Das Buch Hiob, erklärt von D. BERNHARD DUHM, ord. Professor d. Theologie in Basel. (Abteilung xvi. des Kurzen Handcommentar zum Alten Testament, edited by K. Marti.) Large 8o, pp. xiii, 212. Freiburg, i. B. u. Leipzig: J. C. B. Mohr. 1897.

Three independent works of first-class scholarship by Siegfried, Budde and Duhm, on the Book of Job, appearing almost simultaneously, ought to mark an epoch in the interpretation of this difficult book. Perhaps there is no Old Testament book that can so well repay the effort. At least there are very few where popular understanding lags so far behind the results of criticism and is so hopelessly bewildered. For minute and careful analysis of the Hebrew text, the critical edition of Siegfried for the Haupt Polychrome Bible is indispensable. If we add to this the keen penetration and sympathetic insight of our two commentators, Budde and Duhm, with the allied labors of Cheyne and Bickell, the student who is merely master of vigorous and straightforward German may consider himself fully equipped for a thorough study of the drama in the light of all that the best Old Testament scholars can supply. Readers of the NEW WORLD are no strangers to either of the distinguished commentators, and will recall in particular Professor Duhm's article on "The Book of Job" in this periodical for 1894, pp. 328–344.

Professor Duhm's solution for the underlying problem of the book, the relation of the prose prelude and postlude to the poetic dialogue of the main body of the work, is as follows: "The original groundwork of the Book of Job was a folk-tale, of which only the beginning, chs. i. and ii., and the close, chs. xlii. 7–17 (and perhaps xxxviii. 1 as well), have been preserved. The conversations between Job and his three friends, together with Yahweh's address to Job, which, according to xlii. 7, the primitive book must have once contained, have had to give way before the great interpolation of a later poet. The book related in epic prose, which only here and there, in discourses of more gnomic character, passed over into the poetic form, the ancient legend of Edomite origin concerning the righteous Job, his prosperity, his adversity and his recovery. It was a tale with a moral, aiming to teach two things: first, that even a blamelessly pious man may come to misfortune in spite of most scrupulous care, viz., when Satan succeeds in throwing doubt in the sight of God upon the genuineness of his piety, and in obtaining leave to put it to the test of misfortune; second, that, if in such a case God's will is submitted to, without qualification or impatience, God honorably restores his servant and richly compensates him. By means of the despair of Job's wife and of the discourses of the three friends,

concerning which our only information is derived from Yahweh's judgment, xlii. 7 f., it was shown how easily a false course may be pursued in such a case."

In support of this view of the structure of the book, Professor Duhm urges the following seven evidences. The folk-tale employs the name Yahweh in the mouth of its speakers, whereas the later poet never forgets that Job and his friends, as Edomites and Arabs, can have no knowledge of this name. In the folk-tale Satan's distrust is the occasion for Job's cruel ordeal; the poet leaves no room for such a secondary cause. In the folk-tale Job submits to the blows of misfortune with patience and wisdom, and receives at the end (xlii. 7, 8) the acknowledgment that he has spoken rightly of God; according to the poet, Job by his own confession is anything but patient, hurls the sharpest invectives against God, subjects his government of the world to keen criticism, and finally admits himself that he has not spoken rightly of God (xlii. 6). In the folk-tale Yahweh is so incensed at the discourses of the friends that he can only be withheld from doing them bodily injury by the intercession of Job; the poet presents the three friends as the representatives of an inadequate theology, but he makes them speak as devout men, who in the main commend the very same wisdom and patient submission which secure for the Job of the folk-tale the divine approval and reward. The folk-tale regards the misfortune of the righteous as a rare exception, arising from a peculiar cause and yielding later to the general rule; the poet looks upon human life in general as bond-service, sees no relation between righteousness and happiness, and does not even permit the friends, whose view-point otherwise is more nearly that of the folk-tale, to maintain the theory that the adversity of a good man is only the testing of his righteousness. The author of the folk-tale has a naïver, simpler conception of religion; the poet approximates to the idea of man's individual relation to God, though God to him is a much more transcendent being. The folk-tale scrupulously avoids expressions liable to give offense and uses euphemisms (תְּכִלָּה ,בֵּרֵךְ ,נִבְלָה, xlii. 8), whereas the poet speaks without reserve.

Further contrasts appear, according to the author, when the indications of date are considered on both sides. The prose narrative reflects the religious and social conditions of the pre-Deuteronomic time, and may be regarded as referred to in Ezek. xiv. 14 f. The poet of the discourses, on the contrary, to whom belong chs. iii. 1–xlii. 6, with the exception of certain still later interpolations, looks back upon the world-battles of Assyrians, Chaldeans and Persians, as well as the great catastrophe of his own nation. His situation seems to be Palestine in the Persian period.

