely accepted by Roman Catholics and Protestants alike. But in the ensuing controversies it placed a strong weapon in the hands of the Roman Catholics, and Protestants found that, in taking their stand upon a Bible whose text was open to various readings, they had left themselves open to harassing attacks. With no little eagerness, therefore, many rallied to the support of the elder John Buxtorf, whose view was quite opposed to that of Levita.

In 1620 this outstanding Hebrew scholar, Professor of Hebrew at Basle, published his "Tiberias" in which he gave his assent to the view of the antiquity of the vowel points. He and his son, who succeeded him both as professor and as controversialist, were champions of this cause, and probably

the theory of the antiquity and inspiration of the points owed its longevity to their efforts, though many other Protestants, under their influence, wrote in support of it. These included the British scholars Fulke, Broughton and Lightfoot. Their standpoint is in direct contrast to that of the Reformers themselves, for Luther, Calvin and Zwingli all rejected the idea of an inspired pointing.

The Protestants had an even more able opponent in Ludovic Capellus, Protestant Professor at Saumur, who, in his "Arcanum Punctationis Revelatum" in 1624, brought the whole weight of his vast learning to support Levita's view. In 1645 he published his "Diatriba de veris et antiquis Ebraeorum litteris" in which he dealt in an equally able manner with the consonantal text itself, showing that the present Hebrew square characters are a later form of writing of Aramaic origin.

The struggle between Capellus and the younger Buxtorf continued on this new ground. For fifteen years Capellus had tried to get his most important work, the "Critica Sacra", published, and only in 1650 was his son successful in overcoming the opposition aroused by his father's work on the vowel-points. In this extremely able work Capellus brings together much evidence to prove that the original text of the Old and New Testaments has not been preserved untouched. He not only points out the corruptions in it,

but also proffers a method of re-establishing the text most like the original. In so doing he shows that a sacred text is not immune from the changes that befall any other ancient writings. That could only be so by "some stupendous and incredible miracle" by which such a book would be "divinely inspired and incapable of error". Therefore, if sacred and secular books are subject to like corruptions, there must be a like science to restore them. The work of Capellus was not received unopposed. Many, especially the younger Buxtorf who produced his "Anticritica" three years later, attacked him fiercely, but none could match his scholarly arguments and the tradition of verbal inspiration, though not destroyed, could never again command universal acceptance. Richard Simon, who is aware of some of the defects of the "Critica Sacra", nevertheless describes it as "the most learned work which we have on the several readings and other changes of the Old Testament, and adds that Buxtorf's "Anticritica", though a learned answer, has rather contributed to the reputation of the Critica Sacra than to the disadvantage of it.

A similar contribution to the achievement of a more accurate text was made by J. Morin, like Richard Simon a Priest of the Oratory. With Gabriel Sionita he edited Michael Le Jay's ten volume Paris Polyglot (1629-1645). This was one of several great Polyglot Bibles. In 1520

the Complutensian (printed 1514-17) appeared at Alcala, for which Cardinal Ximenes was responsible. This contained the Old Testament in its Hebrew, Vulgate, Septuagint versions; Onkelos with Latin translation; New Testament; dictionaries and grammar. The Antwerp Polyglot, edited by Arias Montanus, contained Old Testament in Hebrew, some of the Targums with Latin version, LXX and Vulgate; New Testament in Greek, Vulgate and Syriac with a Latin version; and philological and archaeological writings (1569-1572). Brian Walton produced his famous London Polyglot in 1654-57. Richard Simon, who, at the end of his *Histoire Critique*, discusses and criticises all these Polyglots, devotes his last four chapters to a detailed criticism of Walton's Prolegomena (I-XIV) which appear in Vol. 1 of the Polyglot. Nevertheless, he remarks that "we have no Bible as complete as the English Polyglot". It contains the Old Testament in Hebrew with Latin intralinear version, Samaritan Pentateuch and Targum, Septuagint, fragments of the Old Latin, the Vulgate, Peshitta, Arabic, Targums, an Ethiopic version of Psalms and Canticles, and the Persian rendering of the Pentateuch. For all these a Latin version is given. The New Testament is given in Greek with Montanus' Latin version, Vulgate, Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic and the Persian rendering of the Gospels with the Latin equivalents. The last volume has a valuable critical apparatus of variants.

Morin's main responsibility in Le Jay's Polyglot was the publication of the Samaritan Pentateuch and Targum. In 1628 he published an edition of the Septuagint following the Varican edition of 1587. Richard Simon wonders that he should have withheld this from the Paris Polyglot which contained the less perfect Complutensian version. From this time onwards Morin published various works, notably "Exercitations Ecclesiastiques sur le Pentateuque Samaritain"; "Dissertation on the Sincerity of the Sacred Text"; "Opuscules Samaritains"; and "Exercitationes Biblicae de hebraei Graecique Textus Sinceritate". The first part of this work was published in 1633 and the second part posthumously in 1669. In all his writings Morin asserts the superiority of the Septuagint, Samaritan, or Vulgate versions over the Hebrew text, which, he alleges, is so full of errors and corruptions, not all of which are accidental, that the original text can never be re-established with any degree of certainty.

Morin's purpose is confessedly to weaken the position of the Protestants, by undermining the Scriptures which are their Authority, and thus to demonstrate the superiority of the Roman Church in taking the Church and Tradition as the primary authority. He regards any new translation as quite unjustifiable, and maintains that the only reliable interpretation of Scripture is that given authoritatively by the

Church.

Many responded to this challenge and attacks on his extreme opinion came from all sides, one of the most outstanding defenders of the Hebrew text being Simeón de Muis, Professor of Hebrew in Paris. Richard Simon, who devotes a chapter to the work of Morin, shows his unprejudiced scholarship in dealing with the attacks on the Hebrew text and on the Jews. To all of Morin's exaggerations he makes a fair and thoughtful answer, his main principle being to moderate Morin's opinions by indicating the *via media* between them and those which go to the opposite extreme. With similar impartiality Simon goes on to criticise de Muis and shows how his criticism might have been made more effective.

The first edition of the *Critica Sacra* by Capellus was printed in Paris, as we have seen, under the direction of his son. In this he was assisted by Morin, who took the opportunity to remove from the work some of Capellus' criticisms of his own views. As a result, many associated Capellus with Morin and assumed that he, as much as Morin, took an extreme standpoint with regard to the Hebrew Text. This view was answered by Capellus himself in an *Apologia* in which he opposes Morin's more extreme position and prints what Morin had suppressed from the *Critica Sacra*. Like Capellus, Morin is worthy to be remembered for his very valuable work in proving that the Hebrew text is defective

and that the theory of verbal inspiration is untenable. But his reputation as a scholar suffers when he adds that an unpointed consonantal text is part of the purpose of God that men should submit themselves to the judgment of the Church for the interpretation of Scripture.

One year after the appearance of the *Critica Sacra*, Thomas Hobbes published his "Leviathan". In the course of it he gives some critical remarks on the authorship and date of some of the Old Testament books.

Hobbes, for reasons which had been given by others before him, ('unto this day', Deut. xxxiv, 6; 'the Canaanite was then in the land', Gen. xii, 6; 'the Book of the Wars of the Lord', Num. xxi, 14) denies that Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Moses did write, however, all that he is there said to have written, e.g., the Law in Deut. xi-xxvii, which was lost, according to Hobbes, probably in the reign of Rehoboam and recovered by Hilkiah in Josiah's reign.⁽¹⁾ On the grounds that 'unto this day' and similar phrases denote "a time past, beyond the memory of man", he assigns Joshua, Judges, and I and II Samuel to a time much later than the events they record. The only evidence necessary to prove that Kings and Chronicles were written after the

(1) *Leviathan*. Dent. London. 1928. p. 204.

Captivity is to be found in the fact that the history in them continues up to that time, and that books which record these events are themselves quoted. Ezra and Nehemiah, which record the rebuilding of Jerusalem, are obviously post-Exilic. So also is Esther. Hobbes accepted the assurance of Ezekiel xiv, 14 and James v, 11 that Job was a real man ⁽¹⁾ but regards the book as a philosophic treatise on the problem of evil. His main reason for this conclusion is that the whole book, with the exception of the Prologue and Epilogue, is written in Hexameter Verses, a style common to treatises on Moral Philosophy. ⁽¹¹⁾ The compilation of the Psalter is post-Exilic, containing mostly Psalms written by David, but others have been added to these, "some Songs of Moses, and other holy men", and a few post-Exilic psalms. Proverbs is a collection of sayings of Solomon, Agur the son of Jakeh, and the mother of King Lemuel, but Hobbes ascribes the editing of the sayings to "some other godly man, that lived after them all". Ecclesiastes and Canticles are altogether Solomon's, except possibly the Titles and Inscriptions. The most ancient prophets he lists as Zephaniah, Jonah (who is probably not the author, since it is not a record of his

(1) Op. cit. p. 205.

(11) Op. cit. pp. 205-6.

prophecy but the story of his "frowardness and disputing God's commandments"), Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah. Jeremiah, Obadiah, Nahum and Habakkuk all prophesied in Josiah's reign, while Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai and Zechariah were prophets of the Captivity.⁽¹⁾

He considers that the form of the whole of the Old Testament dates from the period between the Return and the Translation in the Septuagint version, and he himself seems inclined to accept the evidence of IV Esdras xiv, 21, 22, that Ezra was responsible for the restoration of the Old Testament.⁽¹¹⁾ It was Hobbes' opinion that for a long period which ended with this work of Ezra, the Jews were without a Book of the Law. In dealing with the question of who has power to make the Scriptures Laws, Hobbes says that the first Law was the Ten Commandments given by Moses as the Civil Sovereign. The Judicial and Levitical Laws, also made canonical by Moses, may have been written by him but he has no evidence to settle the point. To these, other laws were added shortly before the entry into Canaan, and, and these (Deut. xii-xxvi) are the real Deuteronomy, which was written in a book, lost, according to Hobbes, in

(1) Op. cit. p. 206.

(11) Op. cit. p. 207.

the reign of Rehoboam, and recovered in Josiah's reign, and received by him as the Law of God, so that both when they were first delivered and also when they were recovered, it was by the authority of the Civil Sovereign alone that the Scripture was made Law and Canonical. Hobbes goes on to say that apart from this Book of the Law, there was no other book from the time of Moses until Ezra's restoration received among the Jews as the Law of God.⁽¹⁾ And this book itself was first lost in the time of Rehoboam and then burned when Jerusalem was sacked at the beginning of the Captivity so that for two periods the Jews were without any written Word of God, "but ruled according to their own discretion, or by the direction of such as each of them esteemed prophets".⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Hobbes points out that Ezra, when he restored the Scriptures, was High Priest and that the High Priest was then Civil Sovereign. All these discussions on the Law are designed to prove that the "Scriptures were never made Laws, but by the Sovereign Civil Power",⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ and that, as he says more fully, "It is the Civil Sovereign that is to appoint Judges and Interpreters of the Canonical Scriptures: for it is he that maketh the Laws".^(iv)

Hobbes' opinions were violently attacked. But the attacks were directed mainly upon his general conclusions and against the man himself rather than upon his remarks on particular books or verses of Scripture. His references and 'criticisms' are only incidental to his main theme, and appear to be worked in to support his arguments, rather than facts from which he deduces his conclusions.

(1) Op. cit. p. 281 seq.

(ii) Op. cit. p. 282.

(iii) Op. cit. p. 283.

(iv) Op. cit. p. 298.

In 1655 a Frenchman, Isaac de la Peyrère, published two unusual volumes anonymously and with no indication of the place of publication. (1) The first of these was a very small work simply outlining the hypothesis on which the second and larger work is based. The latter was divided into five books. Only Part One appeared. His theory, based on an interpretation of Romans v. 12 to 14, is that the human race began before Adam who was only the father of the Jews.

In the course of his argument, in which he notices, for example, the double account of Creation, the first account referring to the creation of the Gentile Praeadamites, he considers some of the books of the Old Testament. He does not believe that the historical books are original because of the references in them to earlier books, such as the Books of the Just, of Nathan, of Gad, and others.

Similarly, he believes that the Pentateuch is later than Moses because it records his death. Other evidence he finds in Deuteronomy 1, 1, Numbers xxi, 14, Deuteronomy iiii, 11 and 14, and ii, 12. He points out that the obscurities, omissions, and lack of order arise from the fact that the

(1) The first entitled *Praeadamitae, sive Exercitatio super Versibus duodecimo, decimotertio, et decimoquarto, capituli quinti Epistolae D. Pauli ad Romanos. Quibus inducuntur Primi Homines ante Adamum conditi. Anno Salutis, 1655.* The second entitled, *Systema Theologicum, ex Praeadamitarum Hypothesi. Pars Prima. Anno Salutis, 1655.*

Pentateuch contains a selection of copies of different earlier originals. (i)

Peyrère thinks that Moses has written an account of the Exodus from Egypt, the Law delivered on Sinai, the ceremonies described in that Law and the wanderings of the Jews in the desert. Moses has also written a history of the Jews from the time of Adam which he has learned from earlier writers and by revelation. All this earlier history he has written briefly and those who have collected the copies may have shortened the accounts still more. (ii) The books mentioned in the Pentateuch may be copies of original "diaries" of Moses and the Pentateuch must then be regarded as "a copy of a copy". (iii) The basic idea that the Pentateuch is a compilation of earlier sources is important, and it will be seen (iv) how Simon develops the idea with more evidence and puts forward a definite theory.

Spinoza was one of the most important of those who preceded Simon, and it is difficult to assess the extent of his influence upon Simon. Certainly one of Simon's aims was to oppose the conclusions which Spinoza reached in his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus which was published at Amsterdam in 1670. It was published anonymously with a false indication

(i) Systema Theologicum, pp. 182 to 190.

(ii) PP. 194 to 195.

(iii) Op. cit. p. 186.

(iv) Chapter 6 below.

of place and printer. The sub-title indicates the aim of the book, "Containing certain discussions wherein is set forth that freedom of thought and speech not only may, without prejudice to piety and the public peace, be granted; but also may not, without danger to piety and public peace, be withheld."

In the course of achieving his purpose Spinoza discusses such important subjects as inspiration, vocation, and the Law of Moses. In Chapter VII, "Of the Interpretation of Scripture", he maintains that the rule for interpretation is "the natural light of reason".⁽¹⁾ A knowledge of the Hebrew language is all-important, and Spinoza stipulates the necessity for an analysis of each book wherein the environment of the books, the author, the occasion, and the purpose of writing must all be considered.⁽¹¹⁾

Further questions which must be answered about each book should aim at discovering how it was first received, its own history, the different versions of it, why it was received into the Bible, and how all the books have been united to form a whole. Each book should be examined to see what errors the text has suffered and to see if these can be corrected by trustworthy men of ability. When thus a history of Scripture

(1) The works of Spinoza, translated and edited by R. H. M. Elwes, Vol. I, p. 119.

(11) Op. cit. pp. 101 seq.

has been achieved it will be possible to investigate the mind of the prophets and of the Holy Spirit.⁽¹⁾ All these points are considerably amplified until in Chapter VIII he commences his examination of the authorship of the Pentateuch and of the other historical books.

He first considers the points raised by Ibn Ezra. Spinoza sees in him the pioneer of opposition to the traditional view of Mosaic authorship. He concludes that Ibn Ezra intended to imply that the preface to Deuteronomy could not have been written by Moses since he had never crossed the Jordan; that "the whole book of Moses was written at full length on the circumference of a single altar (Deut. xxvii, and Josh. viii, 37), which...consisted of only twelve stones." Thus Spinoza interprets Ibn Ezra's "the mystery of the twelve", but notes the possible alternative interpretations that this phrase may refer to the twelve curses in the same chapter of Deuteronomy or to the last chapter of Deuteronomy recording the death of Moses. The words "Moses wrote the Law" are certainly by someone other than Moses; "and the Canaanite was then in the land", is a clear anachronism, as are the references to "the mountain of the Lord" and to "the bed of iron".⁽¹¹⁾

(1) Op. cit. p. 104.

(11) Op. cit. pp. 121 to 123.

In addition Spinoza raised points of his own. Moses is spoken of in the third person, and he is described as if by another writer, while in Deut. ii, 1, 17, etc. where the Law which he has expounded and written is set forth. Secondly, not only are his death and burial related but he is compared with all the prophets who came after him. Again, places are anachronistically named and narratives, for example, Genesis xxxvi, 31 and Exodus xvi, 34, extend beyond the lifetime of Moses.

Spinoza then refers to books which Moses actually wrote and which are different from the Pentateuch, for example, the Book of the Wars of the Lord, apparently referred to in Exodus xvii, 14, but not named until Numbers xxi, 14; the Book of the Covenant; the Book of the Law of God. Spinoza concludes that what Moses wrote is far less than the Pentateuch and that "the belief that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch is ungrounded and even irrational".⁽¹⁾

The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings seem to him to be written by someone long after the events recorded in them took place, and from their "connection and argument" he concludes that they, as well as the Pentateuch, are compilations but written by a single historian "who wished to relate the antiquities of the Jews from their first beginning

(1) Op. cit. p. 126.

down to the first destruction of the city."⁽¹⁾ The most likely person is Ezra, but Spinoza adds ⁽¹¹⁾ that "Ezra did not put the finishing touches to the narratives contained therein, but merely collected the histories from various writers, and sometimes simply set them down, leaving their examination and arrangement to posterity." This idea of a unity based on a compilation of earlier sources is intended to explain the apparent connection and the contradictions and lack of order.

In Chapter X ⁽¹¹¹⁾ Spinoza deals with the remaining books of the Old Testament. The books of Chronicles were probably written after the Maccabean restoration of the Temple, certainly after Ezra. The Psalms were collected and divided into five books in the time of the Second Temple, and also the Proverbs, or at least in the time of Josiah since in xxv, 1, "the men of Hezekiah" are said to have collected them.

Spinoza believes that the prophecies have been compiled from other books, that they are not in chronological order, and are only fragmentary. Isaiah began to prophesy in the reign of Uzziah and wrote his history (II Chronicles xxvi, 22),

(1) Op. cit. p. 128.

(11) Op. cit. p. 133.

(111) PP. 146 seq.

in a volume now lost. Jeremiah's prophecies are taken from various chronicles with much confusion of order. Ezekiel is only a fragment as the first verse obviously follows from something else and the contents imply that other writings existed. Hosea seems to have written surprisingly little if his book contains everything which he wrote since he is said to have prophesied for more than eighty years. Spinoza thinks it possible that Job was a living person, but that the dialogues are invented. Ibn Ezra was possibly correct in regarding it as a translation. Daniel from Chapter viii onwards is written by Daniel and the earlier chapters, written in Aramaic, Ezra, Esther and Nehemiah seem to have been written by the same unknown author after Judas Maccabaeus had restored the worship in the Temple.

Spinoza, in speaking of the prophets generally, ⁽¹⁾ claims that prophecy varied according to the individual disposition and temperament of each prophet and according to his own opinions irrespective of revelation. He notes that the style of prophecy varies according to the eloquence and culture of the individual prophet. Since the ideas about God varied according to different prophets Spinoza believes that God adapted revelations to the understanding of prophets.

Failing to find a complete and accurate chronology in

(1) PP. 30 seq.

the historical books and observing the inconsistencies in them, Spinoza is confirmed in his opinion that the books have been compiled from various writers without arrangement or examination. (1)

The state of the Text is also considered. He does not believe that the faults are important enough, particularly in doctrinal passages, to render the meaning obscure or doubtful. The marginal notes sometimes marked variant readings and sometimes explained obsolete words but they contain no profound mysteries. There were almost certainly more variants than those which have been noted by the Massoretes.

After reviewing the Old Testament, Spinoza concludes that the Canon was not established before the Maccabees and that what we now have is a selection made by the Pharisees at the period of the restoration of the Temple. He believes that the Sadducees had no part in this as Daniel ii proclaims the doctrine of the Resurrection. From a reference to the treatise of Sabbathus it is obvious that a council met to decide on the inclusion and exclusion of books. It is not, however, possible to demonstrate the authority of Holy Scripture unless each book's authority can be proved. Otherwise the council must be considered infallible, an assumption which cannot be proved. (11)

(1) P. 138.

(11) P. 155.

The great value and importance of Spinoza's work lies in the fact that he gave the first survey of the Bible dealing with the origins of the books and also suggested the value of a history of the state of the Text. Simon not only repeated some of Spinoza's particular ideas but also gives in the *Histoire Critique* a much fuller and scientific development of the general plan at which Spinoza has hinted. Some of Spinoza's conclusions were of a fairly conjectural nature and his criticism forms only a small part of his book.

When Simon's work is considered in more detail it will be observed just how much he owes to some of these writers whose work has been described briefly in this chapter. There is no doubt, however, that in the work of Capellus and Spinoza something similar to the *Histoire Critique* was foreshadowed. Simon gave to the study of Text and Versions a more definite form and so another stage in the development of this study was reached.

CHAPTER 6THE "HISTOIRE CRITIQUE DU VIEUX TESTAMENT"

NOTE: Page references to the text of the Histoire Critique in this and succeeding chapters are always to the Fifth, or Seventh, 1685 Edition, "because it is more correct than the others", as Simon himself says. (Réponse aux Sentimens. Avertissement).

Simon prefaces his book with some remarks in which he shows how it may benefit those who wish to have a thorough understanding of the Bible by outlining the principles which he has advanced in his work.

In the first place such an understanding is impossible unless we know how the Text has changed from time to time, what the changes were, and how they have occurred. He has, therefore, advanced various theories which will obviate many of the difficulties concerning such questions as, Authorship of the Books, the Authority of the Scriptures, Chronology and repetitions in the Text.

Part of Simon's purpose is to oppose the views of

Spinoza which, he maintains, have diminished the authority of the Bible and he includes in the "usefulness" of his own book the fact that he has made it evident that the Protestant principle of dependence on the Scriptures alone has been destroyed by showing the changes that have taken place in the Text. At the same time the book makes it obvious, he assumes, that the only alternative is to accept the authority of the Church and its Tradition.

Bossuet and others, unlike Simon apparently, found it difficult to reconcile this statement with the fact that in so many places Simon's book seems to undermine that Tradition, and denies that the Fathers of the Church are wholly reliable as interpreters of Scripture.

The "Histoire Critique" itself is divided into three books. The first, which is the most important, is a critical history of the Hebrew Text of the Old Testament and the changes in it from the time of Moses up to the present time. The second book deals with the Versions of the Bible, Jewish and Christian, and gives an account of ancient and modern translations. The beginning of the third book outlines a method of translating the Bible (1) while showing how the obscurities in the Text add to the

(i) Summarised page 32 above.

difficulties of the translator. In the same book, finally, and for the greater part of it, Simon reviews the work of the principal Jewish and Christian Commentators on the Bible.

The first eight chapters of Book One are concerned with Simon's reasons for the present state of the Books of the Old Testament, how they have reached their present form, proofs of additions and of alterations, and the possibilities of earlier sources on which the present Books are based or which have been incorporated in them. The division of the Books is the subject of Chapter Nine. In the three following chapters Simon discusses the Samaritan Pentateuch. Chapter Thirteen is devoted to the Origin of the "Samaritan" and "Phoenician" characters ⁽¹⁾ and Simon's theories about the origin of languages in general follow in the next two chapters. Thereafter, Chapters 16 to 29 contain the history of the Text from the time of the Exile up to the first centuries of Christianity with discussions on the manuscript copies of the Text, on the Massoretic Text, and on the division of verses. This Book closes with two chapters on the origin of grammar among the Jews and a history of Jewish Grammarians.

It will be seen from this summary of the contents that in his first book Simon covers a wide field and undertakes

(1) These terms are discussed in loc.

a systematic examination of the Text of the Old Testament in a way that had not been attempted before. He was, of course, in a sense the successor of Morin, Capellus, Buxtorf and Spinoza, but, for the most part, he had little agreement with any of them except in part with Capellus and went further than any of them had done.

We may now review the work which Simon has done in sections which he has not always clearly defined himself. He was frequently liable to digress from his main subject and sometimes the position which he held on certain matters may only be guessed at from the hints which he gives in passing.

It has been his fate to be remembered almost entirely for his theory on the composition of the Books of the Old Testament, which theory, in his own day and for long afterwards, was dismissed as ridiculous and unacceptable. His solid contribution in the shape of a critical history of the Text, his discussion of the work of the Massoretes, of the Samaritan Pentateuch, and of the manuscripts has been largely forgotten. This has been due partly to the fact that increased facilities and aids to research have enabled later generations to give a more accurate and more complete treatment of these subjects than was possible for Simon with his comparatively limited resources. But the point upon which contemporary and later critics seized was his

hypothesis of the composition of the Pentateuch. The evidence which he collected and which led him to feel the need of a hypothesis, in opposition to the generally accepted opinion that the Pentateuch as a whole was the work of Moses, and the remainder of his critical history was, by comparison, of no interest to them. The hypothesis itself was the major interest.

That Simon could not attribute the whole of the Pentateuch to Moses has almost invariably been cited as the reason for the suppression of the "Histoire Critique". However true this may be it is only one result of his investigations into the history of the Text of the Old Testament, to show the changes of which was his main purpose. It is evident that Bossuet and others saw in the whole of his work, and not just in that part of it which concerned the Pentateuch, a threat to their own cherished beliefs not only of the authorship of the Pentateuch but also of the infallibility of the Tradition of the Church which Simon claimed to be defending.

A. BOOK I

I. The State of the Text and the Composition of the Books. (Chapters I to VIII).

Simon begins by emphasising that the truths contained in the Bible are infallible and of Divine authority, because the Bible is "the pure word of God".⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless,

(1) Page 1.

since these truths have been communicated through, and interpreted by men and since the originals of the books have been lost, some changes have been inevitable, owing partly to the vagaries of time and partly to the carelessness of copyists.

Some of these changes, however, Simon attributes to the compilers of the books in their present form either by their deliberate intention or, in the case of grammatical changes, because they were not concerned to preserve the niceties of the original grammar.⁽¹⁾ He refers to Simeon ben Tsemah and Ibn Melech in maintaining that sometimes changes have been made when there are two words with the same meaning. Aramaic influence has been responsible for some differences in letters, and the impartial use of new and old forms of words, as an example of which he gives the interchange of 'ayin and 'aleph, is also supported by the evidence of Rabbinic writers and grammarians. He notes that generally there is a uniformity of orthography throughout individual books and that the variations occur usually between different books which suggests that the carelessness of copyists is not completely responsible for the differences.

Other differences, in the accounts and vocabularies of passages dealing with identical subjects are ascribed by

(1) Pages 21 and 22.

him to the fact that the books in their present form are only abridgements, made at various times for different purposes, of earlier annals such as those mentioned in the Bible itself, e.g. the Annals of the Kings of Judah and Israel; Isaiah's History of the Reign of Uzziah; the Book of the Wars of the Lord; the Prophecies of Jonah, etc..

Because these abridgements and compilations have been made to suit particular times and occasions we cannot explain why, for example, the Books of Samuel give a selection of different incidents in the life of David from that given in Chronicles. "It is better, therefore, to keep silence on this subject and to hold to the general reasons which we have adduced, than to search further into this matter and condemn by an injudicious criticism that which we do not understand".⁽¹⁾

Simon opposes the view of David Kimchi, Ibn Melech, Levi ben Gerson and others that the errors in the Text are due to the faulty copies collected by Ezra and his companions after the Return, when a collection of the Scriptures is alleged to have been made. This view does not explain so well the defects in the Text, according to Simon, as his own does, which lays the responsibility on later copyists. For the evidence of the Fathers is that Ezra collected the

(1) Page 24.

earlier copies and corrected them where they were corrupt. Similarly he rejects the theory that the books were entirely lost during the Exile and that Ezra dictated new ones.⁽¹⁾

Some of the difficulties in the Text arise from the editing of the prophetic books which were not composed by the Prophets in their present form. To their prophecies there have been added titles and fragments of history to illustrate the prophecies. In addition, when the collections have been made, the writings relating to the time of the collections have been inserted by the compilers.

Some of these confusions are not due to the compilers but to the copyists. Others, however, arise in the style of the original authors. Simon notes the differences in the styles of Isaiah and Jeremiah, the latter interchanging prepositions, genders, numbers, and tenses, whereas the style of Isaiah is neat and orderly. This, following Jerome, (Praef. in Isaiam et Jeremiam) Simon attributes to the fact that Isaiah "was a man of quality, whereas Jeremiah, having been raised in the country among peasants, had a low and rough style".⁽¹¹⁾

These variants, additions and repetitions are considered in greatest detail in Chapters V and VI where, by a careful

(1) Pages 25 to 29 and 37.

(11) Page 31.

examination of the evidence, he seeks to disprove the view that Moses was the author of the whole of the Pentateuch.

He begins by referring to other writers, from Jerome to Bonfrère, who have, implicitly or explicitly, contested this view. He mentions the assertions of such writers that several things have been added to the books of Moses or that there are passages which Moses could not have written except in a spirit of prophecy such as the account of his own death in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, Joshua's addition to the Law in Joshua XXIV, 26, the statements "the Canaanite was then in their land" in Genesis XII, 6, and "these are the Kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any King over the children of Israel", (Gen. XXXVI, 31) and the names of Hebron and Dan which do not belong to the time of Moses. "I know," he says, ⁽¹⁾ "that replies may be brought to most of these passages, and to some others ... but for a little reflection on these replies, they can be found more subtle than true."

But apart from these references to anachronisms which had been noticed singly or together by his predecessors, Simon sees much more cogent reasons for attacking this traditional position. He finds in the Pentateuch many repetitions which appear to him to result from the compilation of the Scriptures in their present form. The editors, having

(1) Page 32.

found variant readings in some places have included all the variants. He cites as examples the description of the Flood in Genesis VII, 17 to 24 in which verses there are four repetitions of the increase of the waters and three repetitions of the destruction of life. He notes that these repetitions are more frequent in Exodus and in Leviticus. He refers further to the repetition of the commandment to observe the Sabbath in Exodus XXXI, 14 and 15 and further repetitions in Leviticus III, 9 and 14, Exodus XXXII, 15, and Exodus XVI, 35 and 36. With many other references he distinguishes between repetitions which have been added in this way and those which have been added deliberately by the compilers themselves as explanations of terms already in the originals.⁽¹⁾ Some repetitions, however, were in the originals, he believes, in the same way as they are found in Homer where their purpose is emphasis. On the whole, however, it seems to Simon that "there is every appearance, that if a single author had composed this work, he would have explained himself in far fewer words."⁽¹¹⁾

The next class of evidence raised by Simon is the lack of order in the narrative. He notices the double account

(1) Page 34.

