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ART. I.—HIPPOLYTUS AND HIS AGE, or the Doctrine and Practice of the Church of Rome under Commodus and Alexander Severus, and Ancient and Modern Christianity and Divinity compared. By C. C. J. Bunsen, D.C.L. In Four Volumes. London, 1852.

BY THE EDITOR.

AN agent sent from France in 1841, to Mount Athos, to search for ancient Greek manuscripts, succeeded in obtaining a considerable number, which, on his return, were placed in the National Library at Paris. Among them one bearing the title, "On All Heresies," was, in 1851, published at Oxford, as a work of Origen, under the belief that it was a lost treatise of that father on that subject. It was that publication that gave occasion to these volumes. The author's main aim in the first is to show that the treatise is authentic, and instead of Origen, is the work of Hippolytus. He treats in the second of a philosophical History of the Church; and in the third and fourth, chiefly of the ancient creeds, liturgies, and ordinances. His great object, however, is to set forth his own peculiar theory of religion, which is mainly

It cannot be till Jehovah comes out of his place, shakes terribly the earth, causes his dead saints to live, and visits their iniquity upon those who slaughter his faithful people, and endeavor to prevent the establishment of his millennial kingdom.

ART. VII.—HENGSTENBERG ON THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

Das Hohelied Salomonis: ausgelegt von G. W. Hengstenberg, Dr. und Professor der Theologie zu Berlin. Berlin, 1853.

BY THE REV. J. FORSYTH, JUN., D.D.

THERE is no portion of the Old Testament whose canonical authority rests upon a firmer basis than that of the Song of Solomon, yet we will venture to affirm that there are many Christians who rarely, if ever read it, because they do not pretend to understand it. As Dr. Hengstenberg observes in the Preface of the work above named, the Song has come to be practically excluded from the use of the church. The great mass of the British and American theologians, though entertaining widely different opinions respecting the age, authorship, structure of the Song, and the principles upon which it should be expounded, have very generally united in recognising it as a part of the inspired volume. One of the few dissenters from this view was the late eminent Dr. John Pye Smith, who, in a note in his Scripture Testimony to the Messiah, very peremptorily asserts that "the language of the Song of Solomon is far indeed remote from the deep humility, the reverence and godly fear, which are the inseparable characteristics of the prayers and praises of one, who, though pardoned and favored with all spiritual blessings, can never, and would never forget the lowliness becoming a penitent sinner when admitted to the presence of the Holy One. Further, this book declares no sacred truths, it includes no lessons of faith, obedience, and piety towards God, or of duty to man; it never introduces a devotional sentiment, it makes no mention of Jehovah, his dominion, his

laws, his sanctuary, or his worship; it has no appearance of being a religious poem, didactic, devotional, or prophetic.* The note from which we have made this extract, is, on another account, a great blemish in an otherwise admirable work, for it develops a theory of Inspiration, which virtually robs a considerable portion of the Old Testament of its character as an authoritative standard of faith.

The theologians of Germany, even some of those who are regarded as in the main evangelical, have allowed themselves a good deal of liberty in handling certain parts of the sacred volume, and if we had encountered in one of their works the passage above quoted, we should not have deemed it remarkable; but we do confess that we were greatly surprised, as well as scandalized, to meet with such a bold and absolute denial of the inspiration of a book, whose canonical authority has been recognised by the whole Catholic church, coming from an *evangelical* English dissenting professor of theology. It is one of the many proofs that "evil communications corrupt good manners;" for Dr. Smith was more familiar with the works of the biblical critics of Germany, than any other English theologian of his day. Recently, two distinguished German scholars have published an exposition of the Song of Solomon, one of them being from the pen of Delitzsch, the other of Dr. Hengstenberg. Of the latter, we propose to give a brief account.

