

## VI.

### ECCLESIASTICUS.

**M**OST of the readers of the PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW are doubtless acquainted with the fact that certain leaves containing most of the last twenty-two chapters and some other portions of Ecclesiasticus in Hebrew have lately been acquired by the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford and by the British Museum. Although these leaves are partly decayed and the letters often illegible, yet, thanks to the strenuous labors of Drs. Cowley and Neubauer of Oxford, Schechter and Taylor of Cambridge, and the Rev. G. Margoliouth for the British Museum, the fragments now lie before us in a Hebrew text and in a carefully edited form. Prof. Nöldeke says that "among all the rich documentary discoveries of our time, this one claims a foremost rank. In the field of the Old Testament, nothing like it has happened before." In view of the great importance of Ecclesiasticus as a revelation of the mind of the Jewish people at the time when it was written, and especially in view of the magnified importance of it in the original Hebrew, we shall discuss in the succeeding pages the following subjects in order, to wit: the genuineness and form of the Hebrew fragments, the versions, the name, author and date of the book, and its relation to the canon.

#### I. GENUINENESS AND FORM OF THE FRAGMENTS.

As to the original language, there has been little doubt among scholars that Ecclesiasticus was written in Hebrew, though some supposed that it was in Aramaic.\* The grandson implies that his grandfather had written in the Hebrew tongue.† Jerome says that he saw a copy of the Hebrew, and the Rabbis from the first

\* An argument in favor of an Aramaic original was made on the basis of citations found in the Talmud and elsewhere. The fragments show that these citations were translations into Aramaic.

† In the prologue to Ben Sira, written by the grandson and translator, he says: "Pardon us wherein we may seem to come short of some words which we have labored to interpret. For the same things uttered in Hebrew and translated into another tongue have not the same force in them: and not only these things, but the law itself and the prophets and the rest of the books have no small difference when they are spoken in their own language."

century of the Christian era down to the tenth quote it more or less accurately in Hebrew.\* At or near the tenth century the Hebrew sinks out of sight, and when the Geniza fragments were discovered the first question to be discussed was naturally whether they are the genuine original or merely a retranslation.

Most scholars who have investigated the matter maintain that we have here the very text substantially as it was written by Ben Sira himself, subject only to those inevitable changes which every text undergoes in the process of transmission. Profs. Lévi, D. S. Margoliouth and Bickell stand alone in opposition to this view. Dr. Lévi asserts, in the number of the *Revue des Études Juives* for September, 1899, that the new fragments bear the visible traces that they are, at least for a certain number of chapters, only a retranslation into Hebrew of a Syriac version, which was made earlier from the original Hebrew. This view, which is contrary to the previously expressed opinion of M. Lévi (see especially *L'Écclesiastique*, p. xviii), is based upon his belief that the fragments contain Arabisms; upon the supposition that li. 13-28 was originally a complete acrostic, and that the present Hebrew of this chapter is a translation from the Syriac; and, lastly, upon the frequent occurrence of doublets, or consecutive verses expressing in two different fashions the same thought. Prof. D. S. Margoliouth† contends that the fragments are a reconstruction of the Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus out of a Syriac and a Persian translation. To do him no injustice, we shall quote his own words concerning the translator and his methods and results:

"This remarkable man," says he, "lived after 1000 A.D., for the Persian which he knew was already mixed with Arabic words and phrases to overflowing; but his natural language was Arabic, for he uses that for his stop-gap words. He was taught Hebrew by a Jew who had a pronunciation similar to that of the Christians of Urmi. . . . He was no great grammarian. . . . It was over a bargain, then, perhaps at Baghdad, that some Christian quoted Ben Sira to him—probably the verse which says that a dealer is a knave—and he learned to his astonishment that the proverbs of Ben Sira, of which he had heard, were preserved in the Christian Scriptures, though lost to the Jews. And fired with the thought that he, too, might do something for the dear Hebrew language and the honor of his race, he makes haste to procure a copy, and presently engages a teacher to help him to read it. And talking of languages, as teachers will, his tutor mentions casually that he has a friend who knows a tongue of which they both are ignorant. . . . And when the Grecian is introduced, he takes some interest in the Ben Sira project, but regrets (not without ostentation) that the worthy Jew should base his work on the Syriac, when the Greek in his possession is so much fuller and better. And when he has proved this by examples . . . the Jew tells him that if he will translate the Greek into Persian, he, the Jew, will reward him well. And presently the materials are all collected; he can read

\* See page x of the Preface to *The Original Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus*.

† In his work entitled *The Origin of the Original Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus*.

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Syriac, and has a complete copy of the Persian ; and he collects the Old Testament parallels, and tries to think what the Hebrew can have been. And indeed he does some things well ; he even restores the original felicitously once or twice where both versions are misleading ; but he makes—as what pioneer does not?—a number of mistakes, and cannot satisfy himself in a variety of passages. And so, desirous of doing well the task which has been given him, he collates and corrects and revises and transcribes till death overtakes him before the work is finished. And then his MS. falls into the hands of a pedant, who knows Hebrew better than the master did, but knows nothing else ; and he scores a few poor and worthless emendations on the margin and has fair copies made, and sells some, but not many ; for the Jews like to get good value for their coin. This is the only account that I can excogitate of this extraordinary book. And having read it over many times, I regard it as the true one.”