(11) Page 33.

of Creation and does not agree that it can be merely recapitulation. (1) Some later writers (11) have been astonished to find that Simon has noticed these doubled accounts so faithfully, that he has observed that in three versions of the same incident three different words are used to express a word like 'earth', (111) without going on to recognise separate strands throughout the Pentateuch as Astruc and others have done. But it is easy to be wise after the event, and before many discoveries in other fields there have been even more observers of the phenomena who have not been able to explain them. Simon even noticed the occurrence of 'Jahweh' and 'Elohim' without seeing the significance of them. He regarded them as alternatives used impartially. (1v)

He further points out that the order of successive verses seems to have inverted the sequence of events. With many other instances of the lack of order throughout the Pentateuch Simon is led to conclude that the books were not originally composed in this form.

(1) PP. 35 and 36.

(11) e.g. Bernus, op. cit. p. 85.

(111) P. 33.

(1v) P. 73.

An important part of his evidence to show that Moses cannot be the author of the whole of the Pentateuch and that more than one person has been responsible for it is the diversity of style. ⁽¹⁾ He does not, however, develop this point only remarking that, in some cases, a study of the style is rendered more difficult because of obvious textual corruptions.

Simon continues his discussion of the authorship of the Pentateuch by particularly opposing the Jewish tradition that Moses wrote the whole of it at the dictation of God. He challenges the opinion that "the Law" is synonymous with the Pentateuch by an examination of Exodus XXIV, 12, Deuteronomy XXVII, 3 and XXXI, 24, which are regarded by the Jews, he says, as testimonies to their tradition.

Firstly, God cannot have given Moses all the Pentateuch on Sinai since the Israelites were another forty years in the desert and Moses has written or has caused to be written the events of these forty years only as they occurred. Neither is there any ground for believing, as the Jews maintain, that God gave to Moses the history recorded in Genesis and Exodus. All that Moses received was the Tables, the Law and the Commandments. ⁽¹¹⁾ No other history is

(1) P. 39

(11) PP. 41 and 42.

mentioned nor is it credible that Moses read the whole of the Pentateuch to the people. The term 'Law' must be restricted to the ordinances and the commandments.

Secondly, the Law that the Israelites were commanded to write upon the stones at the crossing of Jordan is the Law contained in the twelve curses of Deuteronomy XXVII. The text of Verse 3 reads "this Law" not "the Law", and Simon regards "this" as a restriction repeated in subsequent verses, and refers particularly to Verse 26. Similarly, "this Book of the Law" in Deuteronomy XXXI refers to the Law contained in Deuteronomy, and Simon adds that it cannot even refer to the whole of Deuteronomy.⁽¹⁾ Therefore, "Law" must be limited according to the circumstances in which it is found.

Simon then gives the views of Ibn Ezra declaring that he "has not doubted that there were several additions in the books of Moses",⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Simon does not explicitly associate himself with the views of Ibn Ezra on these points,⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ and it is interesting to see how Simon deals with Spinoza^(iv) when he is opposing Spinoza's treatment of

(1) P. 43.

(ii) P. 44.

(iii) See p. 83 above.

(iv) See p. 265 seq. below.

the Pentateuch. (1)

Having observed these classes of evidence throughout the Old Testament though dealing particularly with examples drawn from the Pentateuch, Simon finds himself with no alternative but to reject the traditional view of authorship. He, therefore, puts forward a theory which will, in his opinion, not only account for the present state of the Text but which will also answer any questions which the destruction of the traditional view may raise on Authority, Inspiration, and Chronology.

This is his theory of Public Writers in State Registries. God gave His Laws to the "Holy and Divine Republic" of the Hebrews by means of Moses and other 'prophets'. These 'prophets' were paralleled in many states, especially in Eastern countries by those whose special charge it was to commit to written records all the important events of their times. (11) Moses, influenced by the example of Egypt where he would have observed the existence of such people, probably established these Scribes who may be called Public Writers to distinguish them from particular writers who only

(1) De l'Inspiration des Livres Sacrez, pp. 43-49.

(11) Preface ii, pp. 15, 16, 25, 46, etc.

wrote of the history of their times for their own interest. So, following Josephus, ⁽¹⁾ Simon calls them 'Prophets', because they wrote under Divine inspiration.

In addition to writing the State Annals, these 'Prophets', especially the later ones, were responsible for collecting the Annals of earlier times as Theodoret hinted. (Praef. in Lib. Regum). Simon, therefore, claims that these 'Prophets' alone had this God-given task with the additional authority to judge the Sacred and Prophetic books, to retain some and to reject others. As all Scripture is called 'prophecy' in II Peter, I, 21, and as Nathan, Gad and others who, he maintains, had the task of writing these Annals, were called prophets, Simon believes that such people have always existed from the time of Moses.

Thus they collected the Annals of earlier times and added to them, sometimes, accounts of events of their own times, or they have omitted some of the earlier material. ⁽¹¹⁾ Since the first generation of these writers worked under the command of Moses, it may be said in this sense that the books of the Pentateuch are "of Moses". ⁽¹¹¹⁾

(1) 'Contra Apion', Lib. 2. Le Clerc contests the validity of this and other references made by Simon in "Sentimens", p. 69 seq., to which Simon replies in "Réponse aux Sentimens" p. 49 seq..

(11) PP. 3, 4, 26.

(111) P. 3.

But in fact Moses himself can have written only the commandments and ordinances in his capacity of Legislator. The historical accounts, the remainder of the Pentateuch, were entrusted by him to these Public Writers.⁽¹⁾ In the person of Ezra Simon sees the outstanding example of a Public Writer who, according to the Fathers, has compiled the Bible in its present form, in the opinion of some people completely anew, or, more probably, editing ancient records.⁽¹¹⁾ But, according to Simon, there has been a succession of compilations or recensions of these earlier records.

This is the outline of Simon's theory which he gives in a very expanded form with considerable repetitions in his first eight chapters. This theory, then, that earlier records written by divinely inspired men have been edited by their successors, equally inspired, accounts satisfactorily, Simon feels, for all the difficulties in the Text.

To this must be added the fact that these writings were made on small rolls or leaves which, in the course of time, have become disarranged.⁽¹¹¹⁾ The majority of the omissions, repetitions, anachronisms and other difficulties are to be traced to these editors. By this theory Simon

(1) PP. 3 and 17.

(11) PP. 4 and 24.

(111) Pref. p. v, pp. 5, 35, 37.

attacks the commonly accepted theory of authorship as held by many of his contemporaries, but at the same time, preserves the authority of Scripture. In this idea of State Registries or Archives, Simon follows the hints of earlier writers such as Abrabanel and Massius. But he elaborates and develops the idea. While it was only an hypothesis for which he produced no absolutely conclusive evidence its importance lies in the idea of earlier documents which had passed through several processes of editing, the main concern of the editors being to edify or otherwise influence their contemporaries rather than to preserve historical records.

This hypothesis was ridiculed by all his opponents and by many later writers. But underlying the hypothesis there was a basis upon which later writers have been able to build. Simon had assembled evidence which no one before him had done quite so thoroughly. The value of this part of his work lies not so much in the theory itself as in the evidence on which it was based and the general conclusions which he drew.

It is obvious that the idea of Simon's book has been inspired by the work of Spinoza, but in putting into practice some of the suggestions of Spinoza, Simon, at the same time, strives to combat those views of Spinoza which conflict with the beliefs of his Church.

It is interesting to see what Simon has to say about

the word "nābî'". This word, he says, ⁽ⁱ⁾ signified nothing more, originally, than "orator". He goes on to say that these 'prophets' among the Hebrews were public orators who, as God's interpreters, pronounced His will to the people. It was only part of their task, but at the same time theirs alone, to record the most important affairs of State and to keep the records in the Archives. They exhorted the people ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ as the necessities of State required and the records of their exhortations were also kept in the Archives and have been added in the recension of the earlier annals.

In passing, and remembering that it is dangerous to read into Simon's ideas too much resemblance to later theories, we may notice as a matter of interest that the characteristics of the "nebî'im" according to Simon correspond with some of those given by Jepsen. ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Simon believes them to be inspired men, forming a special and distinct social group, having a concern with politics, prominent in times of national crisis, exemplified in Nathan and Gad. Simon distinguished between these "nebi'im"

(i) PP. 17 and 30.

(ii) P. 30.

(iii) "Nabi" 1934. Discussed in an essay entitled "Prophecy" by N. W. Porteous in "Reason and Revelation" ed. H. Wheeler Robinson. Oxford, 1938, pp. 231 seq.

and the great canonical prophets, and found their counterparts among non-Semitic and pre-Israelitic peoples. Above all, Simon's fundamental theory is that the Old Testament underwent a nebi'istic recension. This is not to suggest, naturally, that Simon's conclusions may be compared with those of Jepsen.

Simon, then, in Chapter VII, concludes his criticism of the Pentateuch with a summary of the manner in which it has been composed.

"The Jews maintain, as we have remarked above, that God has dictated word for word to Moses the five books of the Law; and as it cannot be said that Moses had received from God in the mountain the history of all that happened afterwards during forty years in the desert, the more judicious among them believe that God told Moses the things at the times when they occurred. It is quite true that God sometimes commands Moses to write certain facts of which He has spoken in the Law; but that normally refers only to the Commandments or Ordinances, or something else similar. As for the things that happened every day in his presence, there was no need for God to dictate to him. He had under him persons who put into writing the more important events, and whose charge it was to preserve the Acts for posterity. It is only necessary to glance at the way in which the Pentateuch is composed to be persuaded of this truth and

to see that someone other than Moses has collected the historic facts. The Laws which God ordered him to write are distinguished from the body of the history."⁽¹⁾

Simon goes on to discuss the Sabbaites and their religious fables together with the discussions on them by various writers, and while believing that there are several references to their religion in the Pentateuch totally rejects the so-called books written by the Patriarchs as "invented by impostors".⁽¹¹⁾ He does not consider that the State Registries have been in existence prior to Moses but the parts of the Pentateuch, particularly in Genesis, relating to the period prior to Moses are based either on written memoirs or on oral tradition.

Such then is Simon's hypothesis. He was not at all concerned with the identity of the compilers. The remainder of the Old Testament is discussed briefly in Chapter 8. His conclusions about these books are similar to his conclusions about the Pentateuch. The authors whose names the books bear have not written all that the books contain, and he considers that most of them have been compiled by the prophetic Public Writers. He has already said ⁽¹¹¹⁾ that the historical introductions to many of the

(1) P. 46.

(11) P. 47.

(111) P. 30.

books or 'titles' have been added by the editors. The historical passages in the prophecies have been added by the Archivists.

Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job have been written by a class of writers different from any yet mentioned, ⁽¹⁾ the people "whom some have called Poets Several have claimed that some of these works were actually composed in verse". Simon, however, finds this idea unacceptable and criticises Jerome and Josephus for having compared this so-called Hebrew verse with Latin and Greek verse. Simon thinks it more probable that they are only short sententious sentences as the name of such writers, "subtle people", (moscelim) implies. He notes the similarity of the style of these books to that of the Qurán and believes that poetry among the Jews is of late origin under Arabic influence. While mentioning the suggestion that Job, Tobit and Judith are 'parables' or 'allegorical fictions' he is content to say simply that the common opinion is that they are histories.

Having now completed the survey of Simon's treatment of the contents of the books we may notice that several of the footnotes to the 5th and 7th Editions of the

(1) P. 57.

Histoire Critique, particularly note 'g' on page 17 seem to imply some doubts on the validity of the hypothesis of State Registries and Archivists. Bernus maintains (1) that Simon was changing his position. It is valid to suggest the possibility of such a change on the part of Simon, and this and other possibilities and the whole question of Simon's real attitude will be discussed at length in the Conclusion. (11) But the evidence of these footnotes is very weak if we assume, with most people including Bernus, that Simon was the author both of these footnotes and of the new Preface which appeared in these editions. In that case he was using them as a means to concealing his identity in the guise of a Protestant sympathiser, and such implications of doubt about his own theories are only to be expected as rendering this fiction more credible. And at the end of each note there is an even more subtle hint that despite these doubts Simon was probably right.

The other evidence that Bernus brings for this change in the attitude of Simon is even weaker. We have no reason to be surprised that Simon (111) opposed Le Clerc's view

(1) Op. cit. p. 88

(11) See Chapter 9.

(111) Réponse aux Sentimens, p. 74.

that the Pentateuch is much later than Moses. (1) Bernus seems to forget that Simon never denies but constantly affirms that some of the Pentateuch may still be ascribed to Moses. And further it is not only in his controversy with Le Clerc, as Bernus suggests, but also in the "Histoire Critique" itself (ii) that Simon claims that the other books of the Old Testament are not so exact as the Pentateuch. Simon is not maintaining against Le Clerc that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch as Bernus suggests. On the other hand he never maintained that there was no Mosaic material in the Pentateuch. In his reply to Le Clerc the sentence preceding the one which Bernus quotes states that "the Critics apply themselves to the editions to distinguish them from the body of the works." (iii) It is true that in such places in the controversies Simon tends to minimise these additions but he states nothing explicitly which he could not reconcile with his earlier statements in the Histoire Critique. In any case this different emphasis may be the result of deeper and more serious considerations than "the love of contradiction." (iv)

(1) Sentimens p. 129

(ii) e.g. p. 52.

(iii) Op. cit. p. 74.

(iv) Bernus, op. cit. p. 88.

Everything that Simon says has to be judged in the light of his relationship to the Church of which he was a priest. We should be more surprised that he permitted himself to go as far as he did. But he had to try to accommodate the conclusions which he had reached in his criticism to the views of the Church. This led him into great difficulties on the subjects of Tradition and Inspiration. In his controversies he sometimes found himself confronted with those to whom, as a priest, he was diametrically opposed but with whom, as a critic, he had much in common.

II. The Canon.
 (Parts of Chapters IV and VIII and
 Chapter IX)

Simon does not deal with the subject of the Canon as a separate subject or in very great detail. He is not really very interested in its history or in its date in any particular sense. It is sufficient for him to date what he calls "the last collection of the Scriptures" at a time later than Ezra.⁽¹⁾ Like some of his contemporaries he equated the assembly under Ezra with the Great Synagogue. He does not, however, give much credence to most of the traditions about this assembly and certainly not to the idea that the Canon was finally fixed at that time.

(1) P. 52.

He believes that the Canon includes books written later than Ezra and he thinks it probable that the books have not been collected all at the same time.⁽¹⁾ He thinks it is probable that after the Return, the Jews made a collection out of some of the 'records' which were in their 'Registries', and that only some of these were made public and called canonical.

He maintains that the books written after the reign of Artaxerxes should have the same authority as the rest since "God ... has never failed to give them from time to time persons who had all the qualities necessary for writing the Holy Scriptures." ⁽¹¹⁾ Even though since the Return they have been called Scribes rather than Prophets there is no difference in fact. Of the Talmud's statement that the inclusion of Ezekiel, Ecclesiastes and Proverbs in the collection of Scriptures was debated in an "Assembly" he says that this is a story which has originated in the difficulties of explaining such things as Ezekiel's remarks concerning the Temple and of reconciling them with what is said elsewhere.

The Apocryphal books may have been so called because they had not been authorised by the Sanhedrin, but as the

(1) P. 52.

(11) P. 55.

Church has recognised them, their authority can no longer be doubted. The Jews regarded as canonical only those books written in Hebrew with the exception of the Aramaic sections of Daniel and Ezra which Simon thinks have been taken from the Chaldean Archives where they had previously been kept. "The Jews," he says (1) "having lost the use of the Hebrew language no longer wrote their Acts in that language but in Aramaic which was their mother tongue." From these same Archives have come some of the books called Apocryphal which the Church now accepts. The book of Wisdom, however, was probably written in Greek by an Hellenist Jew and was afterwards translated into Aramaic.

Since Josephus and other Jewish writers sometimes quote Apocryphal books it would appear that the Jews had not altogether rejected them but regarded them as "hidden and unknown, because they had not been published by the authority of the Sanhedrin. It could be, therefore, that these books which are called Apocryphal have been taken from the Acts which were kept in the Archives of the Jews." (11)

In Chapter IX Simon discusses the division of the books. It is only necessary here to mention his main points. It appears from Nehemiah VIII that the word 'mikra', reading,

(1) P. 56.

(11) P. 57.

was originally used of the Law only, and came into use when it became necessary to give expositions of the Law in Aramaic. Later the rest of the Old Testament was called 'mikra' to distinguish between the text and the tradition. Hence the name of the Qaraite sect (bene mikra or karaim) who do not acknowledge the tradition as fundamental. (1)

Now, however, the Jews customarily call the Scriptures "the twenty-four", referring to the division of the Bible into twenty-four parts. When Jerome says that all is apocryphal which is not according to the twenty-four Elders, i.e. of Revelation, he means the books in the Jewish Canon, whereas the Fathers in dividing the Bible into twenty-four books allude to the twenty-four letters in the Greek alphabet including in this twenty-four the books outside the Jewish Canon which Jerome excludes. According to Jerome the number 'twenty-four' is achieved by separating Ruth from Judges and Lamentations from Jeremiah. The Greek Fathers also have divided them into twenty-two, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, according to Josephus.

He then deals with the tri-partite division into classes. The first class - the Law - is distinguished from the rest because the Jews believed that "the quality of Prophet in Moses has been more eminent than in the

(1) PP. 58 and 59.

prophets who have succeeded him." (1) After referring to the second and third classes he notes the apparent allusion to this division in St. Luke XXIV, 44. This division seems to be ancient.

Daniel is only placed with Ezra and Nehemiah because the Jews were concerned more with the history in it. The Prophetæ Posteriores have been separated from the Prophetæ Priores but "they call all equally Prophets although a good part contains only histories, because they have all been written by true Prophets." (ii) The last five books of the Kethubim or Hagiography, i.e. the Five Megilloth, are made to follow the Pentateuch ordinarily "for their particular convenience, because they are read on certain days of the year. They read, for example, at Easter, the Song of Songs; at Pentecost, Ruth; at the Feast of Tabernacles, Esther; and so with the others." (iii)

He gives a detailed account of the Rabbinic explanations of these three divisions based on the three divisions of the Temple and the Tabernacle, corresponding to the intellectual, celestial, and terrestrial worlds. All the Rabbinic explanations of the division into classes and of

(1) P. 59.

(ii) P. 61.

(iii) P. 61.

the order of the books are dismissed as "vain subtleties" and "ill-grounded conjectures." (1) Simon's main purpose was to show that the Jews agreed with the Church about the inspiration of the books which they have in common. (11)

The exclusion of Daniel from the Prophets does not deny that the book is less inspired than the others and degrees of prophecies is only a Rabbinic idea. He closes with a brief survey of the different orderings of the books in manuscript and printed versions of the Hebrew Bible to show the lack of order and its uncertainty. He refers particularly to those by Spanish, French and German Jews and to Munster's Bible, and notes the differences in Greek and Latin Bibles.

It will be seen that Simon was not concerned to give a history of the Canon and so we can hardly compare his views with the now commonly held idea of a gradual development, in which the issues were not finally and unanimously settled at one time and place. His real concern is with changes in the Text which, he maintains, have continued after the time of Ezra. His own opinion of the formation and development of the Canon, in its details, must, therefore, remain a matter for conjecture.

(1) P. 62.

(11) PP. 59 and 62.

III. The Samaritan Pentateuch.
(Chapters X, XI, and XII)

In opposing the ideas of the Spanish Jew, Joseph Albo, who maintains that the Pentateuch has come down unchanged from Moses, Simon deals with the one argument which he considers to have any importance, based on the considerable agreement between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Massoretic text. If it be alleged that the corruptions in the Pentateuch have taken place during the Exile it cannot be claimed that the Samaritan Pentateuch has been corrupted in the same way since the Samaritans had no part in that Exile. Further, it is unreasonable to suggest that the Samaritans have taken a copy from the Jews after the Return from the Exile since, in the first place they were enemies and secondly, the Samaritan Pentateuch is written in the ancient Hebrew characters, whereas the Jews took over the Chaldean, i. e., Aramaic, characters after the Exile.

We must note here that Simon's theory of the development of writing was over-simplified. He had, of course, no knowledge of the developments and the varieties of scripts, our knowledge of which we owe largely to discoveries made since his day. In his view, the Samaritan Pentateuch, which he calls the Samaritan Hebrew Text, or the Samaritan Hebrew Copy, was written in "anciens caractères Hébreux, qu'on nomme maintenant Samaritains." He believed that

these characters had been in use since the time of Moses. He did not, however, give the formal title to this script "Old Hebrew" or "Old Semitic" as Bentzen calls it. (i)

There is no doubt that he thought simply that the Jews used this old script, which he regarded as being identical with that of the Samaritan Pentateuch, until the Return, whereupon they changed to the Aramaic script.

Nor, for the same reason, did he know anything of a gradual change from the old script to the Aramaic and then, again gradually, to the square script. (ii) Without going further into the history of this development we may simply note that the Samaritan Pentateuch "was, and still is, written in a script which approximates to the old Hebrew and is evidently related to it." (iii) In recording the views of Simon we shall use his terminology, and his attitude must, therefore, be borne in mind.

Simon then traces the history of the Samaritans from the destruction of the Northern Kingdom and the transplanting

(i) Introduction to the Old Testament, Bentzen, Copenhagen, 1948. Vol. I, pp. 45 seq.

(ii) See the Old Testament Text and Versions. B. J. Roberts, Cardiff, 1951. Pp. 9 seq.; The Alphabet. D. Diringer, London, 1947, p. 261.

(iii) Roberts. Op. cit. p. 10.

of other nationalities into Samaria, as recorded in the Bible and by Josephus (Antiquities XI). These new arrivals asked for and received an Israelite priest (II Kings XVII) to teach them the Law and the customs of their new country, and he might have brought with him a copy of the Law.⁽¹⁾ This Law was that which was preserved by the Ten Tribes in captivity.

In any case, the Samaritans now have the Pentateuch in the Hebrew language written in ancient Hebrew characters. They have no other books in their Canon because there were no other books published at the time when they made their Schism. It is, therefore, necessary to see whether the Samaritan Pentateuch should be preferred to the Jewish Pentateuch, i. e. the Massoretic Text.

We cannot be certain that these foreign nationalities transplanted into Samaria had a copy of the Law, because the Israelite priest might have taught them the Law without giving them a copy which would have been written in the language which they did not then understand. Simon believes that once the Samaritans had built their Temple on Mount Gerizim and needed the Law for their observances, it was copied from the Jewish version as the agreement between them

(1) PP. 64 and 65. Le Clerc takes this priest to be the original author of the Pentateuch; Sentimens, p. 129.

suggests. He agrees that it would be more probable that they took their copy from one belonging to the Ten Tribes rather than from the Jews who, as he has said already, were their enemies. To this Simon can only reply that we can only judge the Samaritan Pentateuch on what is apparent to us rather than to make conjectures about it in relation to copies which we do not now possess.

The differences between the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Massoretic Text are the fault of copyists with the exception of certain changes made deliberately to suit the prejudices of the Samaritans.⁽¹⁾ The points which Simon has raised as evidence that Moses is not the author of the whole of the Pentateuch are present in the Samaritan Pentateuch. Therefore, the latter is not the Original Pentateuch and must have been copied from the Jews, unless we can say that the Pentateuch even before the Exile contained the same additions and changes that it has now, in which case the Jews must have edited it long before Ezra and the first originals were not in existence even before the separation of the Northern Kingdom.

The close similarity between the two copies of the Pentateuch, despite the divorce between the two nations, suggests more strongly that they have come from the same

(1) P. 66.

copy. For there is little likelihood that the Jews, who have always preserved the essentials of religion, would have borrowed from the Samaritans. A footnote, (1) adds to this the fact that the Samaritan Pentateuch conforms much more in places to the Septuagint than to the Massoretic Text.

The fact that the Samaritan Pentateuch is in ancient Hebrew characters is no proof that they preserved the ancient Hebrew copy of the Law. They received the Law once their Temple was established from someone connected with the Northern Kingdom who used only these characters for writing. The original script had been preserved, but not the original copies of the Law. And so the Samaritan Pentateuch came to be written in these characters as also the Samaritans now write Arabic in these ancient Samaritan letters. Simon gives other examples of this custom in various countries of writing one language in the characters of another.

According to Simon, Morin was too greatly prejudiced in favour of the Samaritan Pentateuch while Hottinger was too greatly prejudiced against it. He does not agree that the Samaritan Pentateuch is of less value because the Samaritans were schismatics. For while the Jews have

(1) P. 66.

always kept the religion of their Fathers it is possible that they may well have altered the Text to suit their Tradition.

He warns against confusing the Samaritan Pentateuch with either the Samaritan Targum (Aramaic dialect of the Samaritans) or the fragments of the Samaritikon. He denies that the Samaritan Pentateuch can be a translation based on the Septuagint. When the Samaritan Pentateuch agrees with the Septuagint against the Massoretic Text it seems likely that the Greek translators have used the same Hebrew copy as the Samaritans.⁽¹⁾ However, it is possible that the Samaritans have taken something from the Septuagint as they not only had a knowledge of Greek but used a Greek translation and they may have added to their Text to render it more intelligible. He supports this by references to Samaritans in Egypt when the Septuagint was in use there and to Samaritans in Egypt in his own day, the latter probably descended from the former as the Samaritans in Nablus (Shechem) who possess a very old copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch,⁽¹¹⁾ are descended from the ancient Samaritans there.

(1) P. 68.

(11) Perhaps the oldest manuscript. See Kahle. The Cairo Geniza, London, 1947, p. 50 n.; Bentzen, op. cit. p. 67. Roberts, op. cit. p. 194.

Simon opposes the views of Morin and Hottinger on the variant readings. Owing to the negligence of copyists certain letters, particularly Waw and Yodh have been omitted or inserted without good reason. Morin, finding that the Samaritan Pentateuch includes these in places where the Massoretic Text omits them, pressed the claims of the former over the latter, but Simon points out that this situation is also very often reversed. Morin gives considerable attention to the Rabbinic explanations of such omissions, instead of just observing that they are due to negligence. He further adduces support for the Samaritan Pentateuch in the fact that it often contains only one reading which is the same as the Qrê of the Massoretic Text. However, Simon comments, it is better to have a text with variant readings, even though in some places the Qrê is the obvious reading, since there are many places where the reading is uncertain and often the one given by the Samaritan Pentateuch is equally uncertain. Furthermore there are not so many variants in the good manuscripts of the Bible and it is better to consult these than to make easy criticisms of one text.

Hottinger maintained that the Samaritan Pentateuch was an imperfect copy of the Pentateuch on the basis of the confusion of letters which are similar in appearance or sound in Hebrew, but which have not a similar appearance

in the "Samaritans' script". Simon maintains that despite this difference in appearance, the similarity in sound e.g. of He and Heth and 'Aleph and 'Ayin, has led to the confusion. He adds that there are several letters in the "alphabet of the Samaritans" of similar appearance. Later Eissfeldt drew attention to similarities between letters in the Old Hebrew alphabet particularly with reference to Beth and Resh, He and Heth, Mem and Nun.⁽¹⁾

Simon's purpose in making these observations on the variant readings is to distinguish between the accidental variations due to copyists and the real variations. Having established the latter, the one text may be corrected from the other. To assist this purpose it would be essential to have several good manuscript copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch to eradicate some of the accidental variations which are in the printed copy, (i.e. in the Paris Polyglot, 1632). Turning to the variants in words and phrases as distinct from single letters Simon says that it is also necessary to remember that both texts are copies and that the Samaritan Pentateuch is not a translation although sometimes it has been edited on the basis of the Septuagint. In addition some variants may be attributed to liberties taken by the copyists and not to their negligence only.

(1) See Bentzen op. cit. p. 46.

He proceeds to give various examples. In Genesis II, 2, where the Septuagint and Syriac agree with the Samaritan Pentateuch but not with the Massoretic Text, Simon reminds us that the Samaritan Pentateuch is no less the Hebrew text than the Massoretic, and that this may therefore be regarded as a variant. The copy used by the Greek translators must then have agreed with that which was behind the Samaritan Pentateuch. On the other hand this may only be a case where the Samaritans have used a Septuagint reading.

Genesis IV, 8, omits a phrase which the Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint and Vulgate read, and also the Greek Scholiast on the Septuagint says it is in the Samaritan Pentateuch Greek translation. Jerome (Questions on Genesis) suggests that this is an addition to the Hebrew text but Simon feels that he seems not to have considered that the Samaritan Pentateuch was a true text. But Jerome's treatment varied and in this case he was concerned with the defence of the Hebrew Text. For on another occasion Jerome (Ep. to Gal.) remarks on the omission of *kōl* (all) from Deuteronomy XXVII in the Massoretic Text, whereas it is in the Samaritan Pentateuch. Simon, however, unlike Morin feels that the omission is not important here. He notes how sometimes the Greek translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch has been confused with the Targum of Jerusalem (i.e. Targum Jerusalem I).

Simon suggests that the Massoretic Pentateuch may be

preferred especially as there are so few copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch, but where they give variant readings, each with a probable meaning, they should be marked as variants of two copies from the same original.⁽¹⁾ Further, if the variants of the Samaritan Pentateuch were put in the margin of the Massoretic Text it would obviate the necessity of printing the Samaritan Pentateuch. The variants between the Greek translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Samaritan Pentateuch itself should be continually examined. But the Greek translation has sometimes rendered the unpointed letters of the Samaritan Pentateuch according to different vocalisation from that of the Massoretic Text. Simon, however, warns against being deceived as Morin has been by the clarity of the Samaritan Pentateuch in some places where the Massoretic Text is obscure. For the Samaritans have sometimes been too willing to add words and phrases, sometimes transferring them from other passages to clarify the meaning.

Simon remarks on the theory of Hottinger and Postell, due to a misunderstanding of Jerome (Prol. Gal.), that the Samaritans used vowel points. The 'apices' which Jerome mentions refer to the shape of the letters.⁽¹¹⁾ Simon

(1) P. 73.