The position which Dr. Hengstenberg has long held in the theological world, is of itself sufficient to secure for any production of his pen designed to elucidate the Word of God, a respectful consideration, even if it were got up somewhat hastily; but the present volume contains the deliberate conclusions of its venerable author, the results of many years' study of this particular portion of the Old Testament. So long ago as 1827, he wrote a dissertation in defence of the allegorical method of expounding the Song, and for the express purpose of combating the prevalent sentiment in regard to it, which induced so many Christians virtually to ignore its canonical authority. In the following year, he spent several months in the requisite labor preliminary to

* Scrip. Test, I. 47.

the composition of a Commentary, but in the progress of his investigations, he encountered difficulties with which he was not prepared at that time satisfactorily to deal. He was hence led to lay aside the subject, though with the fixed resolution to resume it at a future period, when he could avail himself of the fruits of a more extended study and deeper insight into the meaning of the Old Testament. Meanwhile he has prepared and published his Commentaries on the Psalms and the Apocalypse of John, and thus enters upon the task of expounding the Song of Solomon, not only with a ripe judgment and an enlarged experience of the divine life, but also with a familiar acquaintance with those portions of Scripture which present the most numerous and the strongest points of resemblance to the Song of Solomon.

The volume before us contains a new translation of the Song; a commentary upon it, critical and practical, of the same general character as the author's exposition of the Psalms; and lastly, a dissertation, in which the leading questions to which this book has given rise, are ably discussed.

The first of these has reference to the unity of the Song—a point in regard to which biblical critics have been greatly divided. By some, it is maintained that the book has no unity whatever, that it is not even the production of a single author, but consists of a number of pastoral poems composed by various writers, living at different periods, and joined together by a very slender thread. Dr. J. Pye Smith, in the note before quoted, expresses great doubt whether the Song is a single pastoral eclogue, or a collection of poems of this kind. Others, again, regard it as partaking of a dramatic character. Such is the theory of Delitzsch, who asserts that the Song is, in fact, the skeleton of an intended drama. In opposition to these views, Dr. Hengstenberg asserts, that the Song of Solomon is neither a collection of songs by different authors, nor a series of unconnected songs by the same author, but precisely what it purports to be, viz. a single poem having one grand theme, while he at the same time admits that the absence of a regularly developed train of thought gives to the several parts of the Song, a somewhat disjointed appearance. The book divides itself into two portions—the subjects of which are union and reunion; and in neither of these divisions do we find the “dramatic pro-

gress" which Delitzsch professes to discover, but a series of "verse groups," in which the same object is exhibited in various lights, or the different sides and aspects of the same object are presented, according to a method of which examples may be observed in other parts of Scripture.

The first proof of the unity of the poem is derived from its title—"the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's"—a title which would be totally out of place if the book was a mere aggregate of unconnected songs. According to the analogy of other phrases which we find in the prayer of Solomon, 1 Kings viii., the meaning of the expression "Song of Songs" would be, the pre-eminent song, or the most glorious of songs, and such is the explanation of the formula given by Gesenius and Ewald, who say that the sense of it unquestionably is "das schönste der Lieder,"—"Lied, das sich unter den Liedern auszeichnet." In the next place, this conclusion is confirmed by the order in which the groups of verses are arranged; by certain repetitions which are evidently made of set purpose, such as the solemn adjuration addressed to the daughters of Jerusalem, "not to wake my love," which occurs thrice, viz. in Chapters ii. 7, iii. 5, viii. 4; see also ii. 17, viii. 14, iv. 6, ii. 16, vi. 3. Another important circumstance is the use of the same symbols in all parts of the poem; the garden, the vineyard, the rose, the lily, Lebanon and its cedars, the apple-tree, the bundle of myrrh; the last term, by the way, is more frequently mentioned in this short song, than in all the other books of the Old Testament. Finally, there are some verbal peculiarities, e. g. the uniform use of ש for אשׁ, which go to show that the song is the production of a single pen.

Who, then, was its author? To this question, various answers have been returned. Kennicott and others insist that the poem belongs to an age long posterior to that of Solomon, though they are by no means agreed either as to its precise date or its authorship. But the great majority of the ablest critics, ancient and modern, concur in the opinion that it is what it purports to be, the work of Solomon. Such is the conclusion to which Dr. Hengstenberg comes, and for reasons which seem to us perfectly decisive of the question.

