

Allgemeine Einleitung in den Hexateuch (General Introduction to the Hexateuch). By Carl Steuernagel. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck, and Ruprecht, 1900. This work is intended to accompany the commentary on the Old Testament edited by Professor D. W. Nowack, and does not enter into the details of introduction, since these are supposed to be found in connection with the individual books. The work is therefore brief. Still, for its purpose it is excellent. The matter is arranged in seven sections, the first of which is intended to put the reader into possession of the necessary standpoint with reference to the importance, content, and divisions of the Hexateuch. The second section pertains to the tradition concerning the authorship of the Pentateuch. Since, the seventh century B. C. there are traces of the view that parts of the Pentateuch were written by Moses. Steuernagel considers this tradition a fair theme for criticism from the Protestant standpoint, and his discussion leads to the conclusion that at least, so far as the literary authorship is concerned, the tradition not only cannot be supported, but must be rejected. Section three gives the grounds upon which the critics assume the participation of several authors in the composition of the Pentateuch—namely, the doublets and contradictions the Pentateuch contains. In section four Steuernagel passes a valuable estimate upon the various attempts which have been made to account for the phenomena presented by the Pentateuch. Section five discusses the foundations of the critical theory; section six the individual component elements of the Hexateuch (D, P, JE, J, E); and section seven treats of the union of these so-called sources, or the editing of the Hexateuch by which they were united. It is plain from this outline that the treatment is orderly and progressive. One only interesting feature can be mentioned more fully here. It has to do with the completion of the Pentateuch, which must have taken place before it was adopted by the Samaritans, since the Samaritan and Jewish texts agree too well on the whole to admit of serious changes subsequently. Now, according to Neh. xiii, 28, the Samaritan community was founded in about 482 B. C. According to Josephus, however, it was established in the time of Alexander the Great, or about 330 B. C. This raises a somewhat serious question; for, according to the critical theory, P was published about 445 B. C., which is but thirteen years before the Samaritans came into the possession of the Pentateuch containing P, if Neh. xiii, 28 gives us the true date. Since it is difficult to believe that thirteen years would suffice to unite P with JED, and to secure the new work the necessary recognition, Steuernagel inclines to reject the authority of Nehemiah as to the date of the founding of the Samaritan community (482), and to accept that of Josephus (330), thereby giving the period of one hundred and fifteen years instead of thirteen for accomplishing the above-mentioned results. Verily the way of the critic, like that of the transgressor, though for a different reason, is hard.