(11) P. 76.

agrees that they used certain points to separate words and to distinguish periods and also to emphasise certain words.

This leads him on to a consideration of the Samaritan characters. He accumulates from other writers a considerable amount of support for his own opinion, against the Buxtorfs, that the Samaritan characters are the old Hebrew letters.⁽¹⁾ He goes on to consider more particularly the difference between the two types of letters and says that it is more correct to call the Samaritan script 'Phoenician'⁽¹¹⁾ since it has been in use before the Jews entered Canaan. He concludes with some remarks on the relationship of the 'Phoenician' characters to Greek and Latin and on the letter Tau and its ancient form of a cross.

Conclusion

Care must be taken in a judgment of any part of Simon's work neither to condemn too harshly nor to praise too highly. There are several places, sufficiently obvious, where his views are not at all in accord with modern opinion. There are mistaken ideas, and the Samaritan Pentateuch is not described in the detailed and concise manner in which any text would be treated to-day.

(1) PP. 77 to 79.

(11) P. 79.

As always, Simon is vague on the question of dating. He goes so far as to say that the Samaritan Pentateuch originated at about the time of the establishment of the Temple on Mount Gerizim. The Samaritan schism is only mentioned as the reason for the limited Canon of the Samaritans, the other books not being published until after that time. On occasion, he refers to the separation of the Ten Tribes as the Schism, and to the Ten Tribes as schismatics, and this, added to his weakness for digressions, leads sometimes to some uncertainty as to his meaning.

But to make a fair estimate of his judgment it would be necessary to compare his conclusions and the methods whereby he reached them not with those of our contemporaries but with those of his. From this standpoint, his conclusions have more in common with the accepted opinions of to-day, even though his reasoning leading to those conclusions may sometimes seem strange. His views on the date approximate fairly closely to that which is most commonly held to-day. His reasons for the shorter Canon are the generally accepted ones. It is true, as we have remarked, that Simon's dating of events is always rather vague and that he rarely troubles himself with definite dates. It is probable that he would have placed the Samaritan Schism somewhat earlier than the third or fourth century B.C., but in placing the date of the Samaritan Pentateuch at approximately the time of the Schism

he has reached a result with which the majority would agree. His critical sense and reasoned judgment in his evaluation of the Samaritan and Massoretic Texts compares favourably with the views of his contemporaries and of many later writers. We cannot wholly agree with Stummer's verdict: "His clear-sighted thought succeeded in obtaining a result which experts had to admit, equipped as they were with much better means of discovering the truth and with the critical experience of many generations behind them. Indeed, Richard Simon's opinions about the Samaritan Pentateuch may well be completely relied upon. Truly his judgment which he pronounced over the textual worth of this revision will not be easily refuted ... but also his proposed date may well have the advantage that it is based on sound scientific grounds and that it accords best of any theories with the literary facts and those based on the history of religion."⁽¹⁾

But if that be not wholly acceptable the fact remains that we cannot do better than use the Samaritan Pentateuch in the spirit of Richard Simon. Simon sums up his own attitude thus: "We should conclude that since the Samaritans have not faithfully copied the Hebrew text in some places we must have recourse to the copy of the Jews; which does

(1) F. Stummer. Die Bedeutung Richard Simons für die Pentateuchkritik. Münster. 1912, pp. 140 seq.

not hinder us, however, from being able to correct the Jewish Hebrew Text sometimes by the Samaritan. These are two copies of an identical original. which, each having its defects and perfections, may help one another. (1)

.....

Simon proceeds in Chapters XIV and XV to discuss the origin of Language. With his vast knowledge of all kinds of writings from ancient times up to his own day he seems to have been well equipped to discuss almost any question with great facility. He moves freely in this subject too, amassing evidence from the languages of many countries and summoning as witnesses Gregory of Nyssa, Lucretius, Socrates, Josephus and a host of others. However, his discussion may well be left with these remarks. "If one compares with a little application the Hebrew language and the other Oriental languages, one will find that it has the advantages of simplicity and antiquity above all the rest. I do not believe, however, that most words were so composed in the beginning as they are at present; but Art has joined, little by little, other letters for greater convenience." (11)

After discussing the various changes and developments he continues: "Besides these changes which are very ancient

(1) P. 76

(11) P. 88

and previous to the rise of Greek and Latin the Grammarians have introduced other newer ones in the way of writing Hebrew and then have cut off several letters to render the pronunciation easier ... This has been the reason for a great number of verbs which are called 'defective' because of the letters which have been taken out ... This change which the Jews have introduced in the Hebrew Text of the Bible sometimes creates much confusion because it is difficult after these changes to reduce the words to their first roots." (1)

.....

IV. History of the State of the Text. (Chapters XVI to XX)

In these chapters Simon gives his history of the changes in the Text from the Exile onwards. Simon believed that the Hebrew language began to go out of common use during the Exile. The result was that the copyists in the post-Exilic period who no longer understood the language perfectly but who spoke Aramaic, so similar to Hebrew, sometimes put one letter for another. It is to this period that Simon ascribes "a good part of the confusion which exists to-day in the Hebrew Text." (11) Similarly

(1) P. 91.

(11) P. 92.

the Septuagint differs from the Hebrew because, as the Text has since been revised, it does not now wholly agree with the copies used by the ancient interpreters.

The Jews were not very careful of their Text, being more concerned with preserving their Tradition. Then, in the course of time, the Sadducees arose, opposing all new explanations and rejecting Tradition. Here Simon correctly understands Josephus (Ant. XVIII, 15), unlike some of the Fathers, e.g. Origen, Jerome,⁽¹⁾ in denying that the Sadducees accepted the Pentateuch only. He adds that the Samaritans' Canon consists only of the Pentateuch because nothing more existed at the time of the Schism whereas when the Sadducees came into existence all the Jews accepted the Canonical Scriptures.⁽¹¹⁾ But since the majority of the Jews were concerned with Tradition it is not surprising that many alterations have been made in the Text to support their "vain subtleties".

Again, the copyists wrote many words in the Aramaic orthography, some of which have persisted despite the revisions of the Jews. But many more may be found in the old manuscripts in which the Massorah has not been followed closely. Simon, therefore, denies to some of the authors of the books such Aramaic words. Other changes which he

(1) See Bentzen, op. cit. p. 35.

(11) P. 93.

notices arise from the confusion of 'Aleph changed to 'Ayin; Beth into Phe; Qoph into Kaph; Shin into Samekh. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the best sense of the words rather than their form. These confusions lead Simon to conclude that we should regard Hebrew as having lost its original purity and as being a language with several dialects.⁽¹⁾

The Septuagint testifies to a variety of Hebrew copies. He observes that Jerome did not always follow the Hebrew copy which he had, but took the liberty, sometimes, without the authority of variants, of emending one letter for another if it would produce a more satisfactory sense. The Septuagint is not based on any true original and it cannot be taken as an infallible guide.

The concern with Tradition continued during the time of Christ. We owe our present copies of the Bible to the Pharisees. Moreover, Christ and the Apostles have followed the method of the Pharisees in the interpretation of Scripture, quoting the Old Testament with more concern for the sense than for the letter of the Text, and accommodating its witness to the received Tradition.⁽¹¹⁾

Similarly, Josephus is not exact in his translations adding or omitting according to his whim. It appears, then, that Jews and Christians in the early part of the Christian

(1) PP. 94 and 95.

(11) PP. 97 and 98.

era were not very faithful to the books of the Bible. Allegories and Tradition were the main concern.

It was only owing to the disputes which arose between Christians and Jews that any care began to be taken with the exactness of Scripture and a serious study of the Text was undertaken. ⁽¹⁾ In the same way these disputes resulted in a new concern for the study of the Septuagint. It had been read for a long time in the Synagogues, but now the Jews decried it, denied its divine origin and looked on it as accursed.

The Law in future was to be written only in Hebrew and a knowledge of Hebrew was to be withheld from Christians. But this does not seem to have been true of the Hellenist Jews. On the other hand Simon remarks that the Christians accused the Jews of having corrupted the Text. Therefore, it is only right to see whether these accusations have any basis in fact.

Simon now undertakes this examination. Although Morin (*Exercit. Bibl.*) has produced many such allegations of the Fathers he does not commit himself to their view. Vossius, however, has done all that he can to increase the authority of the Septuagint at the expense of the Hebrew Bible. But Simon finds that all these accusations,

(1) P. 100.

purporting to emanate from the Fathers, have no foundation in fact. Rather, they arise from a failure on the part of Vossius and others like him to understand perfectly what the Fathers have said.

Any such feeling on the part of the Fathers arose because they held that the Septuagint was the only true Scripture. When the Jews denied that the Septuagint was correct or said that it was not the same in the original, the reply of the Fathers was that they were falsifying Scripture, i.e. the Septuagint.

In addition the Fathers, generally had no knowledge of Hebrew and they called the Translations of Aquila or Symmachus or Theodotion, "the Scripture of the Hebrews" because they had been made from Hebrew to oppose the Septuagint. It was with these that the Jews were felt to be falsifying Scripture, and so the Jews were regarded as publishing corrupt interpretations and were not accused of corrupting the original Hebrew Text. (1)

The conclusion is, then, that we have no evidence that the Jews have corrupted the Text deliberately. But the disputes with the Christians have led to a greater concern for accuracy in the Text. Nevertheless some of the "corrections" made in this period may have erred from the

(1) PP. 102 to 105.

original. It is, therefore, necessary to carry out an examination with all the critical apparatus at our disposal. (1)

Hebrew was not taught at first with grammar as its starting point. But there was a method for explaining and reading the Text. Usage was the rule, and Origen's Hexapla contains the Hebrew Text in Greek characters, as it was read at that time. In addition there were schools such as the one at Tiberias where Jerome was taught. But despite the rule of usage or custom there still remained freedom to debate the meanings of some words because the vowel letters, 'matres lectionis', in pre-Massoretic times might be added or omitted by copyists. (11)

Simon goes on to give examples of those variant readings from the Talmud which the younger Buxtorf had maintained were not considerable. But the Talmud is not to be relied upon too completely to supply these variants since the authors of it have not quoted the Text exactly and their variants arise not from true originals but from the Tradition, which was not always reliable.

Simon agrees that the variations which we find in the Talmud are not considerable but thinks that this is due

(1) P. 111.

(11) PP. 112 and 113.

to the fact that when the Talmud has been printed, the passages of Scripture in it have been corrected by the Massoretic Text. In fact most of the variants arise from allegorical inventions.

In all this Simon spares himself no effort to give a thorough examination of every question that has arisen either in the early Church or in his own day. Here again if we compare Simon's judgment with that of his contemporaries it will be noted that he possessed a restraint which was not commonly revealed in his time. By comparison with our contemporaries his work has obvious weaknesses and his method leaves much to be desired. There is, for example, a lack of historical exactness. But such weaknesses as we may find might well have been considerably multiplied. It is natural ability which overcomes the lack of resources available to him. The only resources available to him were the contents of a limited number of libraries in Paris which only he had utilised to the fullest possible extent.

V. The Manuscript Copies.
(Chapters XXI to XXIII)

"There is hardly anyone who is not capable of collecting the various readings which are in the printed Bibles," says Simon. ⁽¹⁾ "But there are very few people

(1) P. 117.

who have all the requisite aids to consult the ancient manuscripts; and, moreover, it is absolutely necessary to have seen several of them to be able to judge them soundly."

To supply this deficiency, Simon undertakes a short but detailed survey of the Manuscripts in which he reveals his close acquaintance with them and some understanding of their history.

He distinguishes, first of all, between the two main categories of Jewish manuscripts - those used in the Synagogue, written with great exactness on rolls or parchments and containing only the Five Books of the Law and some little volumes which are read in the Synagogues and are all written on separate rolls; and those manuscripts written by individuals for their own private use which are no different from our manuscripts, the Codices. The latter contain the complete text, divided into twenty-four books. ⁽¹⁾

Simon observes that there is some difference between the scripts of the manuscripts of these two categories, more precautions having been taken with the Synagogue manuscripts than with the private ones. Some of these differences owe their origin to the superstitious inventions of the Rabbis, so Simon gives a summary of the main ones only. He mentions the difference in the characters of the scripts,

(1) P. 117.

the Synagogue manuscripts having the characters embellished with the 'tagim' or 'crowns' for ornamentation. He refers to the beliefs about their origin on Sinai ⁽¹⁾ and the mysteries surrounding their interpretation.

He then goes on to discuss the regulations concerning the writing materials, the skins of clean animals, the kinds of ink, the size of the skins and of the letters, the spacing of lines, letters and words, the 'open' and 'closed' sections of the Pentateuch and the size of the consequent blank spaces and the required clarity of the script. The copies are to be taken from authentic copies and are to be corrected by an authentic copy. The promise of correctness which these regulations give has not, however, been fulfilled, since these rules are not of sufficient antiquity, and hence there was no division of sections or chapters, the 'parshiyoth' being invented for the convenience of individuals. The divisions in the ancient books were the invention of critics and grammarians.

The Synagogue manuscripts lack points and accents, because these too have been invented by individuals in the private manuscripts. The late invention of these is proved by this fact that the Synagogue manuscripts lack them.

(1) Also p. 43.

The other manuscripts have not been so carefully written and there are, therefore, few good ones. The greatest care with the Hebrew language has been taken by the Spanish Jews, and in their manuscripts the characters are square. Next to their manuscripts the best are those of France and Italy with rather rounder characters. The worst manuscripts are the German ones with larger characters. The best manuscripts are the ones at Constantinople and Salonica and some other Levantine towns to which the Spanish Jews went as exiles. (1)

He next describes particular manuscripts, the best of all being that written by Moses Cohen, son of Rabbi Salomon Cohen, in 1207, for Theodore Levite (Hannashi). This was in three volumes of which Simon has seen only one, containing the Prophets. Originally written unpointed from an old copy it has been reformed according to the Massoretic Text. There are, however, fewer occurrences of Qrê and Kthibh, i.e., variant readings, than in the copies of the Massorah. In fact, Simon says it would have been better to correct the Massoretic Text by this and others like it rather than the reverse.

He next considers those manuscripts in which the Massorah Magna is represented with figures of various

(1) P. 121.

animals, and says that they are full of faults. The good Spanish manuscripts have only the variants in the margin. He disputes the great antiquity claimed for the copy of Hillel by Leusden, Hebrew Professor of Utrecht, editor of *Biblia Sacra Hebraea correcta* etc., Antwerp, 1671, and others. On the other hand he disagrees with Morin who says that it is only 500 years old. But Morin has only seen manuscripts with the variant readings of Hillel in the margin and these manuscripts are 500 years old. They do not prove the date of Hillel which still might be earlier or later than these manuscripts. Simon considers it to be of later date on the grounds that the variant readings of the copy "ne consistent qu'en des minuties", (1) which have been invented by the grammarians some centuries ago. As examples of these "minuties" he gives Hîreq, Pathah, Daghesh, Mappiq, etc. He further discusses at length a variant reading in Joshua, XXI.

He then discusses the manuscripts of ben Asher and ben Naphtali. He does not commit himself to the common belief that these two, regarded as two individuals, lived circa 1034. He says that the date must remain uncertain. He refers to Elias Levita's claim that they were masters of some famous universities. However the variant readings of

(1) P. 124.

these manuscripts cannot be very ancient as they too consist only in "minuties de grammaire".⁽¹⁾ Maimonides said that the ben Asher manuscript was greatly esteemed in Palestine and Egypt and that he had followed it himself in writing his own copy of the Law.

Simon thinks it probable that those who were "Chiefs or Rectors of the celebrated schools applied themselves to the correction of the copies of the Bible and that then their Criticism or correction passed to a whole province."⁽¹¹⁾ That is why, he thinks, the ben Asher manuscript is so famous in Egypt. The same Maimonides also affirms that ben Asher spent many years correcting his copy and that he reviewed it several times. Simon gives a consideration of the printed catalogue of all the variations of ben Asher and ben Naphtali as well as of the Western Jews, who he believes were of Jerusalem, and of the Eastern Jews, of Babylon. "Those who cannot read them believe that these variant readings are of some importance; but they consist for the most part only in some small points and, moreover, the manuscript copies of these catalogues which I have consulted do not always agree with those printed. Others, on the other hand, who see that these variations are of no

(1) P. 125.

(11) P. 125

consequence imagine that the Hebrew Text is quite correct."⁽¹⁾
 But he adds that they fail to realise that there is more to understanding the state of the Hebrew copies than that. For when these variants were marked the Hebrew Text had already been reformed by the Massoretes. He notes that the Rabbinic writers maintain that the Jerusalem Jews followed the ben Asher manuscript and the Babylonian Jews that of ben Naphtali. His final judgment is that these reformations are late and it may be inferred that the Hebrew Text is not free from faults as so many Rabbis and heads of universities have spent time correcting it, even after the Massoretic correction.

Simon makes no distinction here between different ben Asher manuscripts, nor does he give an explicit indication, in his references to Maimonides, of the decree of the latter according to which the ben Asher text and vocalisation was to be regarded as standard.

Thanks largely to the work of Kahle it is now customary to regard the following manuscripts as the most important:-

(a) The Moshe ben Asher codex of the Prophets, now in the Qaraite synagogue in Cairo, written in 895 A.D.⁽¹¹⁾

(1) PP. 125 to 126.

(11) Siglum C in Kittel's Biblia Hebraica. 3rd Edition.

(b) The codex of the whole of the Old Testament, sometimes called the Aleppo Codex, in the Sephardic synagogue at Aleppo, with vocalisation and Massorah by ^aAaron ben Moshe ben Asher, the consonanted text by ben Buja'a dating from 929 A.D. (i)

(c) The British Museum codex of most of the Pentateuch, Or. 4445, also dated about mid-tenth century A.D. (ii)

(d) The best ben Asher text, according to Kahle, (iii) is the one in the Public Library of Leningrad (iv) actually a copy of a ben Asher codex, independent of, but in fair agreement with, the Aleppo codex. This manuscript, L, the oldest attested of the manuscripts containing the whole of the Old Testament in the second Firkowitch collection in Leningrad, was written in 1008 A.D.

The Reuchlin-codex, representing the ben Naphtali family, which is preserved in Karlsruhe was written in 1105. According to Kahle, there are signs of compromise between the ben Asher and ben Naphtali texts about 1300 A.D.

(i) Kahle. The Cairo Geniza, p. 59.

(ii) Kahle. Op. cit. pp. 67 seq.

(iii) Op. cit. pp. 60 seq. See also Preface to Biblia Hebraica.

(iv) L in Biblia Hebraica.

It is not part of our purpose to give a fuller consideration of this subject here. Simon's treatment of it pales into insignificance compared with the studies which have brought the work of the ben Asher and ben Naphtali families into such prominence during the past three decades. Even compared with many other parts of his own work, Simon's judgment here is very superficial and though, in other places, his conclusions have a striking affinity with modern ideas, it can only be said that in this case his statements are of no real value, and, on the whole, quite erroneous. Having observed, apparently, the differences between the manuscripts and the later official text of the Old Testament, he concludes that these are later, and it is earlier.

To continue, Simon agrees that vocalisation originated in the manuscripts for private use. His verdict on the variants is that they are to be regarded critically and that too great a concern to preserve all possible variations where some are obviously wrong is contrary to the purpose of true criticism.

An important factor to be observed in judging a manuscript is that the characters should be well proportioned, plain without ornament. The Perpignan manuscript of 1300 was written thus but a copyist has added adornments to the letters. These additions result in considerable confusion because they make for greater similarity between different

letters. Confusion also results from too many letters being crowded into a small space especially at the end of a line; from the similarities of final Kaph and Waw; a large Yodh; He and Heth; Zain and Daleth; final Kaph and Zain; Nun and Waw joined together resembling Mem. Sometimes a line ruled beneath the letters will turn a He into Mem, and Resh or Daleth into Beth. (1)

Since the genius of the language remains the same, writers are subject to the same errors and our present manuscripts may help us to discover the faults that have crept in to the ancient manuscripts. Although the Jews are now very scrupulous in their treatment of manuscripts, their predecessors' carelessness has left a legacy of confusion. If the variants had always been placed in the margins, this would have helped to show whether the Septuagint and other old copies had good reasons for their readings. He goes on to consider carefully the origin of particular variants by comparing them with several manuscripts which he has seen.

He concludes that it would be hard to find any Hebrew manuscript above 900 years old despite the Jewish claims that some of these are as ancient as Ezra. (11) In this

(1) P. 127

(11) P. 130

Simon has more agreement with the modern view if we do not include the Papyrus Nash and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

He condemns the practice of those who, like Morin and Capellus, multiply variants from manuscripts in printed copies. Many of the variants are not worthy of serious consideration.

Before leaving this part of Simon's work, we should point out that even though many of Simon's conclusions have no value to-day, his aim was to give a description of some of those manuscripts which he had seen. It is in this description that the value of his work lies, and although incomplete by comparison with modern standards, as probably the first of its kind, it should merit our respect.

VI. The Work of the Massoretes. (Chapters XXIV to XXVII)

While it may seem strange, to-day, to consider the work of the Massoretes without explicit reference to ben Asher and ben Naphtali groups, the fact that Simon does so, not only dates his work, but gives a hint, in advance, of his attitude to the Massoretes.

It will have been seen already that Simon was very far from accepting the traditional view that the Text has been handed down faithfully from generation to generation after having been fixed in ancient times.

His attitude towards the establishment of the Massoretic

Text by the School of Tiberias may be shown best by his statement: "As for Elias Levita's making the Jews of Tiberias authors of a good part of this Massorah, that is all the more probable since from the time of St. Epiphanius and St. Jerome, the School of Tiberias was reckoned one of the most learned which the Jews had for the knowledge of the Hebrew language." (1) It appears that he had some reservations about this, and it is to be expected from our knowledge of him that he will hold some views which will differ from those commonly held. We may, therefore, consider his attitude in more detail.

He goes into the attack at once, not only against the upholders of the traditional view represented by Buxtorf, who held out for the inspiration of the vowel points but also against Morin and Capellus who, in Simon's view, were antagonistic to the Massorah to the extent of seeming prejudiced against it.

Simon says, (11) "Since I here examine the Massorah as a Historian and without any prejudices, it should not be found strange that I do not stand by the opinion of Buxtorf at all, nor by that of Father Morin and Capellus. I have read the Massorah objectively and having translated the

(1) P. 132.

(11) *ibid.*

better part of it for my own use, I am persuaded that if, on the one hand, it contains many useless niceties, there are, on the other hand, a great number of very useful rules which can serve to reconcile the ancient translations with the new."

Elias Levita, while accepting that Ezra re-established Scripture, denies that Ezra invented the vowel points, accents, etc., in the present Hebrew Text. Maintaining that they were invented by the School of Tiberias, he adds that this criticism was not all made at one time nor by the same people but gradually over a considerable period of time. Simon's practically complete agreement with Levita has been noted and he points out that many critics have shown that what the Jews ascribe to Ezra was not known to Jerome.⁽¹⁾

In Simon's opinion the Massoretic criticism of the Text is to be valued since it was made by learned Jews who consulted the best copies they could find and the name they give to it shows that they have followed Tradition as their principal rule.

The School of Tiberias, he continues, felt that it was necessary to fix the traditional reading by inserting 'marks' into the text, but it cannot be said that their reading has

(1) P. 132.

always been the same in all times and places. Their correction should therefore be judged in the same way as other books are, which have been printed from good manuscripts and revised by learned critics, which does not prevent us from revising them again by the same rules of criticism.⁽¹⁾ There is no doubt that this view of Biblical Criticism was one which was not readily acceptable for some time after Simon.

While it is true that the text was faulty before the Massoretes corrected it, Simon says, it is equally true that they have not wholly cleared it of errors, and as they were not infallible the Massoretic Text should be regarded only as a work of learned critics. For he feels that in some places they have worked more by conjecture than by tradition.

Simon clearly states: "The Massorah has not always been in the same order or in the form in which we find it to-day."⁽¹¹⁾ It has been invented gradually by Doctors who made their remarks in the margins of their copies, as critics usually do, or in separate books. Most of these observations have in course of time been collected, of which the body of the Massorah has been composed as it is to-day. Simon has never seen it complete in any manuscript. The copyists

(1) P. 134.

(11) P. 135, i.e. in the Hebrew Bibles of Venice and Basle.

have only copied out some parts of it, with some confusion.

He notes the first publication of it by Joseph ben Chayim, a Tunisian Jew, who collected what he could out of several manuscripts. This was printed in the Venice Bible, the so-called "second-Rabbinical" by Bombergue with the Aramaic Text, (the Targums), and some Rabbinic commentaries, 1524 to 1525. This was the first compilation of the Massorah from manuscripts but they were late and not very satisfactory. (1)

There is no need to give here a summary of Simon's description and explanation of the Massorah, (Chapters XXV and XXVI), its divisions and the way in which it appears in the Bibles. All this he does with very great care for every detail.

Simon believes that the ancient Interpreters should be consulted and often followed in preference to the Massoretic Text. (11) Sometimes, where the Massorettes have kept an old reading although it is obviously a copyist's error, we should correct it to lessen the number of variants. Where the Massorettes have left empty spaces, and the old manuscripts have the missing words, we should restore them.

(1) Kahle. The Cairo Geniza, pp. 69 and 70; Roberts. op. cit. p. 70; Bentzen. op. cit. pp. 53 and 58.

(11) PP. 137, 142, etc.

Superstition must not hinder a proper treatment of the Text, and all letters should be written of equal size as they were originally. ⁽¹⁾

All his opinions he summarises as follows: "The rules which the Massorettes have collected concerning these changes are very useful for discovering the nature of the ancient manuscripts, on which they have composed their Criticism. There is, nevertheless, considerable confusion in this Massorah and it is agreed that the compiler has not removed all the errors. It must not, however, be neglected and although it is nearly impossible to re-establish it entirely it ought not, for that reason, to be rejected, since it contains many very useful rules. If there be something useless, or superstitious and ridiculous niceties, we should choose that which is the better." ⁽¹¹⁾ Here Simon is speaking of the Massorah as it was accepted in his day, in this case, probably, the text of ben Chayim's Venice Bible.

Simon devotes Chapter XXVII to a discussion of Vocalisation and Accentuation. He notes first that it is evident from Jerome's commentaries that vowel points were unknown in his time. As the reading of the Bible depends to a certain extent on these points, "it seems that it

(1) PP. 142 and 143.

(11) P. 139

cannot be said that Holy Scripture is entirely the Word of God, but that a part is the invention of men".⁽¹⁾

The Oriental languages had other vowels, originally, than the points now used, but as these first vowels did not sufficiently limit the reading, when the care for more scrupulous preservation of the text arose the vowel points were introduced.

It would seem that this originated with the Mohammedans,⁽¹¹⁾ in the Qurân. Simon sets the date for this as most probably under Omar, the third Caliph. The first Jewish Grammarians wrote in Arabic and probably imported the points and other parts of grammar into Hebrew.

It should be observed, however, that the reading of the Text has not wholly depended on these man-made points but they have only helped to limit the reading which was already received and authorised by custom. The Jewish Doctors, usually thought to be those of the School of Tiberias, by the invention of the points did nothing other than fix this ancient Tradition.⁽¹¹¹⁾

Ibn Ezra, contrary to Jewish belief, suggests that the Massorettes invented the points but adds that they have only

(1) P. 146.

(11) P. 147.

(111) P. 148.

fixed what was long since fixed by Tradition. This, says Simon, is true in a general way, but the Massoretic pointing is not infallible. "This Tradition has not been so constant that some alteration according to time and place has not occurred before the points were invented. Even since they have been added to the Text there have been many variations in the reading and one could, it seems, point several places better, principally those which seem to be irregular." (1)

Simon believes that the Massorah has been made on copies which had their faults and "consequently it cannot be considered as the first original by which we should be guided." (11)

The accents, also invented by the Massorettes, should be judged in the same way as the vowel points. They have been added as punctuation. Where the Septuagint or other versions disagree, the reading which makes the better sense is again to be followed. Even the fact that the Hebrew Text is still read in Synagogues should not lead us to regard it as infallible in this matter though it deserves to be considered.

Before going on to Simon's consideration of other matters which properly pertain to the work of the Massorettes we may try to give a summary of his ideas about the origin

(1) P. 149.

(11) P. 150.

of the Massoretic Text, arising from what has been said already.

In giving this summary, it is presupposed that the implicit and explicit references to the later theories on the work of the Massorettes, especially from the late Eighteenth Century onwards, the work of Kennicott, de Rossi and de Lagarde up to Kahle and the subsequent discussions, will be understood.

Not only must it be remembered, as always, that later discoveries have increased our knowledge, but also we must remember that the main subject of dispute in Simon's day was whether or not the vocalisation and pointing was of great antiquity, even of equal antiquity with the consonantal text. Hence Simon is more concerned with disproving this extreme view than with giving a detailed and positive theory of his own. Therefore his views cannot be stated with exact certainty.

It appears that he considers it to be the work of the Tiberian Massorettes. But it was a gradual process culminating in a collection of "the greater part of these Remarks" to form the "corpus of the Massorah as it is now".⁽¹⁾ He refers to the fixing of the text "by custom", but he does

(1) P. 136.

not mention Aqiba. The aim of the Tiberian Massoretes was to secure this text by marks or signs which would be more definite than custom alone.

However, Simon notes that this reading of the Massoretes was not constant, but varied according to time and place. They have also invented the vowel points, but Simon ascribes the original introduction of these in a primitive form to Mohammedan influence. Kahle has given this idea considerable prominence ⁽¹⁾ and although Simon only mentions the fact as a probability ⁽¹¹⁾ it seems worthy of note. Simon constantly refers to their invention as "new" or "late", and certainly regards them as later than Jerome. He is only concerned, of course, with Tiberian vocalisation, with no knowledge of the three, or strictly, four systems which Kahle, mainly, has revealed.

Simon, in accordance with his usual practice, gives no indication of his views of the dates of the Tiberian Massoretes, though we shall see that he regarded them as later than the Talmud, and the "authorisation of the Massorah" earlier than the founding of the Qaraite sect. ⁽¹¹¹⁾ This would suggest that he regarded their work as more or less

(1) The Cairo Geniza, pp. 78-110.

(11) PP. 147, 156.