His first reason is drawn from the title, which expressly

names Solomon as the author. The genuineness of the inscription or the title, has been called in question, on the ground that, contrary to the uniform usage of the book, the full form of אֲשֶׁר is employed in it; but to this Dr. Hengstenberg replies, that the title is of the nature of prose, and, therefore, that we should not expect to find in it a verbal form which is distinctively poetical.

In the next place, all the historical references and allusions in the Song clearly show that it belongs to the age of Solomon. The address to the spouse, "Come with me from Lebanon," &c., ch. iv. 8, and in vii. 7, vi. 4; the references to Jerusalem, the Temple, the Tower of David, Engedi, Sharon, the valley of the Jordan, Tirzah, Gilead, Heshbon, and Carmel, to say the least, create a very strong presumption that the poem was written before the division of the Hebrew monarchy, and while Jerusalem was the political, as well as the religious, metropolis of the kingdom. Nor is this all. The conviction that the song was written at a time when the localities above named belonged to the dominions of the son of David, "who was king in Jerusalem," will be much strengthened by a consideration of the tone of sentiment which pervades the piece, of its style and manner. While thoroughly natural, it is at once æsthetic and practical, marked by precisely those qualities which we might look for in the production of a poet who lived at the most splendid epoch, the golden age of the Hebrew commonwealth. All the images, the symbols, the pictured scenes of the book, betoken a brilliant period; and the meditative reader cannot help feeling that he is in converse with an author who had shared in the glory, the magnificence, the boundless wealth, the undisturbed repose of those "days without clouds," when the throne of Israel was occupied by David's peaceful son. There are other peculiar features of the Song which point very distinctly to Solomon as its author. It breathes the same lofty spirit which pervades his sublime prayer at the dedication of the Temple, as recorded in 1 Kings viii. The sacred historian informs us that, besides his "three thousand proverbs, and his songs which were a thousand and five," Solomon spake of "trees from the cedar that is in Lebanon unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of

fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes."—1 Kings iv. 32, 33. In a word, he had a minute and extensive acquaintance with natural history, in its several departments; and as far surpassed all his contemporaries in his familiarity with subjects of scientific research, as he did in the number of his apothegms and of his songs. Now it is exactly this kind of knowledge which the author of the Song perpetually evinces. Still farther, it appears from Ecclesiastes ii., that Solomon cultivated those very arts to which there is such frequent allusion in the Song. He had a taste for horticulture and architecture, and possessing, as he did, almost boundless means for gratifying them, "he made great works, builded houses, planted vineyards, made gardens and orchards, planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit, made pools of water to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees—above all that were in Jerusalem before him." His magnificent edifices and enchanting gardens were, indeed, the wonder of his own age, and in Judea, at least, were never equalled by any of later times. Now the author of the Song not only refers to these magnificent objects with which the Jerusalem of that day and its environs were adorned, but he does it in the tone and manner of one who has the most familiar, every-day acquaintance with these marvellous creations of refined taste and exuberant wealth,—of one, in short, who was their originator and owner.

In the other undoubted productions of Solomon's pen, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, the nature of their subjects, and the species of writing suited to them, and actually employed, differ so widely from the subject and style of the Song, that we should hardly look for any points of affinity between them. Yet such resemblances exist, and we may justly regard them as lending additional strength to the conclusion, that they were all written by the man whose name they in common bear. Thus the book of Proverbs, though, in the main, a collection of condensed, disconnected apothegms, evinces the same fondness for images, continued personification, and allegorical pictures, that appears so prominently in the Song. Then, again, we have a number of expressions which are used both in the Proverbs and the Song. See Prov. i. 9, and Song iv. 9; Prov. i. 28, and Song v. 6; Prov. v. 15-18, and Song iv. 12; Prov. v. 18, 19, and Song

iv. 5; Prov. vi. 30, 31, and Song viii. 7; Prov. ix. 5, and Song vii. 3; Prov. xvi. 24, and Song iv. 11.

