

P II.

THE PROBLEM OF THE PENTATEUCH.

The investigator of the religious literature of the Christian Church finds its sacred writings beginning with five books. Most Bible print at the head of these books, "The First Book of Moses", "The Second Book of ~~Moses~~", etc. Are the publishers warranted in putting these headings above these five books? Did Moses actually write a sufficient proportion of each of these books to justify one in calling them his books?

Our first step in this investigation is to read the books themselves to see whether they actually claim to be written by Moses. In my term paper I have dealt with this phase of the subject. I will only summarize here by stating that the reading of the books leads one to the conviction that they do claim to be the work of Moses. Twice it is reported that part of it was written at the express command of God. Leviticus and Numbers end with statements that these ~~are~~ the laws which God gave Moses, and which he declared to the Hebrew people. Near the end of Deuteronomy there is a similar statement. Much is described as the words of Moses. Several times Moses is described as writing down what he said. Toward the end of Deuteronomy Moses commands the people to preserve his words carefully, and to observe them for all their subsequent history. The clear claim of the Pentateuch is that it is the substance of what Moses wrote in the wilderness and committed into the careful keeping of the children of Israel.

The later books of the Old Testament refer often to the law of Moses, and frequent references to it show that by it they mean precisely that law which is contained in the Pentateuch. In the New Testament we find the Jews ascribing the words of the Pentateuch