(111) P. 162.

complete by the end of the Eighth Century at the latest. But we have no indication of his view of the dates of the Talmud or of the Qaraites. It certainly appears that he would not have placed the Tiberian Massoretes as early as the First or Second Centuries. But there is, again, no conclusive evidence.

In the matter of the distinction of verses Simon is concerned with opposing the view that these originate in their present form, i. e. marked by Sōph Pasūḳ - End of Verse - from Ezra or even Moses. The Sōph Pasūḳ he ascribes to the Massoretes ⁽¹⁾ and he dates it later than the Talmud, as he dates all their work. ⁽¹¹⁾ He agrees that pauses may have always been observed by the Jews for their reading in the Synagogue especially when a Hebrew Reader was accompanied by an Aramaic Interpreter. And after considering the Talmud interpretation of Nehemiah, viii, 8 in Treatises Nedarim and Megilla, he finds no reason for changing this opinion. But the distinctions marked in the Massoretic Text only follow the custom of the time and place whence they originate, and are not grounded on a constant Tradition, since the Septuagint, the Versions and Jerome do not exactly agree with it. ⁽¹¹¹⁾

(1) PP. 152, 153.

(11) P. 145.

(111) P. 153.

His own opinion is that we should not necessarily observe these distinctions invented by Grammarians whose rule is not infallible. However, we should deviate from them only with good reason, for the Tradition, while not infallible, is fairly authentic.⁽¹⁾ There follows a long discussion on the difference between this kind of Verse distinction and that which depends on reckoning numbers of words for each verse. In this he also discusses the views of many other writers.

He also describes the 'petuḥa' and 'setuma', the so-called 'open' and 'closed' parashas, and the origin of chapters which, he believed, originated with the Dominican, Cardinal Hugo, in his Concordance. These chapters, in the modern sense, he distinguishes from the parashas, i.e. liturgical parashas, marked with PPP in the printed Bibles but in most good manuscripts by a void space. Other manuscripts have 'Parasha' in the margin.

In closing his study of the work of the Massoretes, Simon gives a detailed examination, (Chapter XXIX), of the Qaraite sect, founded by Anan ben David c. 750. Simon has already alluded,⁽¹¹⁾ to the fact that they reject the Tradition of the Jews but accept the Massoretic Text.

(1) PP. 151 to 153.

(11) P. 148.

He dissipates the confusion that has existed between this sect and the Sadducees and the Samaritans, and disproves the claim of Leon of Modena that there were two kinds of Qaraites, and that only one of them rejects all the Jewish Tradition while accepting the Massoretic Text. He refers at length to the Qaraite commentator, Aaron ben Joseph, c. 1294, and concludes that they receive the Massoretic Text and reject most of the Jewish Traditions. There is no indication here of the important influence of the Qaraites on the development of vocalisation. (i)

Bentzen, (ii) states that the theory, as declared by the Qaraite, Juda Hadassi, that God has not created the Torah without punctuation has penetrated to Christian theology through Elias Levita. It should not be inferred from this that Levita accepted this view. On the contrary he was definitely opposed to it. (iii)

We may say, then, that Simon is not primarily concerned with developing a theory, or giving an elaborate history, of the origin of the Massorah. Tempting as it

(i) Kahle. op. cit. pp. 55, 84.

(ii) op. cit. p. 62.

(iii) Levita; Massoreth Ha-Massoreth, ed. Ginsburg, London, 1867, pp. 127 seq.

might be to read into his sometimes rather loosely stated views, ideas approaching those of Kahle, it can only be said that he comes nearer to the conclusion of the supporters of the 'archetype theory'. However, he does point out that he has never seen the Massorah complete in any manuscript. His references to "the Massorah" are usually to be understood as indicating that compiled by ben Chayim.. And if his general conclusion is antiquated, some of his particular remarks have only been confirmed by later writers.

The main point, as far as he was concerned, is that the work of the Massoretes cannot be regarded as the final authority. It is useful as a help towards the establishment of a true Text. But the Massoretic Text is not itself, by any means, the true Text.

.....

Book I concludes with a study of the origin and development of grammar among the Jews, and a catalogue of the most famous Jewish Grammarians with their history. He dates the rise of Hebrew grammar from about the end of the Ninth Century, basing his opinion on a catalogue of Jewish Grammarians written in 1600 and embracing 730 years and which gives the first Grammarian as Saadia of the Babylonian School in 927.

He again emphasises the influence of Arabic on Hebrew grammar. The earliest grammar book that Simon had seen was that of the Rabbi Juda Hiug of Fez, numbered seventh in the catalogue, (and) who lived in the Eleventh Century. It is from him that he traces the first understanding of Hebrew grammar although books on it had previously been written.

B BOOK II

In Book II of the Histoire Critique Simon undertakes a critical examination of the principal Versions and translations of the Bible, beginning with the Septuagint and including a discussion of Origen's Hexapla. In the later chapters he considers the other important Versions, the Vetus Latina, the Vulgate, the Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Armenian Translations, the Greek translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch, Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, the Targums and other translations or paraphrases by Jews. In the remaining chapters Simon discusses more modern translations by Roman Catholics and Protestants.

It is not our purpose to give a detailed consideration

of the whole of this second book. But since Simon was the first in the field of Biblical Criticism to include a comprehensive and comparative survey of ancient Versions and later translations it should be of interest to give a summary of his theories, his treatment, and his conclusions, and to see how they compare with those of more modern times and particularly with the most recent ideas.

After giving a brief review of the general outline of the contents of Book II in Chapter One, Simon commences his examination with the Septuagint.

I. The Septuagint.
(Chapters II to VIII)

The Septuagint was not translated by specially inspired men and it was quoted by the Apostles not because it was inspired but because Greek was a common language, ⁽¹⁾ and because the Septuagint was used in the Synagogues. ⁽¹¹⁾ Josephus, Philo and those Early Fathers who give it great authority do so only on the evidence of the Letter of Aristeas and other writers who have been believed ^{it?} to be very ancient.

(1) P. 186.

(11) PP. 181, 186 and note.

But, setting aside other reasons adduced by Scaliger and others to disprove the genuineness of Aristeas, from the style and contents of the Letter itself, the miracles, the wonderful stories, especially those concerning Theopompus and Theodectus, (Philodectus), and from a comparison of these with similar wonders related in the Talmud about the Targum Jonathan, Simon concludes that the Letter of Aristeas has been invented by a Hellenist Jew as propaganda for the Septuagint translation of the Pentateuch, which had already been written under one of the Ptolemies, and to commend it to his own nation. He believes that the Letter had been spuriously written long before Josephus and Philo. (1)

Josephus and Philo have related these wonderful stories on the testimony of Aristeas and the Fathers have accepted it in support of the Septuagint when the Jews had rejected the Septuagint. Other stories were added, derived from the Jews of Alexandria, including the story of the 72 cells which is taken from other Jewish writings and is not given by Aristeas or Josephus.

Aristeas, wrongly according to Simon, follows the book of Aristobulus in suggesting that there were earlier

(1) PP. 187 and 188.

translations of the Pentateuch. But Simon feels that this is contrary to the purpose of the Septuagint which implied that the Law was written only in Hebrew characters. Simon will not countenance the suggestion that there had been imperfect Greek translations and that the Ptolemy's purpose was to have one more exact. The latter suggestion, he feels, is contrary to the Letter of Aristeas. (1)

Thus Simon would have opposed a theory such as that of Kahle that the Septuagint Pentateuch must be a revision. Since Kahle's conclusion is based on the reference to these earlier translations in the Letter of Aristeas.

Simon gives no more authority to Aristobulus than he does to Aristeas and others whom Eusebius and Josephus have followed without examining their genuineness.

Vossius had alleged that the reference to an earlier Greek translation in Aristobulus indicated one made from an incorrect version in 'Samaritan' characters and that the Septuagint was made from better versions in 'Jewish or Babylonian' characters. But, according to Simon, Aristeas only says that the Law was written in Hebrew and that it should be put into a better state by translating it into Greek. (11)

(1) P. 189.

(11) P. 190.

Whether the story given by Aristeas about the Septuagint be true, with Hellenist Jews having made several additions, as some authors maintain, or whether it be completely fictitious, it is certain that the Jews of that time translated the Bible into Greek and that the translation was approved by the same Hellenist Jews. But from the diversity of style it can easily be seen that only the Pentateuch was translated at first since it is more exact than the translation of the other books. Or else the various books have been translated at roughly the same time but by different translators. Morin and other critics wrongly maintain that by the word 'Law' the whole of the Old Testament is indicated and that the whole of Scripture was translated by the Septuagint. Jerome followed the Jews in this but Aristeas, Josephus and Philo seemed to contradict him. (1)

Nor should we trouble to refute or reconcile the testimony of the Talmud in various places that the Septuagint was translated by five or seventy-two interpreters. The Talmud is not reliable from the standpoint of history and neither are modern Jews. Simon prefers the theory that it was called Septuagint because it was approved by the Sanhedrin who authorised the Hellenist Jews to read it in their

(1) P. 190.

Synagogues or at least in their Schools instead of the Hebrew Text. (1)

As he does not consider the Letter of Aristeas reliable he does not accept its assurance that the Septuagint is in exact conformity with the original, or that all the Jews who read it as soon as it was finished recognised it as such. The fidelity of a translation could not have been assessed so quickly. Likewise, Philo who followed Aristeas and knew no Hebrew is not a reliable judge of the conformity of the Septuagint to the Hebrew. For all that, there is no reason why we should not esteem the translation highly and we may, therefore, judge it by comparing it with the Hebrew Text, not necessarily our present Hebrew Text but the Hebrew Text as it was.

There were, as far as Simon was concerned, three main editions of the Septuagint - that of the Complutensian Bible of 1515, or more usually 1514 to 1517, the Aldine Edition of Venice, in 1518, and reprinted several times, latterly at Frankfurt in 1597 with a collection of Scholia, and thirdly the Sixtine Edition of 1586 at Rome. These editions do not agree and it is difficult to obtain from a comparative study of them with the Hebrew a faithful Septuagint Text, because this translation was corrupted

(1) See reference to the association with the Sanhedrin, in "The Septuagint: The Oldest Translation of the Bible. H. M. Orlinsky. Cincinnati. 1949, p.4.

before the earliest Fathers, who have not hesitated to accommodate it to their hypotheses. Furthermore they sometimes quoted it from memory and were not able to consult the Hebrew when they met with any difficulty.

Also the Septuagint was written in what Simon calls 'Synagogue Greek',⁽¹⁾ i.e. Koiné, and many words were changed to give a more suitable sense. As these alterations are very old, Origen himself having been responsible for some under the pretext of making his translation more exact, we have to begin our examination of the different editions further back.

There were many different Greek versions of the Septuagint before Origen undertook the correction of the one which was used throughout the Church. For this purpose he consulted other Greek translations made from the Hebrew, with the result that after Origen had made his correction, the old Septuagint began to be neglected.⁽¹¹⁾

Simon points out, however, that Origen corrupted the old version in some places to make it agree better with the original. Simon adds that in writing to St. Augustine, Jerome agrees with this view saying that Origen has taken too great a liberty with his reformation and has given a

(1) PP. 182, 193, 200.

(11) P. 193.

mixture of several translations joined together.

Origen's Hexapla arose from the rejection by the Jews, especially the non-Hellenists, of the Septuagint as being inexact and full of additions. The Fathers, therefore, had recourse sometimes to other Greek translations, e.g. Aquila, which they called Hebrew because it was verbatim with the Hebrew.⁽¹⁾ Origen, therefore, conceived the idea of a Bible which would show both the Septuagint and the Hebrew and then added the other Greek translations to aid the Fathers in their disputes with the Jews. Hence his Tetrapla, Hexapla and Octapla.

Simon then gives the description of the contents of these according to Epiphanius and notes the different explanations of the 'obelus' and 'asterisk' as given by Ruffinus and Jerome. This is followed by Jerome's reasons for his translation which he undertook for the same purpose as that for which Origen undertook his work.

The Tetrapla then, had four columns containing Aquila, Symmachus, Septuagint and Theodotion. To these were added two more columns containing the Hebrew Text and the Hebrew Text in Greek Characters. To these were added Quinta and Sexta to form the Octapla. Simon simply assumes the priority of the Tetrapla, and that the Septuagint was the

(1) P. 194, cf. p. 105.

same in both Tetrapla and Hexapla.

From this Septuagint translation, which was the Septuagint supplemented by passages from the Greek translations and marked as such, many copies were made by individuals and eventually became so common that they largely superseded the old Septuagint translation. Origen's marks were retained in these copies but the copyists were not always very careful about their position and the confusion in the Septuagint was increased when marginal scholia at these points were later inserted into the text.

But the various translations, the original Septuagint, the Hexaplaric, and the Hexaplaric with the scholia continued to exist. According to Jerome, some called the old Septuagint the Edition of Lucian. Also according to Jerome this was read from Constantinople to Antioch; the edition of Hesychius in Egypt; and between these places the correction of Origen which Eusebius and Pamphilius had taken from the Hexapla.

Simon's opinion is that Origen has not been sufficiently careful in reforming the old Septuagint by the other translations where he doubted the true reading, especially since he had a far from perfect understanding of Hebrew. Against Archbishop Usher of Armagh, who maintained that there had been two translations bearing the name Septuagint under Ptolemy Philadelphus and Ptolemy Phiscon, the latter not

being the true one although it is the one we have at present, Simon asserts that Jerome never mentioned this second translation. Following Jerome, Simon points out that the Pentateuch only was translated originally. In that sense one may say that there were two translations or rather that the whole translation was not made by the same people.⁽¹⁾ The Hellenist Jews having the Law translated into Greek, would without doubt cause the other books to be translated into the same language.

To conclude, it will be hard to recover this ancient translation as it was at first. But although the Hebrew Text and the Septuagint are defective, Simon prefers the Hebrew to the Greek. But "it is not necessary to separate them especially as they help each other."⁽¹¹⁾ He does not agree with those who favour the one to the exclusion of the other.

With regard to Lucian, Hesychius and Origen and their corrections of copies of the Septuagint there are great difficulties because they have not had sufficient knowledge for making an exact criticism. As for the three principal editions in his own day, although the Sixtine Edition is far from being the true one it is not the worst and is

(1) PP. 190 and 201.

(11) P. 201.

better than the Aldine, while the Complutensian has been corrupted and mixed in many places to make it agree more with the Hebrew. (1)

It would thus appear that Simon had reached a conclusion similar to that which Bentzen calls "the current theory", i.e. the pre-Kahle theory, that the Septuagint is not a unity but that there has been lost an "Urseptuaginta" - "source and archetype of all other Greek forms of the Old Testament". (11)

We can speak of such 'similar conclusions', of course, only in the most general terms. Simon was, as it were, opening the discussion which has so considerably developed since. It is not wise, therefore, to try to extract answers from his work to questions which had not arisen as far as he was concerned. Nor should we try to claim that his views have been reproduced by a later critic or group of critics. But while the great importance of Simon's work is that he was a pioneer in the critico-historical account of the Versions, anyone acquainted with the various theories which this century has produced cannot fail to observe hints and ideas in Simon's work which have been more recently developed.

(1) P. 202.

(11) Bentzen, *op. cit.* p. 80.

In Chapter X, after asserting again, at greater length, that Origen's "corrected" Septuagint in the Hexapla was not a new translation but only a new edition of the "common" Septuagint and that it was sometimes called the Edition of Pamphilius and Eusebius because they copied it and spread it throughout the Empire, Simon mentions the theory that Lucian and Hesychius have made new translations. While, on the evidence of Jerome and St. Augustine, Simon believes that they only corrected the "common" Septuagint also, he adds that these three, Origen, Hesychius and Lucian appear not to have been satisfied with consulting ancient Greek copies of the Septuagint but consulted also the original Hebrew and the Greek translations made from the Hebrew, with the result that they seem to have taken too much liberty in their criticisms. When Jerome called the Lucianic the Vulgar, it was the Vulgar corrected.

Like most other critics before Kahle Simon assumed the existence of a standard text at the beginning of the development, not at its end.

It should be added that Simon goes on to give a detailed examination of the various theories that have been held concerning the Septuagint, some preferring it to the Hebrew, and others taking the opposite view. Also ⁽¹⁾ he gives a

(1) In Chapters V, VI and VII.

comparison of the Septuagint and Hebrew translations of particular passages.

His conclusion about their relative merits has already been noted. Simon never readily regarded one principal version of the Old Testament as being wholly better than another but advocated a critical use of one with the other.

We may further note that Simon concluded, particularly from a reference in Justinian's Constitutions, (Novel. Constit. 146) that the Septuagint of the Pentateuch at least, was used by the Hellenist Jews as a paraphrase to the Hebrew Text, and that as this was used for an Interpretation or Exposition and they were not concerned with having a strictly verbatim translation, the differences between the Septuagint and the Hebrew may be accounted for partly in this way.⁽¹⁾

II. Other Versions.

It now only remains to give the briefest summary of Simon's opinions of the other translations dealt with in Book II. He gives brief descriptions of the Greek translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch, i.e. the Samaritan counterpart of the Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion and the anonymous Quinta and Sexta. On these he has nothing of very great importance to say but he gives an

(1) P. 294.

adequate description which, again, has some accord with current views. He observes, however, that the first versions of Aquila and Symmachus have been revised.⁽¹⁾

After a brief survey of the *Vetus Latina* or *Itala*, regarded as being originally one, but with later variations in different times and places, and which he says is an attempted verbatim translation of the Septuagint, even reproducing the barbarisms of the latter, and which is not very exact, Simon considers the Vulgate.

He agrees that Jerome is not the author of the whole of it but apart from those portions which belong to the *Vetus Latina* and some alterations which are not very important, he ascribes the major part of it to Jerome.⁽¹¹⁾ Simon notices that in some places the sense rather than the exact meaning is given and regrets that Jerome has deviated so much from the Septuagint.⁽¹¹¹⁾

He then devotes a chapter to a comparison of the translations of the Vulgate of certain passages with the Hebrew and with Jerome's suggested translations in his *Hebrew Questions on Genesis*. In some cases the Vulgate reading is preferred but by no means always.

There follows a similar chapter in which the Vulgate

(1) PP. 234 to 235.

(11) P. 245.

(111) P. 247.

is compared with the Septuagint. Throughout, one feels that Simon is concerned to justify the Vulgate, emphasising that the Council of Trent, in authorising this translation, have not set aside other translations, least of all the original Hebrew. (1)

In a chapter devoted to this authorisation by the Council of Trent, he points out that as it was absolutely necessary that there should be in the Western Church a Translation of Scripture by which it could be guided as much in disputes as in preaching and in other public actions, the Fathers of the Council of Trent wisely decided "to limit themselves to the ancient Latin Interpretation and that among all the Latin Translations it should be judged authentic" (11) He adds, however, that this did not mean that it was infallible and free from all faults since the same Council commanded it to be corrected. They did not examine it according to rules of an exact criticism to judge its conformity to the original, but they have followed the ancient custom of the Church which in these matters authorises "that which is the most ancient and least suspect of error", the Vulgate alone fulfilling these requirements. (111)

(1) P. 249.

(11) P. 265.

(111) P. 266.

He refers to the two Syriac translations, one made from Hebrew and one from the Greek of the Septuagint, the Peshitta, and the Syrian edition of the fifth column of Origen's Hexapla. The first, he notes, has been called by Gregory ^{about} Albupharagius 'simple', either in relation to the second or because the Septuagint is in some parts rather a paraphrase than a simple translation.

This 'simple' translation, according to Albupharagius, was used by the Eastern Syrians, while the Western Syrians use both. He dismisses the tradition that the Bible was translated into Syriac in the time of Solomon. He is not certain whether the translation used by the Syrian Church has been one made from the Hebrew or from the Greek. He thinks that the latter is the more probable since the Church is the same age as the Septuagint. It is certain, anyway, that the Syrians have translated the Septuagint into their language in the same manner as Eusebius copied it from Origen's Hexapla.

The Syriac translation in the English and French Polyglots, made from the Hebrew, i.e. the Peshitta, has, in some places been corrected by the Septuagint or made to agree with the Arabic and Syriac translations from the Septuagint. It has, however, suffered several errors from copyists who have not consulted the Hebrew. (1)

(1) PP. 270-272.

Simon goes on to give a summary of various passages as they are translated by the Paris and London Polyglots where the Syriac differs from the Hebrew. He gives some reasons for these variants. There follows a short consideration of the Syriac language and of the influence of Greek upon it. He blames the Syrians for the little uniformity in this translation because they have not consistently reviewed their copies and have, in some places, preferred the sense of their other translations from the Septuagint. (1)

Simon does not concern himself with a detailed account of the Peshitta, a term which he does not use, nor with the history of the Text. The edition which he used was that prepared by Gabriel Sionita for the Paris Polyglot, a poor version, as is generally acknowledged and as Simon says himself. (ii)

Simon next deals briefly with the Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Armenian translations, some Jewish translations or paraphrases and the Targumim whose date and authorship he regards as uncertain. The Onkelos translation of the Pentateuch is fairly exact and certainly more a Translation than a Paraphrase. In considering the others he distinguishes

(1) P. 280.

(ii) P. 277.

between the Targum Jonathan on the Prophets and the so-called Targum Jonathan, (Jerusalem or Yerushalmi I), on the Pentateuch. They are obviously not by the same author, as Simon points out with some annoyance, since Morin enlarged greatly upon this fact "as if the most learned critics did not agree, and had not distinguished these two Targums attributed to Jonathan". (i)

He notes that the Targumim, except Onkelos and Jonathan, seem to be of no great value. The manuscripts and printed editions differ considerably, especially in vowels and points which he attributes to the fact that the Jews who had added the points have not all had an equal mastery of Aramaic. (ii)

Various other translations are next considered, especially those by the Jews in Arabic, Persian, Spanish and Koine Greek and by the Jews of Constantinople. (iii) The latter involves Simon in a comparison of Koine Greek with Italian and French. He criticises the Spanish translation for a lack of exactness and suggests better translations for certain parts. (iv)

(i) P. 297.

(ii) P. 299.

(iii) P. 308.

(iv) PP. 311 to 312.

The remainder of Book II gives short studies, sometimes not much more than enlarged references, sometimes more detailed, of more modern translations grouped as follows: (1)

I. Latin Translations

A. By Roman Catholics.

- (1) The Alcala Bible of Cardinal Ximenes, 1515.
A good and commendable design.
- (ii) Santes Pagnin, the Dominican, 1527.
Faulty, obscure, full of solecisms.
- (iii) Arias Montanus in the Great Bible. Reprinted in the London Polyglot. Simon says this has been well described "quot correctiones, tot corruptiones" as he has not only reviewed Pagnin's translation but has increased the errors.
- (iv) Thomas Malvenda, Dominican, "Barbarous and odd" but useful as a grammatical translation and for the understanding of the Hebrew language.
- (v) Cardinal Cajetan. Literal translation, which has been condemned as heretical.
- (vi) Isidore, a Monk of Mount Cassino. A "correction" of the Vulgate. He does not have a thorough understanding of the Hebrew language.

(1) The comments added here only indicate Simon's conclusions. Their length is not necessarily proportionate to the space devoted by Simon to the translations.

- B. By Protestants.
- (1) Sebastian Munster, 1534. This is better than Pagnin or Montanus. It keeps to the sense as well as to the grammar, but though intelligible, it is harsh. On the whole his Notes may be useful for an understanding of the Hebrew language.
- (ii) Leon de Juda, Zwinglian, 1543. Very agreeable at first and well balanced but the words of the original are badly explained.
- (iii) Sebastian Castalio, 1551. Not an exact Interpreter of the Scriptures. Too elegant and polite in style. But he has a good understanding of Hebrew, Greek and Latin.
- (iv) Tremellius, formerly a Jew, and Junius. A very faulty method which produced a translation which was far from exact.
- (v) Luke and Andrew Osiander. They printed the Vulgate with corrections. A good method according to Simon if they had understood Hebrew better.
- (vi) Robert Stephens. In 1545 he published an edition of the Vulgate with Leon de Juda's Latin translation. In 1557 he published a new edition with a corrected version of Pagnin's translation and alleged that

they were Pagnin's own corrections.

II. Translations into Other Languages.

A. By Roman Catholics.

a. From the Vulgate.

- (i) English translation by English Catholics published at Rheims.
- (ii) German and Polish translations by Clergy of those countries.
- (iii) French translation by the Clergy of Louvain.
- (iv) Italian translation by Nicolas Malermi, 1541.
- (v) French translation by Martin l'Empereur.

None of these is very exact because the Hebrew and Septuagint have not been consulted. Mostly these have been written to prevent Catholics from reading Protestant translations.⁽¹⁾

b. From the Hebrew.

- (i) Antonio Bruccioli, 1530. Italian translation. Indifferent understanding.

B. By Protestants.

- (i) Martin Luther. Simon devotes nearly a chapter

(1) PP. 331 to 333.

to a consideration of this translation. Although Luther understood Hebrew only indifferently he translated from a Hebrew text. Simon points out that Protestants, particularly the Reformed Synod of Dort, and Hebrew scholars have opposed Luther's translation. According to Simon, Luther's method was good, but he rejected the idea of consulting any books by Jews, and his method is subject to mistakes.

In avoiding the pitfall of concentrating too greatly on grammar, Luther has tended to translate rather according to his own notions than according to the truth. Simon's treatment is sometimes a little satirical and he is unable to subjugate some partisan feeling, though he succeeds in doing this very well with the less prominent Protestants and gives a very fair and unbiased judgment of their work. Simon lists the various translations of Luther's translation which have been made in other countries.

- (11) The English Authorised Version. Simon gives a short history of the circumstances leading up to this translation. After several English translations had been rejected, King James

commanded that a new one be made and laid down certain rules for a new translation. This, he says, is now used but also the Edward VI translation of the Psalms in the Liturgy is used along with the Authorised Version of the Psalms. Simon is at a disadvantage here as he has not read it, but only parts of it in Latin or French books. He thinks that there is nothing "extraordinary" about it.⁽¹⁾ It does not seem to him to be exact, after translating parts of it into French. The marginal variants have been omitted and the best readings have not always been chosen. As several people have been engaged in this translation it has been difficult for them to keep the uniformity necessary in a work of this kind. The addition of Notes to illustrate the text and to explain the Hebrew words which may be differently translated would have improved it.

- (iii) Flemish translation 1637.
- (iv) The Spanish translation by Cassiodore de Reyna, 1569.
- (v) Spanish translation by Cyprian de Valere.
- (vi) Italian translation by Diodati, later translated into French.

(1) P. 339.

III. French Translations by Protestants from the Vulgate.

- (1) Robert Olivetan, 1535.
- (11) Revised edition of the above by Calvin.

Both translators, according to Simon, suffered from not understanding Hebrew although Olivetan himself was supposed to be well versed in it. Calvin's good judgment and thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures gave him some advantage, but he was more concerned with giving the sense rather than a translation, as his purpose was to put it into better French and to make it more intelligible. The later editions of this translation were supplemented with notes mainly from Calvin's Commentaries. (1)

- (iii) In 1588 the above was revised by Cornelius Bertram and others. This has fewer faults.
- (iv) Sebastian Castalio. A French translation actually of his own Latin translation. 1555.
- (v) A revision of Calvin's translation by Jean de Tournes, 1557.

Summing up of Book II.

Simon has thus, in Book II, covered an immense field and has made a new departure in Biblical Criticism by giving

(1) PP. 345 seq.

a critical history not only of the important Versions but also of so many different translations. In all his work he displays the fruits of his very wide reading, and it can be seen that his opportunities for prolonged study in the Library of the Oratory have been put to good use. Whether he is concerned with the ancient versions or the modern translations his judgments hold the balance very surely between the extremes, in contrast to those of his contemporaries.

He reveals his ability in giving a judicious estimate not only of the translations themselves but of the various theories that others have held about them. This is not to say that his judgments were always sound or that his opinions were always correct. But he does not neglect to give a reasoned statement of his views. He gathers together a wide selection of authorities with considerable skill and he justifies his declaration that his primary concern is not to follow the opinions of others but to make a judgment based upon each work in itself. These qualities are enhanced by the fairness with which, on the whole, he treats the translations of Protestants, where his normal antipathy is not allowed to cloud his critical vision as much as one might expect.

The value of this book lies not only in his judgments

of his many subjects but in the fact that he gives a very clear impression of so many translations and of their value. Bernus blames Simon for concerning himself too much with the translations of particular passages so that he fails to give "a short and complete idea of each translation and of its spirit".⁽¹⁾ Such a method, however, can sometimes reveal the 'idea and spirit' better than any other. Simon, in any case, was more concerned to show the value of the translations, from the critical standpoint.

Neither does it seem particularly valid to complain of the "marked disproportion"⁽¹¹⁾ between Simon's treatment of the Latin, French, Italian and Spanish translations, and those written in German, English and other languages which Simon did not understand. There is an equally marked disproportion in the treatment by Bernus of the Latin and English translations of the "Histoire Critique". The reason in his case is that he had not seen the English translation. It was no easier for Simon to give a criticism of books which he was unable to read. He was conscious himself that he could not give an accurate criticism of these and acknowledges the fact.⁽¹¹¹⁾

(1) Bernus op. cit. p. 95.

(11) *ibid.*

(111) See for example p. 338 to 339.

C. BOOK III

The first two books of the Histoire Critique contain, as we have seen, Simon's critical work on the Old Testament and some of its different Versions. There remains only the third and last Book of this work which for our purpose is not of the same importance as the others.

The most important part of it, in which Simon outlines a Project for a new translation of the Holy Scriptures, has already been noticed. (1) We may here recall the main points only.

The Text of the Old Testament as we have it at present, Simon points out, is obscure and far from faultless. Defective as the present copies of the Hebrew Text are, that Text must always be the basis for any translation. At the same time it is most necessary to consult the ancient versions because there are places where they alone can help towards a more correct translation. (11) As far as possible, by comparison with all the old versions, a Hebrew Text must be established and the variant readings considered. There must be a thorough understanding of the language into which the text is to be translated and, lastly, the translation must be supplemented by explanatory dictionaries.

(1) PP. 32 to 33 above.

(11) P. 353.