Dr. Hengstenberg next proceeds to consider the subject matter of the Song, and its relations to the period in which it was composed. As has been already remarked, the book consists of two leading divisions, the grand themes of which are union and reunion. The first part reaches to the beginning of chapter five, and its principal topics are the following:—1. The grace, the joy, the salvation which shall result from the advent of Messiah. 2. That he bears the name of Solomon, *i. e.* in this book. 3. That before his advent, the people of God shall suffer great and heavy calamities, in consequence of their unfaithfulness; calamities, one chief element of which shall be their subjugation by a Gentile power, and which is variously symbolized by the fierce rays of the sun, the winter, the rain, the darksome night. These calamities of the covenant people shall be rendered more intense, by their own misguided efforts to help themselves, and to obtain the blessings which Messiah alone can confer. 4. With the advent of Messiah, the way is opened for the admission of the Gentiles into the full enjoyment of the rights and immunities of the kingdom of God, and that this is to be accomplished through the instrumentality of the old covenant people, who, in this book, bear the name of the Daughters of Jerusalem.

The remaining portion of the Song, or the second part, treats of—1. The rejection of the heavenly Solomon by the covenant people, and the judgments which, by this act, they bring down upon themselves. 2. Their repentance and the ultimate reunion brought about with the co-operation of the daughters of Jerusalem, with those whom they had, at an earlier day, brought to the knowledge and enjoyment of salvation. 3. The complete restoration of the old relation and bond of love, in consequence of which the daughters of Zion again assume the central position in the kingdom, to be henceforth secured to them by a new covenant, which, unlike the old covenant, never can be broken.

Now, for each of the points included under the first head, an historical basis may be found in the age of Solomon. 1. That there was a lively faith in the existence of a personal Messiah, and a confident expectation of his advent, is abun-

dantly proved by the Messianic Psalms; particularly by the ii. and cx. by David, the lxxii. by Solomon, and the xlv. by the sons of Korah, and which, most probably, belongs to the same period. Of this faith and hope, the "point of departure" may be said to be the prophecy of Jacob, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet until Shiloh come." This prediction, combined with the subsequent prophetic announcement, 2 Sam. vii., of the perpetuity of the dominion of the race of David, supplied a solid objective basis to the subjective Psalm poetry of the Hebrews. 2. The name of Solomon agrees with the contents and tenor of the lxxii. Psalm, from which it is manifest that the reign of Solomon was a type and image of the righteous and peaceful rule of Messiah. That there is no impropriety in the transfer of the name to Christ, and in regarding him as the heavenly Solomon, will appear, if we look at the circumstances under which David's immediate successor and son obtained the name. "Behold," said the prophet Nathan to David, "a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a *man of rest*, and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about, for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an house for my name, and he shall be my son, and I will be his father."—1 Chron. xxii. 9, 10. We think that there can be no doubt that David recognised the typical relation between his son Solomon and the promised Shiloh, and clearly foresaw that the firmly established and peaceful sway of Solomon over the whole land of promise would shadow forth the wider and more glorious dominion of Him to whom all the kings of the earth should do homage, and whom all nations should obey. Indeed the analogy between the two names Solomon and Shiloh, both in form and meaning, not indistinctly intimates a typical relation between the persons bearing them; and, if the least doubt remained on this head, the lxxii. Psalm would surely remove it. No one can read that magnificent hymn without feeling that "a greater than Solomon is here," yet one of whom the earthly Solomon, the "man of rest" and peace, was a striking type. 3. That the advent of Messiah would be preceded by a period of great and sore calamities, was a fact, of which David and Solo-