The common theme, the problem of evil, is differently treated in the various stages of the literary product. In the primitive narrative the suffering of the righteous is not denied, but accounted for by the neces-

sity for its vindication against the charge of a mercenary motive. As exceptional it can be thus accounted for. God is justified in occasionally sending misfortune on the righteous, because Satan would otherwise be rightly entitled to say: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" For the later poet, the suffering of the righteous is no longer the exception but the rule. He lives in a period of calamity and of the growing consciousness of sin, which for the masses continued to be the sole explanation of disaster. Suffering is always punitive, or at least disciplinary. Against this crude and cruel doctrine of sin, represented in its various forms by the friends of Job, the poet hurls his denial with all the power of conscious rectitude. The result, indeed, is chiefly negative. The why of suffering remains unexplained. But the poet at least succeeds in refuting the narrow orthodoxy of his time, which thinks by searching to have found out God and to understand the whole principle of his dealing. He takes refuge in the larger view of God which recognizes him as Ruler of all nature, and not of man only. In that very humbling of himself in view of the immeasurable greatness of God and of his dominion, the poet trusts for the ultimate solution of the problem without injustice to either of its factors, the perfect righteousness of God or the reality of unmerited suffering. This confidence rises to so sublime a climax in xix. 26 f. that Job there declares that, even if his vindication require a resurrection from the dead, God will not fail to grant it.

If the first Book of Job was a protest against the rigid application of the *quid pro quo* theory of sin and suffering, then the speeches of Elihu represent a second recrudescence of the popular idea. "The author of chs. xxxii.–xxxvii., who, as thinker and poet, is not to be compared with the author of the poem, maintains the idea that Job has declared himself sinless and thus imputed injustice to God; he is angry that the friends should not have silenced him, and considers it quite needless for the poet to introduce God himself as speaker. He undertakes himself, in the person of Elihu, to be apologist for God and to rebuke Job, whom, as a person wise in his own conceit, God would not deign to look upon. In spite of this confident self-assurance, Elihu merely repeats with great diffuseness the arguments of the friends for the justice of God and the disciplinary purpose of suffering."

In his treatment of the relation of the poem as a whole to the earlier folk-book, Professor Duhm occupies a position which since Wellhausen has been vindicated by so many critics, often independently, that it may be regarded as a permanent achievement of the higher criticism. Budde well compares the relation with that of Goethe's "Faust" to the earlier popular legend. In the matter of the speeches of Elihu we cannot but feel that Professor Duhm undervalues the importance of a theory represented by names so eminent as Cornill and Wildeboer, in addition to his eminent colleague and rival, in treating it as a mere ineffectual

"Rettungsversuch." The surface indications make it easy to fall in with the general verdict of the earlier critical period against chs. xxxii.–xxxvii., and we find it no small obstacle to the adoption of Budde's view, that it seems to require us to suppose that the poet, whose own point of view would appear in the Elihu speeches, actually gave at least a seeming victory to Satan in the controversy of the Prelude which he took up. For, according to Budde, that which Satan himself could not accomplish by direct assault, the unworthy arguments of Job's friends accomplished. Job sinned with his mouth and charged God foolishly at last. Nevertheless the real outcome is the vindication of Yahweh and the highest benefit to Job, in that the latter is thus purified by suffering from the sin of moral pride, of which before he had been unconsciously guilty. For, after the rebuke of Elihu and the revelation of God's majesty, Job is able to see that suffering may serve to purify the righteous as well as punish the wicked, and repents of his presumptuous folly in dust and ashes. This theory labors under difficulties in its very depth of thought as being unintelligible to the average reader. But our poem would not be the first to which such a criticism might apply.

If, on the other hand, with Professor Duhm, we reject the Elihu section and hold that the poet's solution of the problem must be found in the theophany and the appeal to God's transcendence, we cannot but feel the unsatisfactory character of the solution offered. Has the poet enough new light in his almost exclusively negative results to justify his radical reconstruction of the popular folk-tale and popular belief, or to account for the inspired enthusiasm of his song? In the contrast drawn by the newer criticism between the theology of the ancient folk-book, represented by the prelude and postlude, and that of Job's speeches in refutation of the inadequate theorizing of his three friends, we are sure that a positive and important advance has been made toward the appreciation of this sublime product of the Hebrew religious consciousness. Is it an advance, or is it retrogression, to distinguish again between the theology of the poet, noble and bold to the degree of irreverence, and that of the Elihu speeches, a mere recrudescence of the traditional, conventional theory of retribution? On this point we are not yet ready for a decision.

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