After this Simon gives proofs of the difficulties which confront the translator in a discussion of verses from the first two chapters of Genesis in particular and of verses from later chapters in Genesis and Exodus. He takes his examples from these places on the grounds that the Historical books, in which for this purpose he includes the narrative parts of the Pentateuch, are most easily translated. Further, by showing the difficulties which may be encountered, he claims to be refuting the Protestant assertion that the Word of God is clear and not at all confused.⁽¹⁾ A note on this statement in the Fifth and Seventh Editions points out that the Protestants mean by this only that the Word relating to belief and morals is clear and not confused, and that their own commentaries show that they are aware of the kind of confusion to which Simon refers. On the assumption that Simon is the author of these notes, this is an example of his attempts to commend his book to the Protestants, which was the main purpose of the new Preface and notes.

In the remainder of Book III Simon examines the various rules for Interpretation and the methods followed by commentators among the Jews, the Fathers, the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. Without going into a detailed consideration of these, we may notice certain points in his

(1) P. 370.

treatment of some of the Fathers of the Church which is important, not because it adds to our knowledge of Simon as a Biblical Critic, but because it gives an indication of those views, which he developed considerably in his "Histoire Critique des principaux commentateurs du nouveau Testament", and in the notes to his New Testament Translation, and which were responsible for so much of the hostility shown by Bossuet and others towards Simon.

The Fathers, Simon points out, in their controversies with Jews and Philosophers used Reason rather than Scripture against the former and the idea of Religion which they had received, i.e. Tradition, against the latter. They considered more the mystical explanations than the grammatical or literal sense which seemed to them only to be able to agree with the Jews. (1)

Therefore, in the commentaries of the Fathers, and in their allegories, we should expect to find the Truths of Christianity rather than a literal explanation of the Bible. Nevertheless Augustine gives many excellent rules for understanding the literal sense of the Bible. The first is that we should seriously study the original language of Holy Scripture so that we may understand better the parts of Scripture which are obscure. A knowledge of Latin alone is

(1) P. 386.

not sufficient. Hebrew and Greek are necessary if we are to get back to the originals. Secondly, we must have correct copies. When we find a fault in the Vulgate the Septuagint should be consulted. (1)

In addition to the grammatical significance of each word we must have a knowledge of the background, conditions, customs, and kindred subjects. But Simon remarks that Augustine was always much more concerned with the allegorical rather than with the literal sense.

Among the Arts necessary for understanding Scripture Augustine included Dialectics. Simon agrees with this but feels that it may be abused. We must take care not to give our own opinions in such a way as to clothe them with the authority of maxims of belief drawn directly from Scripture. Augustine has been accused of doing this and it has been suggested that his books contain more subtlety than solidity.

He refers also to different methods of distinguishing the parts of the discourse, which, having been invented by grammarians and not by the authors themselves must lead us to have recourse to the Rule of Faith. Augustine condemned those who interpreted passages according to their literal sense instead of explaining them figuratively. Simon is very opposed to this principle which too frequently led

(1) PP. 387 and 388.

Augustine to indulge his passion for allegories. Similarly, when Augustine maintained that one passage of Scripture may be explained in different ways Simon comments that Augustine has stretched this principle too far and that by this principle the words of men are made to pass for the Word of God. (1)

Simon proceeds to an examination of the methods of Origen, Jerome and Augustine.

Of Origen he says that he was the most devoted to the study of the Scriptures and that while he imitated no one before him, most of his successors have imitated him. From his commentaries it would appear that he had an equally good knowledge of sacred and profane authors. He too delighted in allegory but especially because he thought it was the most useful means whereby the learned of those days might be drawn to Christianity. No one has taken so much trouble as he has done to correct and explain the Text, and he knew Hebrew sufficiently well not to be easily deceived by the Jews. (11)

We do not find so many trifles and digressions in his writings as in those of the other Fathers. There is much learning in his commentaries. Simon in fact feels that there is too much and that he has deviated from the simplicity of the

(1) P. 390.

(11) P. 392.

Bible. He was more concerned with the spiritual than with the literal sense. Simon does not consider that the method of Origen was a good one because his explanations are too subjective. (1)

After Origen, Jerome is considered. He had greater advantages than any of the other Fathers as a translator, knowing Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek and Latin and having read all the Greek and Latin works on the Bible which had been written before his time. But he is not always very accurate, because he did not meditate sufficiently and he was content to dictate to his copyists what he had read in other commentaries or what he had learned from the Jews. So that the contents of his commentaries are not always his own, as he acknowledges, and he gives rules to distinguish what is his own from that which he has borrowed.

To be thoroughly instructed in his method we must understand his spirit and his way of writing, (11) otherwise we shall find apparent contradictions only. His opinion seems to vary, for he approves something in one place and disapproves elsewhere, commends and blames the same person at different times. But he is the first of the Fathers who understood how to interpret Scripture according to the rules of Criticism and uses allegory only to please others

(1) P. 393.

(11) P. 395.

and to avoid the accusation of partiality to the Jews by his literal expositions. He is able to give the best instruction in Criticism, but he does not always deal justly with the Septuagint and the Greek translations. We must be prepared for contradictions when reading his works.

Thirdly, Simon discusses St. Augustine, who had not so much learning as these two Fathers but his force of spirit and solid judgment compensate for that deficiency. He acknowledged that he did not have most of the qualities which he himself considered necessary for translating the Bible so we should not be surprised to find that his commentaries are sometimes inexact.

His judgment, however, is more sure than that of Jerome, and he is more moderate than Origen. His lack of Hebrew and poor understanding of Greek hampered his work on Genesis, and his love of allegory rather than the literal sense was a great weakness. Simon further criticises his prejudices in Philosophy and Divinity, his exposition of the Psalms and gives an example of his allegorical method. But he adds that Augustine freely acknowledged most of these faults.

The Platonic philosophy was another contributory cause of his failure to keep more closely to the letter and the strict meaning. Thanks to this philosophy also and the Idea of Perfection which he attaches to most things,

Augustine failed to see the difference between what Simon calls "necessary truths" which never alter and "contingent truths" which relate to facts, such truths being the ones contained in Scripture. Augustine has been able to form true ideas of the former. But it is not the same with an infinity of facts which cannot be thoroughly understood by simple speculation. The facts in Scripture do not depend on our conception of them but they must be studied objectively, and to understand them we must be conversant with the style and expressions of the Sacred Books. We must, therefore, depend more on the kind of method which Simon has set down rather than on our own conceptions about them. St. Augustine, however, has sometimes made the facts fit his conceptions. (1)

It is easy to understand even from this brief summary why those who, like Bossuet, could not contemplate any reflections on the perfections of the Fathers, least of all on Augustine, would find in Simon a disturbing element which must be radically altered, or if this were impossible, suppressed. The fuller implications of Simon's work as seen by Bossuet, will be considered below. (11)

When Simon goes on to consider the Commentaries of

(1) P. 400.

(11) Chapter IX.

Luther and Calvin his attitude is much the same as that which he adopted in his criticisms of their translations. ⁽¹⁾ His criticism of Luther is coloured by the fact that he could not consider him to have the qualifications necessary for his task. Simon considered that a knowledge of the original language was a first essential. "As he was not a sufficiently able grammarian, nor learned enough in the Hebrew language to be able to read the Rabbinical Writers in the original, he scorned their interpretations and he established as a rule that the words should be explained with regard to the matter which is treated, and not the matter by the words". ⁽¹¹⁾ However good this rule may be Simon maintains that all Luther's explanation of Scripture has been too much influenced by his "religious prejudices". "As he was not, therefore, exactly capable of making Commentaries on Scripture according to the literal and grammatical sense he has most often spread himself on useless Questions and Remarks". ⁽¹¹¹⁾

For Calvin, however, he reserves a kinder verdict. Although he considers his arguments are too subtle, he believes that he shows more judgment than Luther in his

(1) See pp. 201-202, 204.

(11) P. 432.

(111) P. 433.

Commentaries, and he is more reserved, taking care not to use weak proofs. Although his knowledge of Hebrew was far less than Luther's, he was more exact because he was more capable of reflection on what he read. But he was not versed in Criticism or in the languages and inevitably he was sometimes mistaken in the proper meaning of words. "To conclude, since Calvin has a very lofty spirit, we find in all his Commentaries on Scripture a certain something which is pleasing at first; and as he was principally concerned with understanding Man, he has filled his books with a morality which is striking and he strives even to make his morality true and conformed to his Text. If he had been less obstinate and had not had a longing to be head of a party, he could have worked very usefully for the Church".⁽¹⁾

Simon, after various judgments on other Commentators and a criticism of the Prolegomena to Walton's London Polyglot, concludes Book III with two catalogues - a catalogue of the principal editions of the Bible, Hebrew, Samaritan, Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopian, Greek, Latin, and Bibles in other languages and also on the Polyglot Bibles with a Project for making a Polyglot containing the Hebrew, Vulgate and Septuagint Texts. The second catalogue lists the Jewish and other authors who are little known and who

(1) P. 435.

have been cited in the *Histoire Critique*.

The outline of the *Histoire Critique* has now been completed. It has been given here more fully than has been done in most other works because it is necessary to give a detailed picture of the work of Richard Simon if his importance is to be shown. This work brought Simon notoriety in his lifetime and the controversies in which he became involved have largely submerged his critical reputation beneath that of the polemist. Apart from his theory of the compilation of the Pentateuch his work has been largely ignored and one might think that he had done nothing more. Our aim here has been to show how he tried to achieve his purpose of giving a *Critical History of the Text of the Old Testament and Versions*. His importance for Biblical Criticism lay not so much in his ideas and judgments, although these are not entirely outdated, but in his method and in the vast scope of his work, an undertaking without parallel before his time.

CHAPTER 7THE OPPOSITION AROUSED BY
THE HISTOIRE CRITIQUE

"But enough has been said of the design and usefulness of this History. It only remains for me to beg those who would take the trouble to read it with some care, to notify me charitably of my faults, so that I may profit from their advice. It is only reasonable that having made the Criticism of so great a number of authors I should submit myself to the rebuke of others."⁽¹⁾

With these words Simon closed the Preface to the First Edition of the Histoire Critique. This open and well intentioned invitation met with a ready response. As soon as some of the copies of the First Edition which had escaped destruction were available in the various countries to which they had been sent, they were eagerly read by those whose interest in the subject had been quickened by the news of the

(1) Histoire Critique, Preface. P. xiv.

book's suppression. But the replies to the book commenced even before it was officially suppressed.

The first of these, ⁽¹⁾ came from England in a letter written on the 14th May, 1678. ⁽¹¹⁾ De Veil had an unusual ecclesiastical career. He was born at Metz of Jewish parents who brought him up in their religion. When still young he was converted to Roman Catholicism. He studied theology and eventually became Doctor and Professor of Theology at Angers. Bossuet is said to have been closely concerned with both his conversion and his education. De Veil later became Chanoine Régulier de Sainte Augustine in the Congrégation de Sainte Geneviève de Paris. He then left the Roman Catholic Church, went to England and became an Anglican priest but ultimately became an Anabaptist

(1) In Réponse à la Défense, p. 79, Simon writes "M. Simon sent to M. Claude via M. Justel the first part of his Histoire Critique which was in the press, so that he could tell him what he thought of it. In fact he gave his objections, part of which has been refuted in the Preface, without naming him." Strictly speaking these remarks of Claude were the first criticism of Histoire Critique but are not included here among the opponents of the book.

(11) Lettre de Monsr. de Veil, Docteur en Théologie, et Ministre du Saint Evangile, à Monsr. Boyle de la Société Royale des Sciences à Londres, Pour prouver contre l'Auteur d'un Livre intitulé Critique du Vieux Testament, que la seule Ecriture est la règle de la Foi. Londres, 8^o, 1678. English Translation, 4^o, 1683. Printed in H.C.V.T., 1685, pp. 546 to 557.

minister, in which sect he died. (1)

It was while he was an Anglican priest at Fulham that he wrote his letter to Boyle against the *Histoire Critique*.

It is written in a very controversial style particularly to oppose Simon's claim that Scripture is obscure and that it cannot be, without the Tradition of the Church, the Rule of Faith. He supports his argument by quotations from the New Testament and from Augustine, Jerome and others. He closes by giving thanks that he has been persuaded, by the mercy of God, to renounce "the heterodox Traditions and the superstitious novelties of the Roman Church, to embrace an Orthodox Communion which rules its faith by the divinely inspired Scripture alone". (11)

Simon replied to this in a short letter under an assumed name, (111) and dated 16th August, 1678, although it was not printed until the 1685 Edition of the *Histoire Critique*. He answers all the points which De Veil had made on the basis that the latter, like most Protestants had been prevented

(1) See *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, December 1684, Art. 11. Also marginal notes on the 7th letter in *Lettres Choiesies*, 1730, vol. 1, p. 45.

(11) P. 557, H.C.V.T. 1685.

(111) *Lettre à Monsieur J...S.D.R. (Justel, secrétaire du roi)* H.C.V.T., 1685, pp. 557 to 562, signed R. De Lisle, Prêtre de l'Eglise Gallicane.

from understanding the writings of the Fathers through not having read them in the original. ⁽¹⁾ He quotes as freely as De Veil does to refute the opinions of the latter, and upholds the necessity of Tradition. Apart from some gentle mockery, it is written with calm restraint. Later Simon acknowledged ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ that he was responsible for this reply. De Veil returned to the attack after Simon's reply had appeared, in 1685, ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ with a letter in which he develops his earlier arguments. Simon made no reply to this.

Following the suppression of the *Histoire Critique*, the second adversary, but this time a much more gentle one wrote a letter containing lavish praise and some criticism of Simon's book. This was written by Ezechiel Spanheim, elder ^(iv) brother of Frederick Spanheim, ^(v) and then Envoyé Extraordinaire in London of the Elector of Brandenburg. He was

(1) P. 558.

(ii) Réponse aux Sentimens, pp. 32 and 38.

(iii) Lettre de Mons. G. M. de Veil, Dr. en Theol. à Mons. T. Maimbourg, écuyer, etc. Londres, 1685, 4°. See *Acta Eruditorum*, Lipsiae, 4°, Feb., 1686, pp. 104 to 106

(iv) Lettre à un Ami, Où l'on rend compte d'un Livre, qui a pour titre H.C.V.T., Publié à Paris en 1678. Amsterdam. Elzevir, 1679, 12°. Also reproduced in H.C.V.T., 1685, pp. 563 to 622.

(v) See p. 73.

well known in literary circles. This letter, probably written as a result of his having read one of the copies of the First Edition of the *Histoire Critique* which Simon had succeeded in having sent to England ⁽¹⁾ was published anonymously. It was dated 10th December, 1678.

It includes a detailed analysis of the *Histoire Critique* ⁽¹¹⁾ with a criticism of certain ideas contained in it, particularly the necessity of Tradition, the corruption of the Hebrew Text, and the system of Public Writers. On the whole Spanheim is defending the so-called orthodox or traditional view. But praise and criticism are so mingled that the Letter leaves the impression that the writer has been more attracted by the virtues of the *Histoire Critique* than repelled by those ideas which he finds unacceptable. Quite often the criticisms take the form of unanswered questions.

Simon replied with a letter, dated 10th September, 1679, his identity concealed under the title "Un Théologien de la Faculté de Paris". ⁽¹¹¹⁾ Simon, later, did not deny that he

(1) See p. 50 above.

(11) PP. 570 to 606.

(111) Réponse à la Lettre de Mr. Spanheim, Ou Lettre d'un Théologien de la Faculté de Paris, qui rend compte à un de ses amis de l'*Histoire Critique* du Vieux Testament, Attribuée au P. Simon de l'Oratoire. Amsterdam. Elzevir. 1680, 12^o. Reproduced H.C.V.T., pp. 623 to 667.

was the author.⁽¹⁾ This reply consists almost entirely of yet another analysis of the *Histoire Critique* which is interesting not only because it is written by the author himself in the guise of a critic, but also because it is probably the most complete summary of the work which has been written.⁽¹¹⁾ In the course of it and after it he answers Spanheim's criticisms but for the most part only emphasises what he has already said in the *Histoire Critique* itself, or in his reply, to De Veil.⁽¹¹¹⁾

So far the exchanges between Simon and his opponents had been in the nature of light exchanges only on the fringe of real controversy. His two adversaries were not really anything like his equal in knowledge of the subject under discussion nor do they appear to have had the ability to enter into a detailed or prolonged debate.

Perhaps because of this, personalities and abuse had been kept out of the exchanges. The situation now changed radically with the intervention of an adversary of greater stature, more experienced in the work of criticism, but not,

(1) *Réponse aux Sentimens*, p. 211.

(11) PP. 626 to 664.

(111) A further '*Réponse particulière à Spanheim*' was written by Simon in 1685, and was published in various editions of *Lettres Choiesies*, 1704, Vol. II; 1705, Vol. III; 1730, Vol. II.

however, with a correspondingly penetrating insight into the problems which Simon had discussed in the *Histoire Critique*.

Isaac Vossius was born in Leyden in 1618, and occupied the position of Librarian to Queen Christina of Sweden for some time before proceeding to England where he became Canon of Windsor in 1673. There he, like Simon, occupied himself with extensive studies and produced a number of works which were of sufficient importance for Simon to attack his views in several places in the *Histoire Critique*.⁽¹⁾ The main points that Vossius made were that the Hebrew Text had been designedly corrupted by the Jews and that the Septuagint should be regarded as the work of inspired writers and should be much preferred to the Hebrew. From these first principles a considerable number of rather extreme ideas were developed.

Simon had argued in a reasonable and sufficiently conclusive way against these principles of Vossius as developed in the latter's most important work.⁽¹¹⁾ Simon⁽¹¹¹⁾ had alleged that there were more faults in the Septuagint

(1) Notably Book I, Chapter 18; Book II, Chapter 4; Book III, Chapter 19.

(11) *Is. Vossii De Septuaginta interpretibus eorumque translatione et chronologia*. Hagae Comitum. 1661. 4°. These ideas were further developed in another work entitled, *Is. Vossii Adpendix ad librum de Septuaginta interpretibus, seu Responsiones ad Objecta variorum Theologorum*. Hag. 1663, 4°.

(111) PP. 204 seq.

than in the Hebrew and refuted the claim of Vossius that because the Chronologies of the Hebrew and Septuagint do not agree it can be assumed that the Jews have deliberately corrupted their Text. Simon pointed out that when all the Chronologies from every source are collected there are still many gaps, and that this results from abridgements because the Chronology was not the main concern either of the writers or of the editors of the Text. In the same way Vossius claimed that the Samaritans had corrupted their text.

Vossius replied to these criticisms of his favourite theory in an appendix to his book on the Sibylline Oracles.⁽¹⁾ In this appendix he maintained his opinion that the Hebrew Text had been corrupted by the Jews, particularly in the Chronology of the Patriarchs and that the translators of the Septuagint have been inspired with the spirit of Prophecy. He defends the passages of the Septuagint which Simon had criticised and attacks the Rabbinical writers and the Talmud.

Simon's reply appeared in 1684.⁽¹¹⁾

(1) *Isaaci Vossii De Sibyllinis allisque, quae Christi natalem praecessere, Oraculis; accedit eiusdem responsio ad Objectiones nuperae Criticae Sacrae. Oxoniae, 1680, 8°.*

(11) *Disquisitiones Criticae de variis per diversa loca et tempora Bibliorum editionibus, quibus accedunt Castigationes Theologi cuiusdam Parisiensis ad Opusculum Isaaci Vossii de Sibyllinis Oraculis, et eiusdem Responsionem ad Objectiones nuperae Criticae Sacrae. Londini, impensis Richardi Chiswel, 1684, 4°.*
See page 63 above.

To this Vossius replied in 1685.⁽¹⁾ Simon, in reply to this, reprinted his *Castigationes* in the same year, with a further reply.⁽¹¹⁾ In all these the exchange of terms of personal abuse increases and epithets applied to Jerome by Vossius are in turn applied by Simon to Vossius.⁽¹¹¹⁾ The argument again turns on the opinions of Vossius about the falsification of the Hebrew Text and the superiority of the Septuagint, with subsidiary questions such as whether the common language of the Jews was Greek, or if the Scriptures

(1) *Ad iteratas Simonii Objectiones Responsio* - an appendix to *Isaaci Vossii Variorum Observationem liber*. Londini, 1685, 4^o.

(11) *Richardi Simonis, Gallicanae Ecclesiae Theologi, Opuscula critica adversus Isaacum Vossium, Anglicanae Ecclesiae Canonicum. Defenditur sacer Codex Ebraicus et B. Hieronymi Tralatio*. Edinburgi. Typis Joannis Calderwood, a false indication for Leers, Rotterdam, 1685, 4^o. In this volume are included the revised *Castigationes*, the 1684 edition being faulty according to the Letter to Calderwood, dated Kalend. Februarii, 1685, on the reverse of the title page; the revised title, *Castigationes ad Opusculum Isaaci Vossii de Sibyllinis Oraculis, et Responsonem ad Objectiones nuperae Criticae Sacrae*, pp. 3 to 55; following this, *Excerpta ex Disquisitionibus Criticis Richardi Simonis, Gallicanae Ecclesiae Theologi*, pp. 56 to 86 - these are the chapters relating to the Septuagint; lastly, the new reply pseudonymously, *Hieronymi Le Camus, Theologi Parisiensis Judicium De nupera Isaaci Vossii ad iteratas P. Simonii Objectiones Responsione*. Edinburgi, Typis Joannis Calderwood, 1685, 4^o, pp. 1 to 64. This is dated at the end, *Juliobonae in Kaletibus, die 12. , Januarii, 1685*. Simon admits his authorship in *Reponse aux Sentimens*, p. 147.

(111) e.g. *Castigationes*, pp. 4 and 5.

were read in the Synagogues in Greek or Hebrew. To Simon's latest contribution Vossius gave a further reply.⁽¹⁾ Here the main questions have become overshadowed by discussions about particular prophecies which Vossius quotes from the Talmud, whether they derive from prophets as Vossius maintains, or from Rabbis as Simon maintains; about the language spoken in Egypt; and about the development and changes in the languages spoken by the Jews. There is also a discussion of Simon's hypothesis of Public Writers. The letter of Colomies, a friend of Vossius, included in this reply, is written in French. The exchanges had developed into controversy for its own sake and while all the weight of reason and the consensus of opinion as well as critical ability was on the side of Simon, it was not to be expected that any agreement would be reached.

In the new Preface to the Rotterdam edition of 1685 of the *Histoire Critique*, Simon takes the opportunity to reply to two writers who had criticised his book.⁽¹¹⁾ The first of these was G. Salden, Professor of Theology at Utrecht, who

(1) *Isaaci Vossii Observationum ad Pomponium Melam Appendix. Accedit eiusdem ad tertias P. Simonii Objectiones Responsio. Subjungitur Pauli Colomesii ad Henricum Justellum Epistola.* Londini, 1686, 4^o. This is reviewed in *Acta Eruditorum*, April, 1687, p. 220.

(11) See p. 72 above.

had opposed the views of Isaac de la Peyrère, Spinoza and Simon. (1)

Simon barely enters into a debate. He quotes a letter, usually regarded as his own, which pours ridicule on Salden's criticism of the *Histoire Critique*. This criticism was directed against two of the favourite objects of attack, the theory of Public Writers and the small rolls on which Simon believed that the originals behind the Text had been written, and the disorder of which resulted in some of the confusion of the Text. Pierre Bayle, (11) condemns the manner of Simon's reply and praises Salden for his modesty and restraint. Salden replied with a brief comment in 1688. (111)

In the same Preface Simon replies to the criticism of an anonymous author, actually Jacques Basnage, (iv) later to become famous for various works, and especially his *History of the Church and History of the Jews*. After the revocation

- (1) *Otia Theologica, sive Exercitationum subcisivarum varii argumenti Libri VI*. Amstelodami, 1684, 4^o.
- (11) *Nouvelles de la Rép. des Lettres*, June, 1684, Art. VI, and December, 1684, Art. XI. See also *Acta Eruditorum*, Nov. 1684, p. 517 seq.
- (111) See Preface to his book *De libris variorumque eorum usu et abusu Libri II*, Amstelodami, 1688, 8^o.
- (iv) *Examen des méthodes, proposées par Messieurs de l'Assemblée du Clergé de France*, 1682, Cologne, or Rotterdam.

of the Edict of Nantes he became minister of the Reformed Church in Rotterdam.

His book to which Simon replies is an examination of the instructions prepared for the Roman Catholic Missionaries charged with the task of converting Protestants, and in opposing the Rule which emphasised that the interpretation of Scripture was dependent upon Tradition, he opposes Simon as one of the main supporters of this view. Simon replies firmly but calmly, and corrects certain misinterpretations which Basnage has made of passages in the *Histoire Critique* particularly on "prophets" and the meaning of "bara" in Genesis I, 1.

On the main question, that of Tradition, Simon as is his custom replies, while still pretending to be a Protestant, that even the Protestants are dependent upon human tradition for their possession of the Scriptures. Basnage replied to Simon further, denying that the corruptions in the Text were as important as Simon had claimed, and repeating his denial of the necessity of Tradition. (1)

(1) *Divi Chrysostomi Epistola ad Caesarium monachum, juxta exemplar cl. v. Em. Bigotii; cui adjunctae sunt tres epistolicae, Dissertationes: prima, de Apollinaris haeresi; secunda, de variis Athanasio suppositiis operibus; tertia, adversus Simonium. Rotterodami, 1687, 8^o. See Nouvelles de la Rép. des Lettres, March, 1687, Art. IV, and Acta Eruditorum, October, 1687, pp. 563 seq.*

In 1684 Simon published a project for a new Polyglot.⁽¹⁾ He had already given a brief outline of this idea at the end of the *Histoire Critique*.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Further developments were outlined in a pretended reply to "Origen's letter".⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ In addition to the texts in columns and the variants of the other principal texts which were to be included as marginal notes,^(iv) the new developments included a Hebrew Dictionary and a Hebrew Grammar. There was a possibility of including the Latin text published by Nobilius in 1588 as a fourth column.

In the Preface to the first of these brief works Simon had invited criticism from any scholars who might wish to comment on the project and asked that they be sent to his publisher.

One who took this opportunity was Jean Le Clerc, of French extraction, born at Geneva in 1657. Mainly under his uncle's influence he became an Arminian. He was also considerably influenced by his study of Cartesian philosophy

(1) *Novorum Bibliorum Synopsis*. Ultrajecti. 1684, signed "Origen" dated 20th August, 1684, pp. 31, 8°.

(ii) See p. 216 above.

(iii) *Ambrosii ad Originem Epistola de novis Bibliis Polyglottis*. Ultrajecti, 1685, 8°. Signed "Ambrose". Dated Kal. Dec. 1684.

(iv) H.C.V.T., pp. 521 to 522.

under Chouet. After studying theology for three years he spent some time in the Walloon Church in London, but eventually moved to Holland where he developed a close acquaintance with Limborch, a celebrated Arminian theologian. In 1684, he became Professor of Philosophy and Hebrew, and in 1712, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the Remonstrants' College, Amsterdam. (1)

In reply to Simon's invitation, he sent a letter which Simon considered to be far too long, (11) outlining some of his opinions on the project. Simon never admitted that he was the author of the two letters outlining the project but there is no doubt that Le Clerc was correct to assume that he was. A considerable time elapsed before Simon, again pseudonymously, replied with a letter in Flemish, (111) advising Le Clerc not to publish his opinions until he had corrected some of them.

According to Simon, Le Clerc was so hurt by this reply

(1) See sketch of his life in his own Preface to *Genesis sive Mosis Prophetæ Liber Primus*, etc. Tubingæ, 1733, pp. 1 to viii.

(11) Origeni Adamantio, *Synopsews Novorum Bibliorum Polyglottorum Auctori S.P.D. Critobulus Hierapolitanus*. Dated Hierapoli 4. Non. Novembris, 1684. Reproduced in full in *Défense des Sentimens*, pp. 421 to 459; and in part in *Réponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 2 to 5.

(111) Reproduced in *Réponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 5 to 6 in French.

that he wrote his reply to Simon's *Histoire Critique* ⁽¹⁾ to avenge himself on Simon. Le Clerc denied that this was his reason but their controversy begins over these letters and the subsequent allegations and denials. Each gives his own version of the story. ⁽¹¹⁾

Le Clerc in his original letter on the project of the *Polyglot* had spoken in quite glowing terms of the *Histoire Critique*. Simon wondered that after this Le Clerc could write in "*Sentimens*" so antagonistically.

The significance of this exchange lies not only in its connection with the publication of "*Sentimens*" but also in the fact that it is an example of the succession of similar stories of incidents, alleged and denied, at unnecessary length, which are found in all four books covering the controversy. The books of both Simon and Le Clerc are written in a very controversial spirit. Simon, quite outspokenly impolite, has been severely criticised, e.g. by Bayle and Bernus, for his disparaging treatment of Le Clerc. Le Clerc, however, found that a calm and apparently reasoned

(1) *Sentimens de quelques théologiens de Hollande sur l'Histoire Critique Du Vieux Testament, composée par le P. Richard Simon de l'Oratoire. Où en remarquant les fautes de cet auteur, on donne divers Principes utiles pour l'intelligence de L'Ecriture Sainte.* Amsterdam, 1685.

(11) *Défense du Sentimens*, pp. 11, 418 seq. *Réponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 1 seq.

statement was not only the best way to reply to such attacks, but also to attract supporters who were impressed by his refusal to lose his temper, while he concealed equally complete denigrations beneath a polite front of pained surprise. Even some of the most controversial sections of the four books, however, are valuable from an historical point of view because they throw some light on various incidents in Simon's life, e.g. his participation in the proposed Charenton translation.

Le Clerc's first book, "Sentimens etc.", is the most important of the four connected with this controversy since it is the only one which produces any really new ideas, Simon's two books largely repeating the views contained in the *Histoire Critique* and Le Clerc's second book repeating the views of his first.