mon were not ignorant. So it had been in the whole past history of Israel; each remarkable epoch of national prosperity was preceded by a season of trouble. The bondage in Egypt was the immediate antecedent of the covenant made at Sinai; the wanderings of the desert preceded the entrance into the promised land under Joshua; the low estate of the nation under the judges, the misrule, the almost anarchy of that time, introduced the splendid age of David and Solomon. In many of the Psalms, and particularly in that remarkable series which may be called the Davidic cyclus, cxxxviii.-cxlv., it is very plain that David was thoroughly aware of the deep humiliation which awaited his race and the covenant people of God, of the deep waters of affliction through which they would have to pass before the arrival of the promised days of rest and peace. We can hardly imagine that this series of "Psalms of David" was arranged as it is without a purpose. It closes with a song of thanks, the cxlv., for the re-erection of the tabernacle of David, which had been so long thrown down, and for the restoration of his throne to far more than its ancient glory. 4. The knowledge of the fact that the Gentiles were to be incorporated with the kingdom of Messiah, was almost as old as the hope that Messiah should appear. "In thy seed," ran the promise to Abraham, "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" while the prediction of Jacob respecting the Shiloh intimated, "that to Him should the gathering of the nations be." We might quote many passages from the Psalms of David to prove that he anticipated and rejoiced in the extension to the Gentiles of those glorious privileges and blessings which were in his day, and would continue to be the peculiar inheritance of Israel. Solomon not only recognises the same truth in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, but in the lxxii. Psalm he contemplates with a holy exultation the universal spread of Messiah's dominion, and hails with transports of joy the coming of the day when "all nations shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him Blessed." Indeed, we greatly mistake, if we suppose that the narrow prejudices prevalent among the Jews at the time of our Lord's advent, and their bitter hatred of Gentiles, as such, existed in the earlier ages of the Jewish church. There is not the slightest

evidence to show that the popular mind needed to be prepared for the reception of the idea of the Gentiles being admitted into the commonwealth of Israel.

With reference to the *second* part of the Song, it may be observed that the subjects embraced in it are not so clearly brought out in the Messianic prophecies, given prior to the days of Solomon, as are those of the first. Up to that time there had been no very distinct intimation that, by a large portion of the Jewish people, the promised Messiah would be rejected, and the salvation preached in his name despised, and that for this great national sin, Israel should suffer a terrible punishment. Still we may properly regard this crowning instance of Jewish obstinacy and unbelief, though not named in express terms, as implied in that awful prophetic description of the judgments awaiting his people in a distant age, which were uttered by Moses when near the close of his public ministry, and which we find recorded in the book of Deuteronomy. Paul, in Rom. x. 19, declares, that those words of Moses, in Deut. xxxii. 21, "I will provoke you to anger by them which are not a people," &c., were intended to announce the casting away of the Jews, and the reception of the Gentiles in their room. Many of the Psalms impressively teach that "they are not all Israel who are of Israel;" particularly those in which the promised salvation is limited to the righteous, while the wicked are in effect excommunicated, and their final ruin foretold; see Psalms l., lxxviii., xcv., xcix., cxxv. The teachings of the Song, on this head, are therefore only the application of a general truth to a particular relation, and such use of it exactly agrees with the declarations of prophecy on this very point, in the times subsequent to Solomon's. On the only remaining topic of this division, viz. the principle enunciated by St. Paul, that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," it will not be necessary to dwell. "God hath not cast off his people which he foreknew," says the apostle. Long as may be the period of their exclusion from the privileges once enjoyed by them, it is not to be perpetual. For many a century, Jerusalem, the ancient seat of their solemnities, the sacred spot where their fathers worshipped, where the ashes of their monarchs, and prophets, and holy men repose, shall be trod down of the Gentiles,

but David and Solomon well knew that these dismal years should have an end, that breaches and desolations of many generations should be repaired, that Zion should be built up, and invested with far more than her ancient splendor, for then should her Lord appear in his glory. It was a part of the true Hebrew's faith and hope long before the days of these great kings, for Moses, who had predicted, that the glory of Israel would be sadly dimmed, had also foretold that it should at length shine forth with a transcendent lustre.

The only remaining question that claims to be considered, has reference to the interpretation of the Song. On what principle is this book to be expounded? Are we to understand its language in its strictly literal, or in an allegorical sense.

Dr. Hengstenberg gives a very decided answer to this question, and affirms that the very title of the book—the Song of Songs—proves that the author of it meant it to be understood in an allegorical sense. On any other supposition, the inscription of the poem, if not a lampoon, would at least cast great dishonor upon all the other Scriptures of the Old Testament. What right-hearted Israelite would have ventured to pronounce a song founded upon earthly relations, and descriptive of a merely earthly love, superior to the many divine Psalms and Songs of a Moses, a Miriam, a Deborah, a Hannah, a David? Its title, the Song of Songs, only can be justified, and is most befitting, if we regard the subject of it to be Him who is “fairer than the children of men, into whose lips grace is poured,” the most glorious of all objects, the loftiest of all themes. Even the name, Solomon, in the title, admits of an allegorical exposition, for certain it is that the royal preacher and poet never could have said of himself what is said respecting the Solomon of the Song.

The position that the allegorical interpretation is the true one, derives much strength from a comparison of the Song with the xlv. Psalm. Both exhibit essentially the same features, they employ the same imagery, they treat of the same subject; and if one partakes of the nature of allegory, so must the other. The Psalm is, in truth, the Song in a very condensed form, a brief compend of it, prepared, doubt-

less, for the purpose of being used, in the worship of the temple, by the sons of Korah, who, in this instance, bore to Solomon the same relation as Psalms xlii., xliii., lxxxvi., represent them as sustaining to his father David. The points of similarity between these two compositions are numerous, and at the same time so obvious, that it is quite needless to dwell upon them in detail. Both exhibit the king in precisely the same light, as "fairer than the children of men"—as "the chief among ten thousand;" both exhibit the bride not as a single individual, but as composed of a multitude of persons, one of whom, however, is raised to a position of especial dignity; both exhibit in the same pictorial manner the heroic valor, and august majesty of the king; both represent the kings of the earth as his allies; both speak of "myrrh and aloes," the latter term being found nowhere else than in these two places; the palace of ivory of the Psalm answers to the tower of ivory of the Song; and in both there is substantially the same exhortation to the bride to forget her own people, and her father's house. To these points of resemblance between the Psalm and the Song, may be added the numerous verbal allusions to the latter, in the Prophets, *e. g.* Song i. 4, and Hos. xi. 4; ii. 3, and Hos. xiv. 6, 8, 9; iii. 6, and Joel iii. 3; ii. 14, and Ob. 3; i. 16, and Is. xxxiii. 17; ii. 1, and Is. xxxv. 1, besides many more.

In the second place, the allegorical interpretation of the Song rests upon the highest of all authority, that of our Lord and his apostles. The New Testament abounds throughout with references, more or less distinct, to the Song of Solomon; and one cannot but wonder at the superficiality or the ignorance of those who assert that in the New Testament this book is nowhere recognised. Our Lord refers to it, and in such a way as to show that it is to be understood in an allegorical sense, in Matth. vi. 28-30—compare Song ii. 1; Matth. xiii. 25, xxiv. 22, comp. Song v. 2; Matth. xxi. 33, comp. Song viii. 11; Luke xii. 35-37, comp. Song v. 3; John vii. 44, comp. Song i. 4; John vii. 33, 34, comp. Song v. 6, and in other places, which it is needless to quote.

In the third place, this method of interpretation is supported by the consensus of the Jewish synagogue. That

exposition which can claim to be regarded as the national one, which has been everywhere, and at all times, received by the most learned Jews, is certainly entitled to very great respect, and this unquestionably is the allegorical. Josephus, in his enumeration of the canonical books of the Old Testament, ranks the Song among the prophetic, and that such is its proper place and character is expressly asserted by the Targum. The author of the fourth book of Ezra, who probably lived B. C. 25, has this language: "Of all the flowers of the earth thou hast chosen the lily alone; of all the cities of the world thou hast sanctified for thyself only Zion; of the whole feathered creation thou hast chosen for thyself the dove alone;" *i. e.* Zion is the lily, the dove, the bride of the Song. Rabbi-Akiba says, "The whole world is not of so great value as the single day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel. All the books of Scripture are indeed sacred, but the Song of Songs is the most sacred. And if there be any dispute respecting the books of Solomon, it is only about Ecclesiastes." Aben Ezra says, "Away, away with the idea that the Song of Songs treats of carnal pleasure; all its words are spoken figuratively. Unless it possessed the very highest dignity and worth, it could never have obtained a place among the books of Holy Scripture. Nor has there ever been any controversy among us respecting it."