Le Clerc's first book purports to be the consensus of the opinions of three or four friends, which is conveyed in the form of letters. According to Simon (1) the letters on the Inspiration of the Sacred Books based on a "Mémoire" by an anonymous "Monsieur N." contain the ideas of Noel Aubert de Verſé, who was responsible for the Latin translation of the *Histoire Critique*, and who had no affection for Simon after Simon's criticism of the translation in his Preface to

(1) Reponse aux Sentimens, p. 6.

the new edition.⁽¹⁾ Like the other three books, Le Clerc's first one covers a large part of the contents of the *Histoire Critique*, the method adopted being to take one point at a time and to give a criticism of it, and then, in some cases, to advance new theories. Simon replied to Le Clerc in a book⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ containing, as indicated above, many unnecessary personal references, which do not, nevertheless, wholly distract him from his main purpose of giving a serious reply to the points made by Le Clerc. The latter made a further reply.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ As mentioned above, Le Clerc, for the most part, repeats the themes of his first book without raising any new points of great importance. Simon's reply to this appeared in 1687.^(iv)

(1) See p.67-68 above.

(ii) Réponse au Livre intitulé *Sentimens de quelques Théologiens de Hollande sur l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament par Le Prieur de Bolleville*. Outre les Réponses aux Théologiens de Hollande on trouvera dans cet ouvrage de nouvelles Preuves et de nouveaux Eclaircissemens pour servir de supplément à cette *Histoire Critique*. Rotterdam, 1686. Dated A Bolleville dans le país de Caux en Normandie le 15. Septembre, 1685.

(iii) *Défense des Sentimens de quelques Théologiens de Hollande sur l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament, contre la Reponse du Prieur de Bolleville*, Amsterdam, 1686.

(iv) *De l'Inspiration des Livres Sacrez: Avec une Réponse au livre intitulé, Défense des Sentimens de quelques Théologiens de Hollande sur l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*. Par le Prieur de Bolleville. Rotterdam, 1687, 4^o.

These four books were all produced within a very short time. Cochet records (1) the report of a friend of Simon, that during this controversy all Simon's time was occupied in writing, and that he endangered his health through not taking time for meals.

Without considering these books in the fullest detail here, we may give a résumé of the discussions on some of the more important points, since, in some cases, it will provide an illustration of the way in which Simon's work led to other theories being advanced in opposition both to his own opinion and also the currently accepted views.

Le Clerc's first complaint is against Simon's method and its omissions. "To make a history of a book is not simply to say when and by whom it has been made, what copyists have transcribed it, and what faults they have committed in transcribing it. It does not suffice to tell us who has translated it and to draw our attention to the defects of his translation; nor even to teach us who has commented upon it and what is defective in these commentaries. We must still discover, if possible, the intention which the author had in composing it, what has occasioned him to take up the pen, and to which opinions or events he can be alluding in this work, especially when it is not a question of a book

(1) Galerie Dieppoise, p. 351.

which contains general reflections, or eternal truths, which are at all times and in all places the same but when it is a question of histories and prophecies, which deal principally with one nation, it is well seen that our understanding of a work of this nature is impossible without a knowledge of something of the purpose of the Author, and the occasion which has given rise to the work." (1)

Later critics were to follow this principle of Le Clerc but not always those who were concerned only with the changes in the Text. Simon points out (11) that he was concerned in Book I of the *Histoire Critique* with the changes in the Hebrew Text and questions which Le Clerc regards as essential would have been, for him, only digressions from his main purpose. This is the point on which Simon seems to have been most misunderstood until recently. His main concern was not to write an Introduction to the individual Books of the Old Testament or even to the Pentateuch. He wanted to give a history of the state of the Text and in noting the changes that had occurred in it he tried to give some explanation of them, taking as an example those in the Pentateuch. In the course of that he pointed out that Moses was not the author of the whole of the Pentateuch.

(1) *Sentimens*, pp. 6 and 7.

(11) *Reponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 10 and 11.

But having done that, it was not necessary, in his view, to enquire very narrowly into the identity or the purpose of those responsible for the Books. His sole interest was to establish that there were changes and what he called faults or errors as a result of editing.

It was far from his purpose to discuss the religious Truths treated in the books. Le Clerc cannot agree with this at all. A history of a book involves a treatment of its contents. All this is necessary ⁽¹⁾ for our understanding of the Bible. Simon would agree with this, but as he did not undertake to do anything more than describe the changes in the Text he does not agree that Le Clerc's criticism is justified. Simon thinks in terms of a critical history of the Text of the Old Testament. ⁽¹¹⁾ Le Clerc may have felt that Simon had limited his purpose too strictly. Simon, however, felt entitled to please himself with regard to that and Le Clerc could not complain that Simon had not fulfilled his intentions.

As we have noted, Simon's hypothesis of Public Writers who were also 'prophets' was the result of his examination of the state of the Text. It was important, not only because it was the first fairly developed theory of a

(1) *Défense des Sentimens*, pp. 14 seq.

(11) *Réponse à la Défense*, p. 59.

compilation, but also because he felt it was only by such a theory that the evidence could be accounted for while retaining the idea of inspired Scriptures.

Le Clerc's attitude is, therefore, important and even more so because from his own criticism of Simon's theory there emerged his own ideas on the authorship and composition of the Pentateuch.

His criticism shows that there is no certain evidence that such prophetic Public Writers have existed in the way, and with the functions, which Simon has described. Nowhere in the Old Testament can there be found the proof of their existence or of their inspiration, nor even in the writings of Josephus or other ancient authorities.

However, it is from the evidence of the Text itself that Simon has reached the conclusion that there has been a later recension of earlier documents. He then goes on to elaborate that Hypothesis with a theory that is artificial in the sense that it is made to fit the conclusions which he wishes to establish. He cannot prove that the details of it are correct. Neither, however, is Le Clerc able to disprove it.

It is a possible, or, as far as Simon is concerned, a probable explanation to accord with the facts. Le Clerc deals at length with Simon's too free translations of Josephus and other authorities in his quotations. Simon

had announced in his Preface (p. xiv) that he would only be giving summaries. Le Clerc rightly points out (1) that in his free translations he had adapted the words of the originals to suit his own interpretation of them, and that this is not a justifiable procedure. While this is true and considerably weakens Simon's position, his interpretations are possible and the existence of his theory does not rest upon the correctness of his quotations.

Underlying all the discussion of this hypothesis is Le Clerc's refusal to acknowledge Simon's distinction between these 'prophets' and the great "canonical" prophets. Le Clerc's arguments are based on the evidence of the nature and function of the latter, and Simon only has to reply that he is making this distinction. The result then is that a deadlock is reached where the one can only denounce the other's views without being able to disprove them or completely and certainly to prove his own. (11)

As an example of their manner of discussing the etymologies and meanings of Hebrew words, their discussion of the word "nābî'" may be taken. (111) Simon had said (iv)

(1) Sentimens pp. 66, 69 seq.

(11) Sentimens pp. 69-102; Réponse aux Sentimens pp. 52-73; Defense des Sentimens pp. 112 seq.; Réponse à la Defense pp. 118-126.

(111) Sentimens pp. 95 seq.; Réponse aux Sentimens pp. 67 seq.; Defense des Sentimens pp. 137 seq.; Réponse à la Defense pp. 125 seq.

(iv) H.C.V.T. p. 17.

that this word originally signified "an orator". To this Le Clerc replies that Simon has mistaken the root.

Its derivation is from $\aleph 2 \aleph$, not $2 \aleph$, and he points out that the latter is used only metaphorically of "speaking". He notes that its usual meaning is "produce". Le Clerc goes on to refer to the distinction between 'seer' and 'prophet' (I Samuel ix, 9), and he gives a list of the meanings of $\aleph 2 \aleph$ by reference to the Arabic meaning, 'eminence', 'to excel', 'to be raised'. Among other meanings that he notes is its indication of 'frenzy'. (I Samuel xviii, 10).

He will not allow any linguistic or Scriptural analogy to the use of $2 \aleph$ meaning 'speak'. Simon had not said that $\text{nābī}'$ was derived from this root but Le Clerc assumes that he is following Rabbi Salomon Jarchi who gave the same meaning from that root.

Simon replies that there are endless examples of the confusion of similar verbs to $2 \aleph$ and $\aleph 2 \aleph$ in the Old Testament and that the Septuagint translates $\text{D}'\aleph 2 \aleph$ (I Chron. xxv, 1.) by $\alpha\pi\omicron\phi\ \theta\epsilon\gamma\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ and $\aleph\aleph 2 \aleph$ (II Chron. ix, 29.) by $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, so that his authority rests not only on Rabbinical evidence but on that of the ancient Interpreters.

Le Clerc replies that the first example refers to 'singing' and that in the second case the Hebrew has not been translated literally since the Vulgate reads 'in libris' in the same place.

Simon's reply is that 'singing' is only "words pronounced with certain tones", and that the Vulgate translation of the second example implies the recognition that the word refers, not to Prophecy in the accepted sense, but to the discourse or the books written by Ahia which represent a part of the Annals of the reign of Solomon.

Le Clerc agrees that words similar to 211 and K21 are sometimes confounded. Simon, not so willing to make an open withdrawal, says that the fact that nābī[^] may be more directly derived from K21 is of little importance since both words have been confounded.

Le Clerc admits also that K21 could be derived from the same Arabic root meaning "announce", whereupon Simon says that this is where the confusion of the roots is evident.

He further refers to the Ethiopic and Arabic "nabab" whose meaning is, he says, "speak" and the confusion of the three words only gives support to his original statement that nābī[^] originally signified "orator".

Simon maintained that the difference between Le Clerc and himself was that Le Clerc depended entirely on a Dictionary in these discussions whereas he himself went back to older authorities and examined more thoroughly the history of language.

This discussion demonstrates the manner in which the controversy between the two is conducted. Neither will

readily make concessions no matter how untenable his position. Both are inclined to be led aside from the main discussion into long digressions on minor matters.

When Le Clerc comes to give his own theory about the Pentateuch he first of all makes two general reflections. In the first place, a book which bears the name of an author is not necessarily written by him, ⁽¹⁾ nor need we accept a tradition that he wrote it. Secondly, there are some things of which we are sure but which we cannot prove. Hence it is not possible to prove the age of a book or that the author is not the one whose name it bears. The accepted authorship of the Old Testament books cannot be questioned merely because it cannot be proved. But exact proofs cannot be expected from those who deny the authenticity of a passage which contains anachronisms or differences in style. Exact proofs that words cannot have any other meaning cannot be demanded. It is sufficient if those who understand the language in which the words are written agree that the suggested meaning is the simplest and the most natural. And the acceptance of proof depends upon the critical ability of the person who is to accept the proof.

With regard to the Pentateuch itself Le Clerc finds three kinds of material therein - pre-Mosaic, Mosaic, and

(1) Sentimens, p. 104.

post-Mosaic. Post-Mosaic examples are the references to the rivers in Genesis, ii, 11 and 12, and the description of the country which, he alleges, Moses could not have known; the description of the establishment of towns in Mesopotamia and Assyria in Genesis, x, 8 seq.; the name of Dan in Genesis, xiv, 14, was only in use after Joshua; the statement about the kings of Edom in Genesis, xxxvi, 31; the occurrence several times of the word *nābî'* which, according to I Samuel, ix, 9, was only used later, and thus the Pentateuch is later than Moses unless the word was used earlier, went out of use and came back into use again. In which case the Pentateuch was either written in the time of Moses or written a long time after him. Various other examples of post-Mosaic material are given.

The Mosaic material is the Law which, according to Le Clerc, Simon correctly says consists only of a part of Deuteronomy, ⁽¹⁾ and was probably the book which was found in the reign of Josiah. Further Mosaic material is contained in Exodus, xvii, 14, Numbers, xxxiii, 12 and Deuteronomy, xxxii. This material may have been inserted into the Pentateuch verbatim or in summarised form.

Le Clerc agrees here ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ that Simon's theory of the

(1) Simon did not say this and denies it. Réponse aux Sentimens p. 75.

(ii) Sentimens, p. 121.

Archives is only a conjecture which can be rejected or advanced with equal facility. But it is quite contrary to Sacred History to suggest, with Simon, that the Mosaic material has been put in the Archives. The proof of this is that when the Law Book was found in the time of Josiah, he was concerned to know what it contained and recognised that it had not been observed for a long time. If it had been in the Archives it could have been consulted at any time, and the scribes would have made extracts from it, according to Simon's theory. But if that were so, the king would not have acted as he did when it was discovered.

Le Clerc suggests that as there is no record of such Archives until the Monarchy, the history contained in the Pentateuch might have come from ancient books written by private persons.

The pre-Mosaic history could not be taken from Public Archives, since, according to Simon, they were established by Moses. If such books as the Book of the Wars of the Lord were in existence even in the time of Moses and served as records which the author of the Pentateuch has used, there must have been others covering the pre-Mosaic period. For details like numbers and names could not have been preserved by Tradition alone. This is the third, or pre-Mosaic type of material which Le Clerc finds in the Pentateuch.

Certain passages suggest that these pre-Mosaic records

were very imperfect, e.g. Lamech in Genesis, iv, and Hebron, in Numbers, xiii, which was built seven years before Tanis. These passages have remained obscure because the author has been unable to obtain any further information from the records.

Therefore, the Pentateuch as we have it was not written by Moses. ⁽¹⁾ The non-Mosaic material consists not in single words but in passages of some length. The Pentateuch has been ascribed to Moses simply because it contains the Law of Moses. And as Le Clerc claims to have proved that Moses could not be the author because, amongst other things, he had not been in Chaldaea, the author must be someone who has been there. Spinoza has said that the author was Ezra. Others believe that Ezra was the editor. But Le Clerc's own conjecture involves a consideration of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

The Samaritans have their Pentateuch in "ancient Hebrew characters" ⁽¹¹⁾ for which the Jews have substituted Aramaic characters. It is inconceivable that the Samaritans would take the Law from their enemies, neither would they then have changed the characters. Rather they would keep the Aramaic characters which belonged to the country from

(1) Sentimens, p. 126.

(11) Here again, Le Clerc's terminology is given. See p.

which they came. Nor is it conceivable that the Jews have received the Pentateuch from the Samaritans. This leads Le Clerc to the conjecture that the Pentateuch has been composed before the Exile when the Jews still used the "ancient Hebrew" script and that the author was someone who was acceptable to both Jews and Samaritans. For such a person we need look no further than the Israelite priest, (II Kings, xvii) who came to instruct the new inhabitants of Palestine.

"It appears that this priest either himself or assisted by others, to teach these idolatrous peoples the falsity of their opinions concerning the plurality of gods, has undertaken to give them a history of the Creation of the world by one God, and an abridgement of the History of the Jews until the Law, whereby it was seen that there is one God alone, who is He whom the Israelites worship." (1)

This priest wrote in the ancient script because he knew no other, not having lived sufficiently long in Chaldaea. A certain date cannot be given, only it is very probable that it was after the Eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah when the Book of the Law was found, and thus the priest was able to put the finishing touch to his work, this

(1) Op. cit. p. 129.

Law being essential both to the History of the Hebrews and for the instruction of the Samaritans in their worship. All difficulties of Pentateuch authorship are thus resolved, according to Le Clerc, and even if this conjecture is not true it is not beyond probability and the actual solution must be similar.

In his reply Simon goes directly to some of the examples which Le Clerc cites to show that there is post-Mosaic material in the Pentateuch, for he does not consider that Le Clerc's general maxims of criticism have any particular reference to Old Testament Criticism. The exact knowledge of Chaldaea and other places which the writer of the Pentateuch exhibits does not disprove Mosaic authorship since he could have learned these details from those who had been there or from the ancient records of his ancestors who had lived there.

Simon suggests, as is to some extent true but not completely so, that Le Clerc only confirms his own thoughts for the most part and in any case these examples do not completely disprove the Mosaic authorship. It is the common lot of most of the books to suffer additions and there are less in the Pentateuch than in several others. Le Clerc, in his opinion, has multiplied these additions too greatly.

Le Clerc's citing of the use of nabi' and the reference

to I Samuel ix, 9, is easily answered. "It does not follow from there that the word navi which signifies generally every kind of prophet, has not been in use before that time; but only that this kind of Prophet who is mentioned in this place was hitherto called Roim (for Roe) or seer. It is as we say to-day 'aller au Devin'. Which does not prevent the word navi from having been in use then also. There are other ways of explaining this same passage literally, without being able to conclude from it that navi has been in use among the Hebrews only several centuries after Moses"⁽¹⁾

Simon agrees that the last chapter of Deuteronomy has not been written by Moses but does not agree that it is impossible to reject this and not the other additions. This chapter is quite different from the other passages which are believed to have been added. He repeats that Deuteronomy really ends at Chapter xxxiii and that Chapter ~~xxxiv~~ has been added by the Archivists.

Le Clerc also referred to "beyond Jordan", (Deuteronomy, i, 1) following Ibn Ezra. Simon's answer suggests that he will do anything to disagree with Le Clerc. When he mentions this verse in the Histoire Critique as one of Ibn Ezra's arguments it would appear that he agrees with Ibn Ezra. Here, however, he returns to one of his favourite themes,

(1) Réponse aux Sentimens, p. 74.

Le Clerc's poor knowledge of Hebrew, and maintains that the word בְּיַרְדֵּן literally means "at the crossing" and consequently it can be understood equally of "on this side" or "on that side". He quotes the Syriac and Arabic parallels ܩܕܝܫܐ and قديس , the sense of which can be limited only according to the places where they are found. Neither should the Vulgate and Septuagint be too greatly trusted because they do not always keep to the exact meaning and, for this is the main point of all his discussion, "it is necessary often to glance at the Hebrew if one wishes to translate them correctly". (1)

He points out that Le Clerc has misread the *Histoire Critique* when he suggests that according to Simon all the ordinances of Moses are contained in Deuteronomy alone. Regarding the finding of the Law under Josiah and the king's surprise, on the basis of which Le Clerc maintained that there could not have been Archives containing the Law, Simon replies that if at that time such a stage of negligence had been reached that copies of the Law, which should be in the hands of everyone, were no longer found, it is beyond doubt that the ancient records in the Archives would be still more neglected.

(1) Op. cit. p. 75.

On Le Clerc's statement that the original sources were more likely to be private books than State Annals, Simon says that the very existence, which Le Clerc had mentioned, of the Book of the Wars of the Lord (Numbers xxi) is an evident proof that the Jews at that time had such annals of State.

Simon disagrees that the original sources behind Genesis were imperfect. The faults seem rather to come from the compilers. He recognises that the art of writing Hebrew was always imperfect but even so there would still be order in what was written.

He further disagrees that there are additions extending to chapters. The only one, he says, that Le Clerc mentions is the last of Deuteronomy and Moses could still be the author of the Pentateuch.

If the Pentateuch was composed after the Captivity of the Ten Tribes (1) the Jews cannot have read previously what we call the Law of Moses. But according to Ezra viii the Law he read to the people was the Law which their Fathers had read before the Exile. If the Samaritans have not followed Ezra in their copy of the Law, they will have read the copy which was in use before the separation of the Ten Tribes.

(1) Sentimens p. 127.

The Israelite priest, sent to instruct the Samaritans in the Law must then have had recourse to the one which had been in use among his own people. Simon cannot reconcile the idea of the priest composing the book with the fact that he was sent to teach them the Law in use among the Jews. If he had needed a book for that purpose he could not have composed it since there existed already one known to everyone. He then suggests that, according to Le Clerc's theory, the Jews in Jerusalem must have abandoned their ancient copy to take the new one. And unless Le Clerc can prove certainly that a new one has been made, the connection with the finding of the Law under Josiah is hard to see.

He opposes the idea that the Samaritans would not have wished to have the Law of the Jews since they were enemies. He points out that the Samaritans wanted to help build the Temple and to worship God in the same way as the Jews. Further, in the time when the Samaritans were most at enmity with the Jews they took for their own use the Arab version of the Jew, Saadia, which they only corrected in some parts.

Le Clerc had said that if the Jews had followed Ezra's version they would not have changed the script. Simon points out that they were ignorant of the "ancient Hebrew" and the Aramaic as they spoke the ancient language of the Persians and the Medes.

The reason for the 'ancient Hebrew' script of the

Samaritan Pentateuch is that the new settlers had come to Samaria as pagans, and that there they were instructed in the Law of Moses by Israelite priests who had always preserved the 'ancient Hebrew' and copied the Law in that script for the Samaritans, not believing themselves permitted to alter the true characters of Moses, just as the Mohammedans read the Qur[^]ān in Arabic although many of them do not understand it.

Le Clerc maintains that the Samaritans spoke Aramaic because they had Babylonian Governors, which is absurd. One might say that the Greeks and Arabs speak Turkish because they are under Turkish rule. Le Clerc's other proof that the new inhabitants of Samaria spoke Aramaic is that the Samaritan Targum of the Pentateuch is an Aramaic translation.⁽¹⁾ Simon replies that they also have an Arabic translation, and adds that although this Targum is quite old, it was not composed until long after the original Cutheans were transported to Samaria at a time when their posterity understood Aramaic.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

From this brief summary of some of the more important parts of the discussion between Simon and Le Clerc, it will

(1) Op. cit. p. 128.

(ii) Op. cit. p. 82.

be seen again that the desire of one to refute the other at every opportunity outweighs almost all other considerations. Mistakes, misrepresentations, and lack of judgment are also quite evident. But it does reveal part of the importance of Simon, that his work, along with that of other writers, gave an impetus to such free and detailed discussions.

But also of importance is the fact that there emerges from their controversy Le Clerc's theory of the composition of the Pentateuch. Like Simon, he accepted the existence of earlier documents. But he regards these as being only a basis for a new composition - the Pentateuch written by one person. This is something more than a later editing of earlier material. Le Clerc assumes an essential unity of a work incorporating this earlier material but written at a definite time either by a person or by a group working together.

So there can be seen from Spinoza, through Simon and Le Clerc, the gradual development of different theories about the authorship of the Pentateuch, differing among themselves and all departing from the traditional view.

Later, Le Clerc, in his commentary on Genesis (1)

(1) Op. cit. Section 11 of the Introduction entitled "De scriptore Pentateuchi Mose."

reverted to the view of Mosaic authorship with interpolations by a later editor.

In 1686, a young doctor of the Sorbonne, Louis Ellies Du Pin published the first volume of a massive study of the works of theological writers from the beginning of Christianity until his own day.⁽¹⁾

This volume commenced with a Dissertation in which he discussed various questions of Biblical Introduction and opposed various writers including Hobbes, Peyrère, and Spinoza, particularly with regard to their views on the authorship of the Pentateuch. Simon's theory was also attacked although he was not named.

Du Pin's own views of the authorship of the books of the Old Testament, and his important rules of Criticism were the subjects of Simon's reply rather than Du Pin's criticism of his own hypothesis.

Simon's opportunity for this reply came as a result of his conversations with Piro, the official censor of the *Histoire Critique*, and appeared in a letter published

(1) *Nouvelle Bibliotheque des Auteurs Ecclesiastiques.*
Paris. 1686, 8^o.

originally in 1686. (1)

Not only was Pirot the representative of the official opposition to Simon's views, but Simon's only hope of having the *Histoire Critique* accepted in France depended on his being able to persuade Pirot that his views were quite in accord with the orthodox position of the Church.

The main purpose of this Letter is, therefore, to demonstrate this fact with particular regard to the hypothesis of Public Writers and the Inspiration of Scripture.

Simon shows that a belief in the Inspiration of Scripture need not conflict with Reason when Reason shows that the Text has suffered alteration through the faults of copyists. (11) From this first principle he goes on to defend the position which he had adopted in the *Histoire Critique* and tries to show that it is supported by the views of the Fathers and the Theologians of the Church.

He maintains that Biblical Criticism is just as valid

(1) Lettre à Monsieur l'Abbé P. D. & P. en Th. (Pirot, docteur et professeur en Théologie) touchant l'Inspiration des Livres Sacrez, par R. S. P. D. B. (Richard Simon, prieur de Bolleville) Rotterdam, 1686, pp. 50, 4°. Dated 15 Novembre, 1686. When *Reponse à la Défense des Sentimens* was printed in 1687 this Letter was joined with it under the title *De l'Inspiration des Livres Sacrez: Avec une Reponse etc.*, Rotterdam, 1687, and with an *Avertissement* on the reverse of the title page.

(11) P. 3.

as the criticism of any other book.⁽¹⁾ His "new proofs" of the existence of Public Writers consist only of new illustrations of his original argument.

It would appear from this Letter,⁽¹¹⁾ that Pirot had asked him for his opinion of Du Pin's publication. Accordingly, Simon devotes several pages of the second part of his Letter to a criticism of Du Pin's views.

Du Pin had maintained in his Dissertation Préliminaire that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch except for some interpolations. This was a much more conservative view than those held by Spinoza, Simon or Le Clerc. But Du Pin took a much more liberal view of the other books of the Old Testament. His conclusion in some cases was that only a conjecture could be made about the authorship, in others that there was no means of reaching an answer to the problem. He believed that David had not written all the Psalms but that this book was a collection made by Ezra. He is similarly vague about most of the books.

He had alleged that the denial of Mosaic authorship was "most rash and most dangerous". Simon is not concerned⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ to defend the opponents of Mosaic authorship.

(1) P. 4.

(11) P. 31.

(iii) Op. cit. p. 31.

But he wishes to reveal the opportunity which Du Pin's own 'rashness', in so feebly attacking the supporters of Spinoza's views, has given to the very people whom he attacks.

According to Du Pin the rashness of the opponents of Mosaic authorship consists in the denial of something established on express passages of Scriptures, on the agreement of everyone, and on the testimonies of the most ancient authors.

But he has also given a series of principles of scientific criticism, which in Simon's opinion give unlimited opportunities to the enemies of the traditional view.

"They will only have to apply the rules, which he produces in his Preface and in the body of his work, to the books of Moses, to conclude from them that the Pentateuch is by no means certainly the work of Moses."⁽¹⁾

The first principle which Du Pin lays down is that a writing must accord with its supposed historical position in time and circumstance. "Nothing more evidently shows that a book cannot belong to that time wherein it is supposed to have been written than when we find in it marks of a later date."⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ He goes on to say that impostors,

(1) P. 31.

(ii) Op. cit. Preface.

through their ignorance, generally date a book after the death of the supposed author or they make mistakes in names or circumstances, or they speak of men of later dates and name towns and cities anachronistically. He admits, however, that such anachronisms occur in the Pentateuch. But, asks Simon, will not a follower of Spinoza suggest that, therefore, the Pentateuch is not the authentic work of Moses? If these critical principles can be advanced against one book they can be advanced against another. If the Mosaic authorship is to be defended these principles are too vague and unrestricted.

Du Pin later suggests that the common opinion that Joshua wrote the Book of Joshua is very uncertain and that its title only refers to the contents, - the life of Joshua. And the witness of Joshua, xxiv, 26, "Joshua wrote all these words in the Book of the Law", (Vulgate) does not make for greater certainty.

Simon then applies this reasoning to the Pentateuch which has no title at all. Surely the Pentateuch has been assigned to Moses because it contains the Law and Ordinances given by God through Moses. Simon maintains that this invalidates the proofs which Du Pin has brought from the citations in the Old and New Testaments of the Law as the Law of Moses. Especially since the statement "Moses wrote the Law" in several places in the Pentateuch refers to a

comparatively small part of it.⁽¹⁾

Du Pin has said that facts established on express passages of Scripture cannot be denied. But these express passages are the references to Moses having written the Law. And if the statement in Joshua xxiv, 26, refers only to the contents of the verses immediately preceding it, these references to Moses may be subject to a similar limitation.

Du Pin's argument that books have usually suffered changes or additions to words and terms to make the narrative more intelligible to later ages, or that short explanations have been inserted to clarify what the author is saying or to give greater continuity, is valid. But the same reasoning applied to the Pentateuch and to Joshua should lead to the same conclusions about each book.

Simon adds ⁽¹¹⁾ that Du Pin has wrongly included Ibn Ezra among those who deny the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Ibn Ezra only indicated parts of the Pentateuch which do not appear to have been written by Moses. It would have been more pertinent to say that those who have used him in support of their own theories have not understood him.

Du Pin's next comment is quickly demolished. He

(1) P. 33.

(11) P. 35.

maintains with regard to Numbers, xxi, 14, that for "it is written" we should read "it will be said" - "as it will be said when the Israelites will recount the Wars of the Lord". To this Simon replies that here the Hebrew Future denotes, as often, the Present, since Hebrew has no Present Tense. The suggested translation does not fit the sense of the passage.

The same futility is also to be observed in the statement that it is not certain that a Book is spoken of here because the Hebrew word can signify any kind of narration. As Simon says, such a distinction does not make any difference. Du Pin is further criticised for statements which betray his lack of knowledge of Greek, Syriac and Hebrew, and his misunderstanding of the writings of Josephus.

At length Simon replies to Du Pin's criticism of his hypothesis of prophet-archivists.⁽¹⁾ Simon is able to justify reasonably well his citations of Josephus and Theodoret and other Greek Fathers in support of his hypothesis. While it is true that they have not stated Simon's theory explicitly, they have given hints that the Old Testament Books in some cases are the result of editing of earlier records which the compilers have abridged and to which additions have been made for clarification.

(1) PP. 38 seq.

Du Pin has mistakenly assumed that because some of these earlier sources are mentioned in Kings, Simon has maintained that all the books are abridgements and summaries of earlier records. Simon claims to have extended this principle only to books in which references to such earlier records are found.

Neither are these abridgements imperfect. They were taken from the ancient records for the edification of the people and are no more imperfect than those passages of the Gospel according to St. Mark which contain abridgements of things recorded more fully by St. Matthew. It is sufficiently perfect because St. Mark has composed it in this way.

Du Pin felt that the contrarities which Simon has shown in the Old Testament resulting from the varying purposes of different compilers, ruin the authority of the Bible because they cannot be reconciled. But Simon believes that these contradictions are only apparent and that they can be reconciled according to the methods which he has suggested.

Simon has ascribed some of these repetitions to the peculiar style of the Jews who wrote the original records, a style which the compilers themselves display. Although Du Pin cannot believe that the compilers, in making abridgements, would continue the repetitions, Simon shows that their

aim was to make a compilation with fewer facts or incidents, not just to summarise everything that appeared in the records. They have therefore, selected those passages which they wished to give to the people and have not been concerned to eradicate the repetitions in the report of any one event. Further, variant readings have been retained when the correct reading was in doubt. This is confirmed by a study of the manuscripts. Usually the number of variants has been curtailed in printed editions but some still remain, the result of the concern to preserve all the possible variants of one word. Sometimes too there are explanatory additions.

On the subject of the small Rolls which Simon mentioned as a contributory cause of the lack of order, Du Pin feels that the compilers should have been able to put them in order. Simon patiently explains that the disorder can sometimes have taken place after the compilation. And such disorder happens not only to all kinds of manuscripts but also to printed books, especially when the pages are not numbered. Thus the Greek copies of parts of the books do not exhibit the same order of chapters as the Hebrew does, whether it is the Greek or the Hebrew copies which have been disarranged. (1)

The Canon is next considered. Du Pin maintained that

(1) PP. 39 to 40.

there has only been one Collection of Sacred Books, under Ezra, and it has since been proved and received by the Jews as containing all the Sacred Books. Simon denies this since there are books in it written after Ezra. He further denies that the Jews and Early Christians have recognised only this Canon. The Apostles used the Septuagint and hence the Epistle of Barnabas, which Du Pin recognises as genuine, cites indifferently the so-called Canonical and so-called Apocryphal books. Neither can one say categorically that only the Canonical books are alluded to in the New Testament. While this is the Protestant view, there are even Protestants who say that the Apostles have alluded to Apocryphal books.

Du Pin cannot claim Jerome as an authority for his point of view, for, as Simon shows, his references to books outwith the Canon, e.g. Wisdom, Ben Sirach, Judith, Tobit, etc., occur in his Prologue Galeatus, where the Canon to which he refers is the Jewish Canon which he was translating. In fact his answer to accusations, that he was too greatly in sympathy with the Jews, was that he was following their Canon, and that he gave their opinions rather than his own because he was translating their Canon. Jerome "always followed the common sentiment of the Fathers or at least the one which he believed to be most approved in the Church".⁽¹⁾

(1) P.42.

Because of this misunderstanding Du Pin finds it difficult to explain why Jerome testifies that the Council of Nicaea included Judith in the number of the Holy Scriptures.

Simon's aim, then, in this criticism of Du Pin has not been to oppose Du Pin's conclusions on the questions of authorship of the books of the Old Testament or to deny the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. But he did not feel that Du Pin was consistent and that if one wished to defend the Mosaic authorship against the criticism of Spinoza, one could not do so, as Du Pin has tried to do, on the basis of Du Pin's rules of criticism.

He therefore leaves his criticism of Du Pin to show how Spinoza's criticism should be answered. According to Simon, Spinoza has advanced "genuine facts in his book, and which he has even taken from our authors; but he has drawn from them false and impious consequences". (1) These consequences are the subject of Simon's examination.

All this is very important for an understanding of Simon's position. In his answers to Le Clerc and Du Pin and in this opposition to Spinoza, Simon makes statements which might seem to imply that there has been a change in his attitude to the Pentateuch as given in the *Histoire Critique*. Various explanations of this apparent change can

(1) P. 43.

be given and this question will be considered in our Conclusion (Chapter 9). For the moment, however, we shall simply record his statements.

Simon points out that Spinoza's proofs that Moses is not the author of the Pentateuch rest upon the doubts expressed by Ibn Ezra on certain passages which, he conjectures, are not the work of Moses. Simon maintains here that it cannot be concluded from these that the Pentateuch is not at all the work of Moses, and that the book which Moses wrote was quite different from that which we now read under his name. Others have had the same thoughts as Ibn Ezra without drawing such "fâcheuses conséquences". Simon continues, "indeed, some explanations added to an Act destroy neither the truthfulness nor the antiquity of this Act".⁽¹⁾

He then considers the several "doubts" of Ibn Ezra.⁽¹¹⁾

"Beyond Jordan". Simon repeats what he has said in answer to Le Clerc. The Hebrew word here signifies "across" ('au passage'). Only the context can determine whether it means "on this side" or "on that side". It is even possible that "on this side" has been changed to "beyond" to clarify the situation for the Israelites when they had passed Jordan.

(1) P. 43.

(11) See above p. 83.

"The Law written on twelve stones". Here it is a question whether 'the Law' means the book of Moses, or just some commandments. Simon has already dealt with this in the *Histoire Critique*.

"The secret of the Twelve". Ibn Ezra, according to Simon, was not referring to the twelve stones, as Spinoza thought, but to the last twelve verses of the Pentateuch in Deuteronomy xxxiv. Here Simon follows Rabbi Tsartsa in his "Explanations on Ibn Ezra". Unlike Baba Bathra which supposes that Joshua had written the last eight verses, Ibn Ezra believed that Joshua had written all twelve. If Ibn Ezra is right "does it follow from that, that Moses is not the true author of the five Books of the Law, as Spinoza so rashly maintains?"⁽¹⁾ Rather it may be concluded that this last chapter of Deuteronomy belonged originally to Joshua but it has been considered suitable to join it to the Pentateuch as a supplement to the Book of Moses.

"And Moses wrote the Law". Other writers e.g. Caesar and Josephus, speak of themselves in the third person. Simon agrees that Moses is not always the author of such statements which are so frequent in the Pentateuch. But they are not conclusive evidence that the Pentateuch is much later than Moses and that the Acts which it contains are later.

(1) P. 44.

In any case if someone other than Moses has written them it would be better to attribute them to the scribes who wrote the records. "This principle, so far from destroying the antiquity and the Inspiration of the first Acts entirely establishes it, since they would have been written in his time and by his order. (1)

"The Canaanites were then in the land." Simon reminds us that Ibn Ezra observes that the word *אז*, translated 'then' is equivocal and can be explained in different ways. The simplest meaning is that the Canaanites lived in that country when Abraham came there. But even if we take the explanation which Spinoza follows, and if the words are not just an added explanation, they do not lessen at all the antiquity of the Acts related there.

"The bed of Og, King of Bashan". Several Roman Catholic authors have believed, like Spinoza, that the descriptive words added in this passage have been inserted for clarification, but they have not concluded from that, as Spinoza has done, that the Pentateuch has been written long after Moses. There is nothing in this verse or in Deuteronomy iii, 14, "unto this day" whereby it can be proved that something has been added a long time after Moses.

Spinoza's own arguments scarcely merit reply. Simon,

(1) P. 45.

however, does reply to them. The references to Moses in the third person, the record of his death and anachronisms in the naming of towns Simon has already explained.

Spinoza supposes that the statement "these are the Kings who reigned in Edom before the Israelites had kings" refers to the Kings which they had before David conquered them. Simon notes that according to Ibn Ezra there is nothing recorded here which has not happened before Moses. Other writers regard these words as an addition. But "an addition made to a book does not destroy the authority of this book".⁽¹⁾

To Spinoza's objection to these and other passages Simon gives Huet's answer (Dem. Evang.) to the objection drawn from Deuteronomy, iii, 14, that Ezra has added clarifications and that sometimes marginal notes have been incorporated in the Text. Spinoza's unreasonable attitude is shown when he recognises that part of Deuteronomy, iii, 11, is a parenthesis but concludes that the author of the Pentateuch has lived long after Moses instead of concluding that the parenthesis has been added as an explanatory note.

From the references to particular books of Moses in the Pentateuch, Spinoza concludes that they are different from the Pentateuch. Simon maintains again that they were Annals and early records written in the time of Moses, and that

(1) P. 46.

there were probably Acts collected by Moses and his contemporary scribes which are not in the Pentateuch.

The remainder of Spinoza's arguments have been answered in the *Histoire Critique*. According to Simon the Ordinances and Commandments written by Moses are often indicated simply by "Law".

Simon shows (1) that Spinoza often agrees in principle with Theologians of the Church but he draws false conclusions. Several writers have injudiciously opposed some of his principles which are in accord with the principles of some of the most able Catholics. Simon maintains to Piroet that he should consider that "under pretext of opposing Spinoza the most ancient and most learned Fathers and even reason and experience ought not to be opposed".

Du Pin replied to Simon very briefly in the second edition of his first volume. (11)

(1) P. 48.

(11) 1688, 8°. His *Dissertation Préliminaire*, was later expanded under the title, *Dissertation préliminaire ou Prolegomènes sur la Bible*, 2 vols., 8°. 1699.

Simon replied with a pseudonymous writing ⁽¹⁾ which was quite ineffective as far as Du Pin was concerned. His only new reply was the comment "Monsieur Du Pin, ennemi des contestations personnelles, ne dit plus rien à Monsier Simon et s'est contenté de soutenir plus au long dans ses Prolegomènes sur la Bible, ce qu'il avait dit dans sa Dissertation Préliminaire". ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Simon's last word came after both he and Du Pin were dead in the form of a correction of the whole of Du Pin's great work. ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾

It is worth noting that in his expanded Dissertation or Prolegomènes (Vol. 1), Du Pin follows the example of Simon and gives his own history of the Text and Versions following Simon's plan almost exactly. This fact is most significant and really of more importance than all the discussion on the Pentateuch.

- (1) Dissertation critique sur la nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques où l'on établit en même temps la vérité de quelques principes que l'on a avancés dans l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament. Par Jean Reuchlin, Francfort, (R.S. Rotterdam) 1688, 12^o.
- (ii) Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques, Vol. XIX, Amsterdam, 1715, 4^o, p. 84.
- (iii) Critique de la Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclésiastiques et des Prolegomènes de la Bible, publiés par M. Ellies Du Pin, avec des Eclaircissemens et des Supplémens aux endroits où on les a jugés nécessaires. Par feu M. Richard Simon. Avec des remarques. Paris, 1730, 4 volumes, 8^o.

This controversy with Du Pin is the last one of any importance aroused by the publication of the *Histoire Critique*. One last adversary may here be mentioned in so far as he wrote against the *Histoire Critique* and drew a reply from Simon.

This was Michel Le Vassor, also an Oratorian, who bitterly attacked Simon and his book among other subjects. (i) Simon replied anonymously, (ii) attacking the Oratory, and maintained that the authority of the Sacred Books was firmly established in the *Histoire Critique*. Various other subjects were treated, e.g. Le Vassor's misunderstanding of the ideas of Grotius, and it contains a denial that Simon was responsible for a *Life of Morin* etc. in which Morin is treated very satirically. (iii) Du Pin had alleged (iv) that Simon was the author. Simon's 'Apologie' contained a prediction that Le Vassor would change his religion, which he did eight years later, becoming a Protestant in England in

(i) *De la Veritable Religion*, Paris, 1688, 4°.

(ii) *Apologie pour l'Auteur de l'Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament contre les faussetés d'un Libelle publié par Michel Le Vassor, Prêtre de l'Oratoire, Rotterdam, 1689, 16°.* According to *Douvrandelles* or *Cochet, Galerie Dieppoise* p. 362, the author was Simon's nephew.

(iii) *Antiquitates ecclesiae orientalis*. Londini, 1682, 12°.

(iv) *Nouv. Biblioth. des Auteurs* etc. p. 84.

1697. Le Vassor wrote once more against Simon, this time against his criticism of the New Testament. (1)

Many others who have written against Simon could be mentioned. Cochet names three, Pesavin, Abbé de la Charmoie; (ii) Braunius, Professor at Groningen, in the first two dissertations of "Selecta Sacra", 1700, concerning the state of the Hebrew Text; Honcamp, (iii) who attacks Le Clerc and Simon equally with little critical ability.

Many more books directed against Simon and his *Histoire Critique*, either wholly or in part, were written. While they are useful as indicating the impact of Simon's work upon different kinds of critics, they do not concern us here.

All those to whom Simon replied have been discussed in this chapter. The importance of these controversies for an estimate of Simon's work will be discussed in the Conclusion.

(1) *Journal des Sçavans*, 28th March, 1689.

(ii) *L'Antiquité des Temps Rétablie et Défendue contre les Juifs et les Nouveaux Chronologistes*, Paris, 1687, 4^o.

(iii) *Ad M. D. G. Examen supra Librum quemdam R. P. Simonis, Oratorii ordinis, cujus hic in fronte titulus est : La critique du V.T.: item de Libro Theologorum quorundam Hollandiae cujus inscriptio: Sentimens, etc. Moguntiae. 1688, 8^o.*

CHAPTER 8OTHER WORKS BY RICHARD SIMON

Since all Simon's work on the Old Testament has been considered in the preceding chapters, a chapter on his other critical and literary writings might be considered unnecessary. A review of this part of his work, and some indication of the latter part of his life, will, however, give an even fuller picture both of Richard Simon himself, his character, his way of life, and also of his relationship with some of his contemporaries, particularly of the development of the opposition to him which originated with the publication of his "Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament".

Such a review, however, will be necessarily brief.

In 1678, after the suppression of the Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament, Simon entered his charge at Bolleville for the first time, two years after his appointment to it.⁽¹⁾ It is only from his letters that we have any indication that

(1) See p. 41 above.

he was there. His letters to Lecoqte, ⁽¹⁾ dated 1678; to Justel, ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ dated 15th December, 1678; two letters to Dubreuil, an Oratorian, ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ dated 10th August, 1678, and February, 1679; and to Mallet, Vicar-General of Rouen, ^(iv) dated 1679, were all written at Bolleville.

But he was often in Paris and several of his letters of 1680 were written there. In the Bolleville registers of baptisms, marriages and burials ^(v) his signature first appears on 24th January, 1682, nearly four years after he went to Bolleville.

He left Bolleville again towards the end of March, 1682, ^(vi) and lived at Dieppe and Paris. He continued to call himself "Prieur de Bolleville" in his controversies with Le Clerc and in some of his other books which were written during this period. His signature appears again in the Bolleville registers at the end of 1688 and 1690 and

(1) Lettres Choisies. 1730. Vol. 2. P. 122.

(ii) Op. cit. Vol. 2. P. 118.

(iii) Op. cit. Vol. 4. P. 52.

(iv) Op. cit. Vol. 2. P. 125.

(v) See Cochet. Op. cit. pp. 355 to 356.

(vi) La Martiniere. Eloge. Lettres Choisies. Vol. 1., p. 36.

the last one appears on the 14th January 1691.⁽ⁱ⁾ Cochet reports that, according to village tradition, he was seldom seen in the village and he celebrated Mass on Sundays only.

The first work which appeared at this time, apart from those connected with the "Histoire Critique", which have been mentioned already, was a second and enlarged edition of "Cérémonies et coutumes qui s'observent parmi les Juifs", which had first appeared in 1674.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ This translation was now accompanied by a supplement on the Qaraite Jews and the Samaritans and had a new title.⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ As in the first edition Simon, conceals himself under a pseudonym, this time a different one.

In 1684 he published "Histoire de l'origine et du progrès des revenus ecclésiastiques".^(iv) The pseudonym here was Jérôme d'Acosta. This volume was reprinted

(i) Cochet, op. cit. p. 356.

(ii) See p. 28 above.

(iii) Comparaison des Cérémonies des Juifs et de la Discipline de l'Eglise, par le sieur de Simonville. Paris, 1681, 12°. La Haye 1682, 12°. Lyons, 1684, 12°. It contained a dedicatory letter to Bossuet by Frémont d'Ablancourt. Quérard, pp. 157 and 160, seems to be confused over this new edition and makes two separate works out of it. Nicéron, p. 234, recognises it as an enlarged second edition but confuses the title with that of the original 1674 edition.

(iv) Francfort, 1684, 12°.

several times with the pseudonym and false rubric and in 1767 as the second volume of "Théorie des bénéfices". The first volume, to which it now served as a supplement, was the "Traité des bénéfices" of Fra Paole. The rubric in this case was Basle. In this work Simon discusses, at considerable length, matters appertaining to benefices, clerical nominations and kindred subjects. Simon also takes the opportunity to continue his attack on the Benedictines.

At about this time, Madame Varennes, the Paris publisher, invited Simon to make some additions to a book by Brere-Wood, Professor of Humanities in London, entitled "Recherches utiles sur la diversité des langues et des religions dans toutes les principales parties du monde", which she was about to reprint. Simon agreed to do this and sent some notes on the book itself and some views of his own on the same subject, to serve as a supplement to the book. According to Simon ⁽¹⁾ the publisher decided to alter his contribution, especially in the parts which were considered to be too anti-Protestant. Simon, therefore, through Justel, withdrew his manuscript. He eventually published these notes in a work entitled "Histoire Critique de la

(1) Réponse à la Défense, pp. 79 to 80.

Créance et des coutumes du Levant", under the pseudonym 'S. Moni'. (i)

The purpose of this book was to show that the Eastern Churches are very largely in agreement with the Roman Church and that they are not heretical in the sense in which some Roman Catholics have regarded them. Simon also maintained that the customs wherein they differ from the Roman Church should not be condemned, as the Archbishop of Corfu, Caucus Venitienus had done. Many of these customs are discussed and particularly the view taken by the Greek Church of Transubstantiation. Here Simon defends Gabriel of Philadelphia against a Mr. Smith of Magdalen College, Oxford. Simon also deals with the beliefs of the Syrians, Copts, and other Eastern Churches. His view of the ancient Nestorian heretics is that with a little more understanding on their part a reconciliation could have been effected. But the Greeks have always been too prone to argument, and some say that if they had been more moderate the schism need never have occurred. (ii)

(i) Francfort, 1684, 12^o. Probably actually published by Leers at Rotterdam. The pseudonym was intended to be an anagram of "Simon", but has frequently been lengthened in descriptions of the book to Sieur de Moni. See Querard, p. 158; Nicéron, p. 236. Eventually it was published in 1711 at Trevoux under Simon's own name.

(ii) In Réponse aux Sentimens, Simon continues this discussion and maintains that the ancient Nestorians were rightly condemned. P. 42.

Smith replied to Simon in two out of five dissertations to which Simon replied in 1687.⁽¹⁾ The first chapter of this book is a corrected version of the first chapter of "Histoire Critique de la Créance etc.," and the reply to Smith follows. Another opponent of Simon's book was Arnauld, to whom Simon replied in Bibliothèque Critique.⁽¹¹⁾

Meanwhile in 1686 Simon took the opportunity to develop the answers he had already given to Jurieu, a minister of Rotterdam.⁽¹¹¹⁾ Simon had referred, in the course of his replies to Le Clerc, to the fantastic ideas which Jurieu had expressed in his, "Préjugés légitimes contre le Papisme",^(1v) particularly to his 'proof' that the two-horned beast of Rev., xiii, 11 and 18, signified the Pope.

Simon had shown^(v) that by Jurieu's method, i.e. the addition of the numerical value of the Hebrew letters, the number 666 might equally well, if not better, signify Jurieu

(1) La Créance de l'Eglise orientale sur la transubstantiation: et une Réponse aux nouvelles objections de Th. Smith, touchant Cyrille Lucar, patriarche de Constantinople. Paris, 1687, 12^o.

(11) Vol. 1, Chapter 22.

(111) Réponse aux Sentimens, p. 218 to 220; Réponse à la Défense, pp. 186 to 198.

(1v) Amsterdam, 1685, 2 vols. 4^o.

(v) Réponse aux Sentimens, pp. 219 to 220.

himself. Jurieu devoted a chapter of his "Accomplissement des propheties"⁽¹⁾ to a reply to Simon. The latter replied with a chapter of Réponse à la Défense and with a brochure entitled "Lettre des Rabbins des deux synagogues d'Amsterdam, à M. Jurieu: traduite de l'espagnol. Suivant la copie imprimée chez Joseph Athias."⁽¹¹⁾

In addition to all these works Simon, in 1689, published the first volume of his Critical History of the New Testament.⁽¹¹¹⁾ This did not arouse the opposition or the controversies which had accompanied the appearance of its Old Testament counterpart. The contents were not, in themselves, as arresting as those of his earlier work, and its publication in Holland prevented any action being taken, but when, eventually, the next storm of criticism broke upon Simon, all his critical works came under censure. The pattern of this book is very similar to that of the first book of the Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament. Beginning with the authenticity of the books he discusses authorship, date, canonicity, and changes in the Text. Three chapters are devoted to Inspiration in

(1) Rotterdam 1686, 2 vols. 12°.

(11) A Bruxelles, 5446, actually Amsterdam, 1686, 12°. Also in Lettres Choiesies, vol. 1, p. 318 seq.

(111) Histoire Critique du texte du Nouveau Testament, où l'on établit la vérité des actes sur lesquels la religion chrétienne est fondée. Rotterdam, 1689, 4°.

which he repeats the opinions which he expressed on the controversy with Le Clerc and in "De l'Inspiration des Livres Sacrez", taking a more liberal view than many of his opponents could accept. He considers the style of the writers, and has a discussion on Koine Greek. Lastly he gives a detailed examination of many of the manuscripts.

In the following year, 1690, the second part (1) appeared, corresponding to Book II of H.C.V.T. Again the ancient Versions are discussed, Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and Arabic. The vulgar Greek and the Hebrew Versions of St. Matthew are all considered followed by an examination of the French translations and particularly that of Mons, for which the Port-Royalists were responsible.

Simon, therefore, takes the opportunity of developing his earlier differences with the Jansenist Arnauld. This translation is severely criticised by Simon who does not spare his sarcasm. This controversy between himself and Arnauld was further developed in other writings such as Arnauld's "Difficultés proposées à M. Steyaert" and Simon's "Avis important à M. Arnauld sur le projet d'une nouvelle

(1) Histoire Critique des versions du Nouveau Testament, où l'on fait connaître quel a été l'usage de la lecture des livres sacrés dans les principales églises du monde, Rotterdam, 1690, 4^o.

bibliothèque d'auteurs jansenistes", (1) for which Simon took the pseudonym of Sainte Foi. Other modern translations are reviewed by Simon including Italian, German, English, Spanish and Flemish.

This critical history of the New Testament was completed in 1693 by the third part. (11) In this book Simon develops in greater detail and much more openly the ideas which were hinted at in Book III of the *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*. In his discussion of the Fathers and their Commentaries he does not restrain himself from open criticism of St. Augustine and especially of his views on Predestination and Grace. He endeavours to show that the other Fathers differed very greatly in their views from St. Augustine, maintaining, that in their opposition to the Gnostics they emphasised free will.

Simon's attack was directed against those of his contemporaries who held the views of Augustine in high regard, especially Bossuet. But later in the book when Simon goes on to speak quite favourably about some of the Arminians he increases the reasons for which many were to attack him later.

(1) Rotterdam 1691, 12^o.

(11) *Histoire Critique des principaux commentateurs du Nouveau Testament, avec une Dissertation critique sur les principaux actes manuscrits qui ont été cités dans cet ouvrage.* Rotterdam, 1693, 4^o.

The book closes with a study of the Greek manuscripts and there too he continues his opposition to Arnauld. Bossuet's detailed reply to Simon's views on the Commentators and particularly to his criticism of Augustine did not appear, as we have already said,⁽¹⁾ until long afterwards when both were deceased.⁽¹¹⁾

It is probable that at this time the continued stalemate in Simon's conversations with Bossuet and Pirot and the increasing opposition which he had to face was beginning to have the effect of making him cast all discretion aside and to speak out more forcefully than he would have done a few years earlier. Also the support of de Harlay⁽¹¹¹⁾ and of other influential persons, who were not so much concerned with justice for Simon as to see Bossuet thwarted,^(iv) may have encouraged him further.

He became sufficiently daring to publish in Paris, but with a dedicatory epistle to de Harlay, a book which was intended to supplement the first two parts of his criticism of the New Testament.^(v) It is in two parts, the first one

(1) See above p. 66.

(11) *Défense de la tradition et des Saints Pères*, 1753.

(111) See above pp. 61 seq.

(iv) *Saint-Simon. Mémoires.* ed. Hachette iv. pp. 64, 65, seq. Masson, op. cit. p. 271.

(v) *Nouvelles Observations sur le texte et les versions du Nouveau Testament*, par R.S.P. Paris, 1695, 4^o.

being concerned with the Text, where he discusses some apocryphal books which had not been printed, and advocates that they should be printed on the grounds that they would help towards a better understanding of the Fathers. He has further discussions on changes in the Text and on Inspiration in which he replies to, among others, Le Clerc, who had opposed (i) the views which Simon had expressed in his first volume on the Text of the New Testament. The second part is concerned with a study of translations, some new discoveries, and repetitions of what he had said already in *Histoire Critique des Versions*.

In passing, as it were, Simon carried on minor controversies. He criticised the French translation of the four Gospels by Bouhours, a Jesuit priest. (ii) This consisted of four letters under the pseudonyms of 'Romainville' and 'Eugène'. Other critical letters against various publications of the works of Jerome appeared in 1699. (iii)

(i) *Bibliothèque Universelle*, Amsterdam, 12^o, 1686 to 1718, Vol. xii, p. 411, etc.

(ii) *Difficultés proposées au R.P. Bouhours de la compagnie de Jésus, sur sa traduction française des quatre évangélistes*, Amsterdam, 1697, 12^o.

(iii) *Lettres critiques sur l'édition des Oeuvres de S. Jérôme, donnée par les bénédictins*, 1699, 12^o.

Even more discussions were maintained in the volumes of *Lettres Choisies*, the first of which appeared in 1700.⁽¹⁾

He also attacked the publication by Basnage and Huet of Furétière's "Dictionnaire Universel".⁽¹¹⁾ But these minor discussions were of little importance compared with the controversy which was about to start.

In 1702 Simon published his last major work on the New Testament.⁽¹¹¹⁾ This was a translation into French of the Vulgate New Testament. The variant readings in the Greek and other Versions were added in the margin and the Text was accompanied by critical notes. In the Preface he acknowledged the defects in it and his indebtedness to earlier translations, even those which he had recently been criticising adversely.

- (1) *Lettres choisies de Richard Simon, où l'on trouve un grand nombre de faits, anecdotes de littérature.* Amsterdam, or Trevoux, according to Nicéron, op. cit. p. 241, 3 vols., 1700, 12^o. Reprinted and augmented after Simon had complained of faults in the first edition, volume 1, 1702, volume 2, 1704, volume 3, 1705, Rotterdam.
- (11) *Jugement de la nouvelle édition du Dictionnaire Universel de M. l'Abbé Furétière faite par Messieurs Basnage de Beauval et Huet.* *Mémoires de Trevoux*, March, 1701. The former replied in *Mémoires de Trevoux*, reprinted in *Journal des Sçavans*, and Huet's reply was later published in *La République des Lettres* 1702. Simon replied with *Nouvelles Remarques Critiques sur la Dictionnaire Universel pour répondre à une Lettre de M. Huet.* *Mémoires de Trevoux*, September, 1701, Supplément.
- (111) *Le Nouveau Testament de N.S.J.C., traduit sur l'ancienne édition latine, avec des remarques littérales et critiques.* Trevoux, 1702, 2 vols., 8^o, and 3 vols., 12^o.

The publisher's dedicatory letter to the Duc du Maine in the principality of Dombes, who gave his 'privelége', was full of extremely exaggerated praise of Simon and his work. The translation was officially approved also by the examiners whom the Duke chose. The critics generally were fairly evenly divided, but Bossuet took exception to it as soon as it appeared.⁽¹⁾ But favourable reviews of it⁽¹¹⁾ added to the fact that it was published under such distinguished authority made the danger all the greater as far as Bossuet was concerned.⁽¹¹¹⁾

Further publication of the translation was suspended but it was impossible to do anything about the copies which had already been sold.

On the 15th September, 1702, the Cardinal de Noailles, who had succeeded de Harlay as Archbishop of Paris, published his Ordonnance, prohibiting the reading of Simon's translation in his diocese. He gives a list of criticisms of the Translation and the Notes and condemns Simon's action in

(1) See his Letters to Cardinal de Noailles, Malezieu, and Bertin. Oeuvres, vol. III, pp. 68 to 74.

(11) Corroborated much later, e.g. by Walchius in Bibliotheca theologica selecta, IV, 156, and in Acta Eruditorum, 1704, p. 80.

(111) Letter to Malezieu, op. cit. pp. 71-72.

publishing it anonymously, and contrary to the 'Arrêts du Conseil' prohibiting publication of translations of the Bible without the permission of the bishops. On the 29th September, Bossuet followed this with his own Ordonnance ⁽¹⁾ in which all the critical writings of Simon are denounced and "Instructions" against the Translation are promised.

Meanwhile Simon replied to the first Ordonnance ⁽¹¹⁾ and gave his answer to every point made by the Archbishop.

The First Instruction of Bossuet quickly followed in 1702 and the Second in 1703. ⁽¹¹¹⁾ The First Instruction discusses first of all the design and character of the translation, followed by remarks on the Preface to the Translation. The Second deals with particular passages of the Translation, giving first a Dissertation on the doctrine and criticism of Grotius, whom Bossuet accuses Simon of having followed, and continues with a discussion of the whole translation taking each book in turn. These two Instructions are extremely hostile and the merited criticism is far outweighed by exaggerated accusations.

(1) Oeuvres, vol. III, pp. 78 to 80.

(11) Remontrance à M. l'Archevêque de Paris sur son Ordonnance portant condamnation de la traduction du Nouveau Testament imprimée à Trevoux, 1702, 8°.

(111) Bossuet op. cit. vol. III, pp. 81 to 276.

Most of Simon's replies are to be found among his Letters. He did, however, publish "Moyens de réunir les Protestants avec l'Eglise Romaine", by M. Camus, Bishop of Belley. ⁽¹⁾ This was a new edition of "L'Avoisinement des Protestants vers l'Eglise Romaine", published in 1640 and 1648 by the Bishop of Belley. The additional notes by Simon contain a veiled attack on Bossuet's "Exposition de la doctrine de l'Eglise", ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ alleging that Bossuet's work is almost an exact transcription of this work by Camus.

In 1708 there appeared a collection of "Critical and instructive" writings. ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ This book, which is usually attributed to Simon was suppressed by "Arrêt du Conseil du Roi" on 5th August, 1710. The title explains the contents and purpose of the book which, containing literary and critical articles and more Lettres Choiesies, gives considerable information about Simon's life and work. Two years after his

(1) Paris, 1703, 12^o.

(ii) Cochet, op. cit., p. 372, has taken it for approval.

(iii) Bibliothèque Critique, ou Recueil de diverses pièces critiques, dont la plupart ne sont point imprimées, ou ne se trouvent que très difficilement, publiées par Mr. de Sainjore, qui y a ajouté quelques notes. Vols. 1-3, Amsterdam, 1708. Vol. 4 was published in 1710, also at Amsterdam. Vol. 3 adds "à Paris et se vend à Amsterdam. Querard, op. cit. p. 157, refers to an edition published at Bâle, in 4 vols., 1709 and 1710. Cochet, op. cit. p. 372, and Nicéron, note 4 vols., 1-2 at Bâle according to Cochet, in 1708, 3-4 at Amsterdam in 1710. Querard has heard of the earlier 1708 edition.

death a further collection appeared (1) which was very similar in character.