The history of the exegesis of this book brings out a fact which is not fitted to beget much favor for the literal method, *viz.* that all the older advocates of it were men whose orthodoxy was of a very suspicious kind—Theodore of Mopsuestia, Castellio, Grotius, Simon Episcopus. On the other hand, the Christian church of all ages, and especially in her purest and best times, has not only rejected this method, but has regarded it with horror. In view of considerations such as those already presented, we are warranted in saying that, before we leave in this matter, "the footsteps of the flock," and yield to those who insist that the book is to be taken in a strictly literal sense, the reasons for such a course must be so decisive as virtually to compel us to adopt it.

Now the grand argument on which the advocates of this theory depend, is this,—the allegorical representation of Israel, under the figure of a spouse, was never used by th

sacred writers prior to the time of Solomon, and did not become common until the age of the later prophets. "It was not," says Delitzsch, "until the days of Isaiah, that this method of personifying Israel, Judah, Zion, and Jerusalem, assumed a stereotyped form." "Nowhere in the Pentateuch is Jehovah presented directly or figuratively as the bridegroom, or the husband of Israel. There are, indeed, terms employed, which may be said to contain the germ of the representation, but the relation in which Jehovah stood to Israel as their covenant head, is never illustrated in the books of Moses by the marriage union. Isaiah and other prophets who lived long after Solomon, make frequent use of this figure, but we never meet with it until we come down to their times." Such is the weightiest argument, and if so, every person of reflection who has no theory to maintain, we think will agree with us, that the position it is intended to support must be weak indeed. It is admitted that the Pentateuch contains expressions in regard to the union of Christ and his people, which have the germ of that figure which is so largely used in the Song; these germinant expressions are far more significant than Delitzsch affirms, and it is perfectly incredible that the analogy between the marriage union and the covenant union of God and Israel, was wholly unseen and unknown in the days of Moses. We might quote numerous passages which so obviously suggest the analogy, that one cannot help believing that the idea of it was quite familiar to the popular mind. Thus, Deut. xxxii. 21, "they have provoked me to jealousy with them that are not Gods, and I will provoke them to jealousy by them that are not a people." "In this passage," says Vitranga, "the metaphor is evidently derived from the conduct of a husband, who having discovered that his wife was indulging in illicit amours, resolves to treat her as she has treated him."

The truth is that the notion of Delitzsch that a figurative representation, like the one in question, must first appear in one age, in the form of a "germ," and then gradually develop itself until it reaches its full growth in a later age, is as preposterous in itself as it is unsupported by the usage of Scripture. Isaiah, in his fifty-third chapter, exhibits in sharp outline, the image of the vicarious sufferings of the servant of God, which henceforth becomes the inalienable property

of the church. Now the considerate critic, in dealing with the fact that previous to the Song this representation occurs rarely, and as it were in germ only, while after the Song it is met with often and fully developed, would argue, 1. That the Song must have been composed by Solomon. 2. That it was never understood in any other than an allegorical sense. Then this result would be strongly confirmed by the circumstance, that in precise accordance with the chain-like character of Scripture, we meet this same representation in those books which stand nearest to the Song in point of age.

We do not enter into any criticism of the commentary which fills the largest portion of the volume. Its character may be inferred from the views which Dr. Hengstenberg holds of the subject matter and structure of the Song, as well as from his other exegetical works. Though we do not imagine that our readers will concur with him in all points, we look upon the work as a most valuable contribution to the exegetical literature of the Old Testament. The avowed aim of the volume, is to restore this most precious gift of the Spirit of inspiration—the Song of Songs—to the place in the practical judgment and affection of the church, to which it is so pre-eminently entitled.

ART. VIII.—THE FALL OF THE TURKISH EMPIRE.

THAT the Turkish power, though still to prolong its existence for a period, is hastening to its fall, has become the general conviction of statesmen and politicians, as well as the students of the sacred word who are guided in their views by the revelations that are there made of the future. That event, whenever and however it takes place, will be one of no ordinary significance. The extinction of a race that has been so vast in its numbers, so stern in its character, so hostile to God and his people, so cruel and bloody towards its subjects, that has reigned for so long a period over so large and fine a portion of the globe,—the birthplace of the arts, the seat of all the first great empires, the scene in which Christianity had its origin and its first triumphs; and that as heaven's