Simon finally returned to Dieppe where he died in April, 1712, in his 74th year, and was buried in l'Eglise de Saint Jacques in Dieppe. According to a friend (11) he burned the remaining unpublished manuscripts of his work.

(1) Nouvelle Bibliothèque choisie, où l'on fait connaître les bons Livres en divers genres de Littérature, et l'usage qu'on en doit faire. Amsterdam, 1714, 12^o, 2 vols.

(11) Reported by Douvrandelle in Galerie Dieppoise, p. 373, Journal des Sçavans, June 1714, p. 621.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

The importance of Richard Simon is variously estimated by those who have written about him. Some regard the appearance of his *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament* as marking, if not the beginning of Old Testament Criticism, at least a new stage in its development. Others regard his work as an interesting, but not important, contribution to the progress of criticism. Such judgments are, however, often invalidated by a failure to realise the extent of his work or by misapprehensions of his actual statements.

After the detailed survey of his work which has been given in the preceding chapters, can any new or certain assessment of his importance be made? In every other judgment of him which has been made, it would appear that his character and his situation, particularly with regard to the Church, has been too much ignored, or inaccurately estimated.

The sources of direct information on his personality and character are limited. In fact there is only one

description of Simon in existence, given by his nephew, Bruzen de La Martiniere, at the end of his 'Eloge' in the last edition of *Lettres Choiesies*. This can be supplemented only with the impression which can be derived from a careful consideration of Simon's writings, which will help to balance La Martiniere's unfortunately, but quite naturally, prejudiced description.

On the evidence of these sources we can form this impression of Simon. He was a small, rather unprepossessing figure, mostly of a serious, somewhat preoccupied disposition, in keeping with his manner of life. Entirely devoted to intensive research, he was, at times, almost a recluse, and his most natural environment was his study or the libraries in which so much of his work was done.

But beneath this calm exterior was also a lively, fiery spirit, which could not be restrained and which led him into a life of controversy. In this respect he has often been harshly judged for the abusive attitude and expressions which he adopted in his polemical writings.

There is no doubt that this was one of his failings. But Bernus has greatly exaggerated the extent and seriousness of these expressions to which he, like Bayle and Cochet, has taken exception. Certainly they are more prominent in the controversy with Vossius than elsewhere, but it is quite wrong

to say as Bernus implies (1) that the controversy with Le Clerc becomes, on the part of Simon at least, little more than an abusive tirade in place of reasoned argument.

Perhaps, nearly three hundred years after the event, we are less sensitive to charges of "rubbish", "nonsense", "ignorance" and the like. Without doubt, Simon's humour was of a very heavy kind and he indulges frequently a childish delight in holding up his opponents to ridicule. Nor did he make any effort to soften his habitual bluntness, but giving no quarter he asked none in return.

Intimate personal friendships had no place in his life. We gain no impression of any such relationships, nor of any with his own family. Such relationships as he had were on an academic basis where the only bond was a common intellectual interest. These he formed not only with Roman Catholics but with Reformed Churchmen, and they were lasting relationships. Even in these, however, the personal element seems always to be lacking.

Books, the reading and the writing of them, were the major concern of his life. Before the publication of the *Histoire Critique* he had found himself in the ideal situation and in the occupation most suited to his taste. For in the Library of the Congregation of the Oratory he was able to

(1) Op. cit. pp. 109 to 110 etc.

devote himself completely, without any distraction, to intensive and extensive studies which gave him a reservoir of learning unequalled among his contemporaries. Hence his own vast number of writings appear to be more the natural outpouring of this great store of knowledge, rather than the results of laborious effort.

It is not surprising, therefore, that his most frequent criticism of others is that their main defect is their lack of specialised knowledge of the original sources with which he himself had so intimate an acquaintance. For a critic of the Old Testament a superficial knowledge of Hebrew was worthless. Even what he was wont to call "a dictionary knowledge" of the language was quite inadequate. Rather unfairly, perhaps, he demanded from other critics the same wide acquaintance as he had been able to have himself with the Semitic languages, the most ancient as well as the modern grammarians, the commentators and the various versions of the Text in printed editions and in manuscripts. It cannot be denied that despite these advantages his conclusions were sometimes inferior, even in purely linguistic matters, to those of his opponents whose resources he so despised.

The scope, however, and the variety of his knowledge can be estimated from the consideration of the titles and subjects of such works of his as have been mentioned already. It is in the light of this lifelong devotion to research that he

must be seen. For such a life had a very great influence on his character and on his criticism and on the position which he adopted in his controversies.

This solitariness, his lack of concern for society, and his aggressive spirit were only accentuated by the increasing opposition which he faced from 1678 onwards. How far this opposition influenced his criticism we must try to assess. Can it be said that in his later works he has changed his position from that which he adopted in the *Histoire Critique*? Was there such a change in fact or was it merely a pretence? Has he only modified his views? Or has such opposition, particularly from Protestants, induced him to draw nearer the orthodox position of his own Church for the sake of refuting the representatives of other Communion?

There can be no doubt that his most formidable opponent was Bossuet, not because he had himself great critical ability, but because of the effectiveness of his opposition as far as Simon and the *Histoire Critique* were concerned, Bossuet symbolised the Church and State. He was far more than the originator of the opposition to the *Histoire Critique*. It could almost be said that the Church and State became his instruments in securing the suppression of the book and in silencing the expression of sentiments whose danger he so

clearly realised. Bossuet saw and acted. The authoritative acts were performed by others but these were mere formalities. Bossuet was the driving force behind the actual suppression and the continued refusal of permission to publish the book.

From his first perusal of the Table of Contents and from his later examination of the contents themselves, Bossuet, of course, saw cause for alarm in far more than in the denial that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. That in itself was sufficient to warrant the arrest of the publication of the book pending a more detailed examination. But the discussion of such subjects as the state of the Text at various periods and the changes therein, of manuscripts and versions, and the examinations of the views of the Fathers, would suggest the probability of ideas which would be difficult to reconcile with the belief in the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture and with Bossuet's regard of the Fathers. It is, in fact, a reconciliation which the Roman Church still finds difficulty in making if we may judge from the most recent English commentary by Roman Catholics. ⁽¹⁾

It is unnecessary to give a detailed survey of the differences between Bossuet and Simon in their attitudes to the Old Testament. However true it may be to-day to say

(1) A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture. General Editor, Dom Bernard Orchard. Nelson. 1953.

that a theologian is also, at least in part, a biblical critic, a distinction could be made then. "Agreement between Bossuet and Richard Simon was not obtainable. Bossuet was the theologian, Simon the critic".⁽¹⁾ It was the clash between the old and the new.

But it was not only in this that they were divided. It was unfortunate that the rift was widened by Simon's comments on the Fathers and particularly on St. Augustine. The latter may have had more able defenders than Bossuet. He has had none more ardent. Simon could not have set foot on more dangerous ground than when he ventured to criticise St. Augustine in the *Histoire Critique*. When these views were multiplied and developed in his work on the *New Testament Commentators* and in the Notes accompanying his translation of the *New Testament*, Simon could not hope for mercy from Bossuet. There was no purpose in reasoning with Simon. Bossuet seems to feel that his only duty now is to warn the faithful of the dire consequences of having anything to do with Simon. He cannot be corrected so he must be shunned.

For in attacking St. Augustine, Simon, in Bossuet's view, has attacked Tradition. In fact this is the main

(1) A Study of Bossuet. W.J. Sparrow Simpson. S.P.C.K., 1937. P. 57.

cause of Simon's offence in all his writings, that under the pretence of defending Tradition, he has undermined it. One quotation will suffice. "How, therefore, will he reply to us: you attack me on the tradition which I praise in my whole book. He praises it, I confess, and he seems to wish to make it his whole support; but I have known for a long time how he praises better things. When, by his criticism of the Old Testament, he overturned the authenticity of all the books of which it is composed and even of those of Moses, he seemed to wish thereby to establish Tradition, and to reduce the heretics to recognise it, while he overturned the principal part of it and the foundation with the authenticity of the Holy Books. It is thus that he defended Tradition and that he imposed on those who were not sufficiently instructed in these matters, or who had not the leisure to apply themselves to them".⁽¹⁾

The Protestant opponents of Simon too, found this apparent paradox in the *Histoire Critique*. How could he go to such lengths to demonstrate the faults and changes in the Text and then claim that we must have recourse to Tradition? If in his criticism of the Text he has proved Tradition wrong in some of its views on the Old Testament how can

(1) *Défense de la Tradition et des Saints Pères. Oeuvres de Bossuet, 1846. Vol. 3, p. 296. See also pp. 283, 291, 321, 333, etc.*

Tradition be trusted? If the Text be untrustworthy upon which Tradition rests to some extent has he not undermined Tradition?⁽¹⁾ Simon admits no paradox in his position. In his reply to Le Clerc⁽¹¹⁾ Simon never allows himself to be pinned down to a straight answer to this question. There is a certain fascination in the way in which he appears to refute Le Clerc's arguments with an argument which contains just sufficient logic to make the whole appear reasonable. When he finds himself in an indefensible position he never gives ground. He simply attacks Le Clerc at other points and passes on to other matters, serene in the conviction that he has proved the superiority of the Roman Catholic position over that of the Protestants.

Simon's attitude towards Tradition and the Scriptures has never been clearly stated. It was naturally an attitude which divorced him from his Protestant opponents. It has not been considered hitherto in his relationship with Bossuet. And it is instructive to compare it with the modern Roman Catholic position.

He gives his opinion, briefly, in the Preface to the

(1) See Le Clerc, *Sentimens*, etc. Letters 2 and 3, pp. 27 seq.: *Les Sources du Pentateuque*. A. Westphal. Paris, 1888. Vol. 1, p. 73.

(11) *Réponse aux Sentimens*, pp. 12 to 15, 25 seq.

Histoire Critique. "The great changes which have occurred... to the Copies of the Bible, since the first Originals have been lost ... ruin entirely the principle of the Protestants... who consult only these same Copies... If the truth of Religion had not remained in the Church, it would not be safe to seek it now in the Books which have been subject to so many changes and which have depended to such an extent on the whim of the Copyists... There is doubtless ignorance or prejudice in the spirit of the Protestants, who maintain that Scripture is clear of itself. As they have rejected the Tradition of the Church, and as they have not been willing to recognise any other principle of Religion but this same Scripture, it has been necessary that they suppose it to be clear of itself and sufficient alone to establish the truth of the faith, and independently of Tradition... Far from believing with the Protestants that the shortest, most natural, and most certain way to decide questions of Faith, is to consult Holy Scripture, it will be found on the contrary in this work, that if... Tradition be not joined with Scripture, almost nothing can be certainly affirmed in Religion. (1) Simon goes on to refer to the existence of Tradition before Moses and the 'oral Gospel' before it was written. He affirms that the Protestants have to acknowledge

(1) H.C.V.T., Pref., pp. vii seq.

the Tradition of the Church although they argue to the contrary.

In his "Réponse aux Sentimens", Simon touches on the relationship of Criticism to Religion. Simon claims that his method of Criticism has nothing to do with Catholic religion nor with Protestant religion. In reply to a perspicacious remark of Le Clerc that Simon had to appeal to Tradition in his book lest he be accused of Heresy, Simon replies that Criticism does not concern Religion "in itself". "However, after having shown according to the rules of Criticism which have been followed exactly, that the Text of the Bible was very obscure, the objection had to be forestalled, which would naturally arise from the principle which established the obscurity of the Sacred Books. M. Simon and even Protestants who follow the rules of Criticism have rightly been asked whence they will draw the principles of their Religion, if the Acts upon which we should rely for that purpose are so obscure that they cannot be understood. The Protestants and Socinians reply that, notwithstanding this obscurity, enough clear passages are found in Scripture to support the fundamental articles of Religion. The Catholics, on the other hand, say that whatever the obscurity in Scripture, no consequence can be drawn therefrom against the truth of Religion, which is also based on Tradition.... Although in general the questions of pure Criticism do not

have any concern with belief, they are not without some connection here, because the books which are criticised contain the Actson which this belief is based". (1)

Later, claiming that the Church is the depository of Christian Religion, Simon combats the view that this does not go beyond anything contained in Scripture. "If that be so, it must be proved that all the truths of Religion have been set down in writing from the earliest times; which would not be easy. On the contrary, we see several Churches established before there was any Scripture, and they were the depositories of Apostolic Tradition, of which a part only has been later written according to occasion, and not expressly to be the only rule of our faith. When these Traditions would not have been published in the books of the New Testament, the Church would always have conserved them, and we shall then have recourse to the testimonies of the principal Churches of the world to authorise all these Traditions." (11)

The similarities to and differences from the modern Roman Catholic opinion may now be observed. "There is no evidence for the existence (or destruction) of any divinely

(1) Réponse aux Sentimens. PP. 26 seq.

(11) Op. cit. p. 40.

inspired Scriptures of pre-Mosaic date. Whatever divine revelation or communication there was in the early days of the human race probably took place by word of mouth only and was handed on orally...God communicated his message to certain men and they in turn on his behalf transmitted it to their fellow-men in human language....From Moses onward God made provision that a part of what emanated 'from the chair of Moses' for the instruction of the people should be committed to writing...The same providence, indeed, obtains and is even more visibly in evidence when the Church of Christ begins to execute her divine commission to go out and teach all nations...It is absurd, even psychologically, that the grace of Pentecost should be dominated by the letter of a book. The fact is that, while the Apostles looked upon themselves primarily as witnesses of Christ, the living organism 'which is the pillar and the ground of truth' functioned as a voice, and its ministers were 'servants of the word', the term 'word' meaning the spoken word.

A living voice is not, however, incompatible with a written source of revelation....It is the fixation of a considerable part of the deposit entrusted to the Church. Thus Scripture becomes her patrimony, and is rightly reckoned amongst her greatest treasures....The revelation which she holds is, therefore, as the Council of Trent defined, 'contained in written books and in Traditions without

writing... " (1)

The writers go on to say that Scripture and Tradition are not completely separate. "There is in a sense but one source of revealed truth, viz. divine Tradition...Yet... the Church is accustomed to speak of two sources of revelation, oral Tradition and Scripture....It is the Church, the holder of Tradition, that gives life to the dead letter of Scripture.. The things which the Church is commissioned to teach out of the Bible are matters of faith and morals pertinent to the building up of Christian doctrine. In regard to these truths the authority of Tradition and of the Bible is equal... Nevertheless...the Church is superior to the Bible in the sense that she is the Living Voice of Christ, and therefore the sole infallible interpreter of the inspired Word, whenever an authoritative interpretation is required." (11)

Later in this Commentary, on the History of the Hebrew Text it is stated, "Our present Hebrew text undoubtedly contains corruptions of various kinds....There are many indications on the other hand that this text has remained practically unchanged from c A.D. 100 to the present day. The divergences from the archetype belong therefore almost

(1) A Catholic Commentary etc., Article : The Place of the Bible in the Church, p. 1.

(11) *ibid.*

entirely to the period of its gradual formation....God undoubtedly watched over the text which he had inspired and preserved its substantial integrity, but he did not protect it from the minor alterations which all texts suffer in course of transmission."(1)

It will be seen that despite the similarities between Simon's views and those of the Roman Catholic Church to-day, there are also important differences. And these differences were even greater in his own time. His view of Tradition and of Criticism were more extreme. Sufficient consideration has never been given to the difficulties Simon faced in reconciling his critical views with his religious beliefs.

On the one hand we have the thorough-going critic, far in advance of his time, and especially of his Church, holding views which were even more radical than those of many modern critics in his emphasis on the obscurity of Scripture to the extent that it was far from being clear even in matters pertaining to faith and morals. But for Simon the Roman Catholic, this obscurity observed by Simon the Critic was not a matter for concern. For there was always the Tradition of the Church, between which Tradition and the witness of Scripture he makes a divorce much wider than the Roman Catholic Church has ever done. Even if the testimony

(1) Op. cit. Article : The Languages, Texts and Versions of the Bible. P. 25.

of the Scriptures was completely unobtainable it would not matter. The Tradition is quite independent of Scripture and we still have this as the enduring source of guidance on these matters.

Bossuet, therefore, found Simon's critical views and his attitude to Tradition quite unacceptable. Either way Simon was too extreme. And however easy it might be for Simon to hold to his faith in Tradition serenely oblivious to his attacks on the testimony of Scripture and on the Tradition of the Fathers, it was beyond Bossuet's powers.

He rightly saw that Simon's views, once developed and become widespread, would result in great harm to a Church which insisted on holding the views which Bossuet himself held. On the other hand, such critical ideas when misunderstood and wrongly interpreted could have a similar effect. That such fears were amply justified, history has shown. It is not surprising that Simon and other critics, with the help of an important misunderstanding of their views, have been claimed by rationalists as the heroes of the destruction of religion.

One such writer, who boasts as his watchword, "nous ne croyons pas, mais nous respectons la croyance", sees in all Biblical critics and in Simon especially, those who "recognise no Tradition, and treat the Scriptures and religion more rashly than in their time Livy and the History of Rome were

treated. Armed with the knowledge of languages, of Hebrew, of Greek, they determine the sense of the holy books as they would for a discourse of Demosthenes or a song of Homer, without caring that the wrong sense which they are correcting in the ancient translations is the basis of the dogmas of the Church. Applying to these same holy books...the rules of historic science, they change the ideas which were held of texts, of facts, of people, of beliefs, without troubling if their new history throws down the whole of religion."⁽¹⁾

Again, "Richard Simon truly touched the very foundation of faith; he attacked the principle which shows itself no longer, the postulate which, admitted, overpowers everything, and rejected, makes religion impossible."⁽¹¹⁾

Underlying all this there is a misunderstanding of Simon's aims and religious beliefs. But these views of Simon and Biblical Criticism were shared by Bossuet, and the same misunderstanding is to be observed throughout his attacks on Simon. Simon was and would be horrified to learn that he rejected theology, Tradition, and the Bible and that he was a destroyer of religion.

No understanding of Simon will be complete without this

(1) Bossuet. G. Lanson, 5th Edition, Paris. 1901, pp. 372 to 373.

(11) Op. cit. p. 376.

being considered. Here was a Biblical critic, more far-sighted than any of his contemporaries, and than many of ours. But, like many people, he saw the dangers to faith arising from the wrong use of such criticism. Furthermore he believed himself that the implications of his criticism were more destructive than most modern critics would accept, and that Scripture was not sufficiently clear of itself even in essential matters. The only way in which faith could be saved was by appealing to Tradition. This was an artificial way of escape, a 'deus ex machina' for him, but it explains his attacks upon the Protestants and his thankfulness that he was a Roman Catholic with that way open to him.

To give Bossuet his due, it was not reactionary opposition only on his part. He saw the danger and saw how untenable Simon's position was. But even if Simon had not drawn those conclusions which made his position untenable, Bossuet would still have opposed him for his criticism alone.

It is unlikely that Simon's exaggeration of the importance of the corruptions in the Text and his stress on Tradition arose simply from a desire to confound the Protestants. The inadequacy of Scripture was a sincerely held belief and his dependence on Tradition was the one thing which could satisfy the deep need for security within himself.

There was, of course, some truth in Simon's contention that the guidance of Tradition was needed for the inter-

pretation of Scripture and very near to his own time the effects of the jettisoning of all that pertained to Tradition had been seen. Simon would have approved the statement of a later writer that, "They (the reformers) themselves were well instructed in the traditional schema, and it controlled the biblical theology of Calvin, for example, not less than that of mediaeval theologians. But in placing the Bible at the disposal of the uninstructed they took a fateful step. It could now be read, and was widely read, 'without note or comment', without the guidance which had been supplied by tradition....The claim that the Bible could be read...without the guidance of tradition...exposed it to the dangers of a chaotic individualism".⁽¹⁾ Simon, however, would have read a much deeper meaning into "tradition" and "the danger".

This same factor in Simon's attitude must be remembered when we consider his attacks on Spinoza and the fact that the *Histoire Critique* was intended to be an answer to Spinoza. As Westphal has said,⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ "Instead of refuting Spinoza, his "*Histoire Critique*" gave a reasoned demonstration of the principal ideas put forward intuitively in the "*Tractatus theologico-politicus*"..."

(1) *The Bible to-day*. C.H. Dodd, Cambridge, 1946, pp. 21 and 22.

(ii) *Op. cit.* p. 73.

It must be observed, however, that Simon, in attacking Spinoza, speaks always of the "false, pernicious, and impious" conclusions which the latter draws from his criticism of the Bible. In Simon's view Spinoza's conclusions undermined the authority of the Bible and rendered it no different from any other book written by human authors. There is here, of course, a failure to observe that Spinoza did not consider the corruptions in the text to be as important for the essentials of religion as Simon did. Spinoza observes, "We have now shown that Scripture can only be called the Word of God in so far as it affects religion, or the Divine Law; we must now point out that, in respect to these questions, it is neither faulty, tampered with, nor corrupt....I here mean written so incorrectly that the meaning cannot be arrived at by a study of the language, nor from the authority of Scripture."⁽¹⁾

Even apart from this misunderstanding, however, Simon would not have agreed with Spinoza. Simon claimed that the corruptions did not lessen the Divine authority of Scripture and that even though the traditional authorship of the books be denied, the actual writers were divinely inspired. Notwithstanding that, he maintained that the Text was so faulty that it cannot give sufficient testimony for religion. Therefore all critics who, after their criticism is done, do not emphasise the necessity of Tradition, simply leave

(1) Tractatus theologico-politicus. P. 171-172.

their readers with nothing more than "false, pernicious, and impious" conclusions.

There is here a lesson for all Biblical critics. Simon, advanced critic though he was, had something of the same immature attitude towards the results of criticism which so many sincere and pious people have to-day. The result of criticism, they feel, is the destruction of belief. It must always be necessary for Biblical critics not only to claim that their work does not have this result, but also to show clearly and certainly that it does not. While the work of criticism is not now so hampered as it once was by this immature judgment, the widespread acceptance of its results is still hindered for this reason.

It has been suggested that Simon's views on the authorship of the Pentateuch changed after the suppression of the *Histoire Critique*. In parts of his controversy with Le Clerc and in his answers to Spinoza in "*De l'Inspiration des livres sacrez*" he has seemed to be defending the Mosaic authorship.

Certain facts must be noted here. Firstly Simon nowhere admits that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch, and at the same time he never denies that Moses may have written some of it. Secondly in refuting Le Clerc and Spinoza, while his attitude may be influenced to some extent by a spirit of controversy, he is concerned to show that isolated

examples of obviously non-Mosaic material are not sufficient reasons for disproving the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch apart from these particular verses.

In any case his denial of Mosaic authorship was only secondary to his main purpose of showing that, particularly because of duplicated narratives in diverse styles, there must have been various authors of the narratives. It seemed to him just as uncritical to claim that the Pentateuch was a unity by a later writer as to claim that Moses was the author. His remarks to Le Clerc and Spinoza, therefore, should be thus interpreted as suggesting that their conclusions do not make any real advance on the traditional view.

The only possible development in his attitude is an increasing emphasis on the fact that the 'public writers' in the time of Moses may have written their annals under his supervision. Nowhere does he contradict what he has said in the *Histoire Critique*. Even in his references to Ibn Ezra against Spinoza he avoids contradiction since in the *Histoire Critique* he had only reported Ibn Ezra's statements without using them to support his own views and without committing himself to an explicit statement of Ibn Ezra's real opinion. Furthermore in his answers to Spinoza he is only showing how Spinoza should be answered by anyone like Du Pin whose own answer was inadequate.

A cursory reading of Simon's works may give the

impression of inconsistencies. Only a detailed study can reveal how skilfully he argues, how carefully he chooses words and phrases so that the implications can be much more than the explicit statements.

It is worth devoting some space to these new judgments of Simon. It seems to me that a proper estimate of him has never been given. Always he has been considered in the light of his value for the Biblical criticism of a later age. Some, like Bernus, underestimate his importance. Others, like Stummer, tend to exaggeration.

We have already noticed that for a long time Simon was considered only in relation to the criticism of the Pentateuch. It has been shown, however, that his work had a much wider scope and a greater importance.

It is interesting to trace the repetition or development of the ideas of earlier critics in the works of later writers. Bernus did this in a general way with Simon but on the whole tended simply to compare him unfavourably with critics of a later date. Stummer traced a more particular relationship between Simon's work on the Pentateuch and that of Astruc, Eichhorn, and Semler and later critics. More recently René Dussaud has done the same thing with Renan's work. (1)

In this thesis the work of Simon has been given in

(1) L'Oeuvre scientifique d'Ernest Renan. Paris, 1951.

detail and in some cases compared with recent works on the same subject so that it will be seen how modern and how dated his work is. There is a danger, however, of reading too many later ideas into his work and his statements must always be considered in their context.

While some of Simon's ideas were obviously important in the development of criticism (for example his recognition of different documents in the Pentateuch), we should not judge his importance solely by those ideas which are still accepted to-day. For it is only in a general way that his conclusions are still valid. His importance, however, is not diminished because the details and his way of presenting the facts are outdated.

Of greater importance than Simon's theories and conclusions is the whole plan and scope of his work. The fact that he wrote a critical history of the Text and Versions is more important than the details of it. Simon, as we have seen, was not the first Biblical critic by any means, nor were all his ideas his own. Even the general idea of his work was due in a large measure to the influence of Capellus and Spinoza. As Renan said of one part of Simon's work, "Spinoza fut le Bacon de l'exégèse, il entrevit une méthode qu'il ne pratiqua pas avec suite; Simon en fut le Galilée, il mit résolument la main à l'oeuvre, et avec un surprenant génie éleva d'un seul coup l'édifice de la science sur des

bases qui n'ont pas été ébranlées."⁽¹⁾

Even had his individual conclusions been less advanced than they were, the very idea of writing what has recently been called "the first comprehensive history of the Text and Versions of the Old Testament"⁽¹¹⁾ would be sufficient to rank Simon as an extremely important figure in the history of Old Testament criticism. There is, in fact, a striking resemblance between the general outline and arrangement of the book which has just been quoted and that of the *Histoire Critique*. The details in the treatment of the subjects are of course of a vastly different character.

The conception, plan, and method of the *Histoire Critique* were unique. Where better could one seek an example of the beginnings of the scientific criticism of the Old Testament than in the work of one whose greatest offence, in the eyes of his contemporaries, was that he had examined the Old Testament scientifically?

Therefore, Simon's successors are not merely the individual critics of a later date who have expressed ideas very similar to his own on certain points, but rather all those who after him have examined, and will examine, the

(1) Essay entitled "L'Exégèse Biblique et l'Esprit Français;" *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Vol. 60. Livraison Ier. Novembre. P. 240.

(11) B.J. Roberts, op. cit. p. 68.

Text of the Old Testament and, by a comparative examination of the Versions with all the means which the sciences have placed at their disposal, add to the ever increasing enlightenment on this vast subject. In these days when this branch of Old Testament study is so important and is being zealously pursued by so many scholars we do well to remember its pioneers. In looking back we do not despise their work, but rather are we humbled by the thought that individuals such as Simon so long ago and with all their disadvantages advanced so far.

For scholars to turn their backs on the work of their predecessors, it has been said, to repudiate them and all their ways would be but folly. "Without their work ours would be impossible, and we are wise to remember with honour those who worked before us, though without being bound by all of their conclusions."⁽¹⁾

Thus Simon's successors are many. Yet comparatively few have been French or Roman Catholics and even this was partly a result of Simon's work. "Bossuet, assisted by La Reynie, killed biblical studies in France for several generations. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes completed the work in removing the only incentive which gave some activity to the Catholic clergy. The struggle of the

(1) H.H. Rowley. The Old Testament and Modern Study. Oxford, 1951. Introduction, p. xvii.

two parties produced vigorous studies. Henceforth idleness prevails. France turns completely towards literature.... France becomes a nation of blind conservatives and the spiritually stunned....Had the exploit of La Reynie saved the Bible from the attacks of criticism? The real facts are known. Bossuet, in persecuting Richard Simon, had thought to deliver the Church of France from a great danger. He prepared the way for Voltaire. Serious science, free and weighty, was not wanted; instead there was buffoonery, mocking and superficial unbelief. The success of Voltaire avenged Richard Simon."⁽¹⁾

Both France and the Roman Catholics took a long time to recover from this set-back. And we may remark that if Simon's conclusions are to be compared with modern criticism they should be more correctly compared with modern Roman Catholic criticism. Such a comparison would not be unfavourable to Simon.

As so much has been said of the Roman Catholic opposition to Simon in his own day, we cannot do better than conclude with modern Roman Catholic verdicts on his importance.

"Richard Simon had, in spite of many errors in his works, laid the foundations of Catholic critico-historical study of

(1) Renan, op. cit. pp. 241, 242 and 245,

the Bible. However, new methods of meeting old and new difficulties do not come to maturity in a day. Simon was much ahead of his time, and it took more than a century for the seed which he cast to come to fruition, ... the foundations of critical method laid by this bold and acute pioneer did not quickly prove their utility."⁽¹⁾

In the same work, the authors of the article on Higher Criticism go a long way towards making amends for the treatment meted out to Simon by his Church. "The first name to be mentioned, as that of a critic in the modern sense of the word, is that of Richard Simon, the French Oratorian, justly called 'the father of biblical criticism'. He saw and formulated the major problems that have occupied criticism since his day, and boldly applied scientific methods for their solution. As a pioneer, it was inevitable that some of his solutions should be weak, and others too radical (his works were put on the Index); yet the 'orthodox' exegetes (notably Bossuet) who so vigorously condemned, not his errors alone, but his whole critical approach, had no idea of the importance of the work he was trying to do. In any event he founded no school, and further Catholic work on these lines was discouraged. The result was that the critical analysis of the Bible when it came, was entirely non-Catholic..

(1) A Catholic Commentary, pp. 5 and 7.

Nearly the whole 19th century passed before Catholic exegetes took up the challenge seriously and began to demonstrate that 'criticism' is not fatally destructive of Christian tradition - rather that the tools of criticism rightly used are a precious aid to the understanding and explaining of the Word of God. But Catholic scholarship in this matter has not yet made up for its late start".⁽¹⁾

(1) Op. cit. p. 61.

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