On the other hand, Driver, Neubauer, Schechter, Taylor, G. Margoliouth, Bacher, Perles, Halévy, Smend, Nöldeke, Kautzsch and others hold that the fragments are copies of the original work at an indefinite number of removes, and with an unknown but certainly large number of corruptions.

With regard to the Hebrew text, it may be remarked that, except in two verses, it is entirely without vowel points ; that the vowel letters (*matres lectionis*) are employed frequently, not merely for the naturally long, but also for the short vowels ; that there are no abbreviations except in the case of the tetragrammaton, which is denoted by three yodhs ;\* and that five times at least a variant reading is written immediately above the Kethiv, instead of on the margin, as is ordinarily the case. The margin of the MS. is full of variants, some in Hebrew, some in Aramaic ; some better, some worse ; but differing largely in value in the estimation of different critics.

The principal arguments in favor of the originality of the Hebrew of the fragments have been made by Profs. Edouard König, Smend, Nöldeke and Halévy. We shall base our discussion upon König's articles, published in full in *The Expository Times* for August–December, 1899. First, there is a quantitative

\* There are abbreviations in the margin but not in the text. In the margin, the first letter of a word is sometimes put for the whole word. Lévi seeks to explain some of the peculiarities of the versions by supposing that the text also had abbreviations at one time which were differently read. See *L'Ecclésiastique*, pp. ix, xvii, and especially xlv, xlvii. We quote from the last page the following : “Ceux qui étudient avec attention les passages parallèles de la Bible ne manquent pas d'être frappés des singulières variantes qu'ils offrent parfois, et qui sont uniquement imputables à l'habitude qu'on avait d'écrire certains mots en abrégé. Comme de juste, c'est principalement à la fin des versets où les lignes que les copistes s'avaient de cet expédient. Le Talmud parle même d'exemplaires de la Bible où seul le premier mot du verset était écrit en entier et la gueniza du Caire nous a conservé un grand nombre de fragments de l'Écriture rédigés de cette façon. Ces spécimens offrent cette particularité curieuse que l'abréviation ne consiste pas toujours dans le maintien de la première lettre du mot ; le plus souvent, c'est une autre partie du vocable qui a été conservé.”

argument in favor of the originality of the Hebrew, derived from a comparison of the additions and omissions of H as compared with G and S.\* These additions and omissions are to be found in both G and S,† and are of such a character as to militate in favor

\* That is, of the Hebrew as compared with the Greek and Syriac versions.

† Each of the primary texts (*i. e.*, the Hebrew, the Greek and the Syriac) inserts clauses and verses which the other two omit; and each of them omits clauses and verses which the other two contain. The following tables of variations between H, G and S has been prepared by the writer. It extends over all the published fragments. König had prepared a partial list for xxxix. 15–xliv. 12:

H has the following clauses and verses not found in G or S: iv. 10c, iv. 19, iv. 27 (1), iv. 28 (1), vi. 17b (1), vi. 22 (1 and 2), xii. 14 (2), xiii. 17 (1), xxx. 11 (1), xxx. 17a, xxx. 20 (1 and 2a), xxxi. 2 (1), xxxi. 4 (1), xxxi. 10 (1 and 2), xxxi. 15a, xxxi. 16a, xxxi. 14ab, xxxi. 26 (1), xxxi. 26 (there are doublets in this verse, but it is not easy to take one clause from G and one from S), xxxi. 28cd, xxxii. 4b, xxxii. 10, xxxii. 13 (1), xxxii. 17 (1), xxxv. 15, xxxvi. 21 (S omits and G differs so as scarcely to be recognizable), xxxix. 20b, xxxix. 30c, xl. 9b, xli. 9b, xlv. 7e, xlv. 25f, l. 24b, l. 24 (1)a, li. 10a (1), li. 12 (1–15), li. 13 (1), li. 18 (1), li. 30 (1 and 2).

H omits the following clauses and verses found in G and S: iv. 10b, iv. 16, iv. 17b, vi. 17a, vi. 18, vi. 23, vi. 24, vi. 26, vi. 34, vii. 9, xiv. 7, xxx. 19, xxx. 20a, xxxii. 22 (2), xxxvi. 9, xxxviii. 19bc, xxxi. 19bcd, xxxvii. 1b, xxxvii. 5, xxxvii. 11ij, xxxvii. 21, xxxvii. 22, xxxvii. 24, lx. 2, lx. 12, xlii. 18cd, xlii. 22ab, xlii. 11c, xlii. 12ab, xlii. 15a, xlii. 21cd, xlii. 26bd, xlii. 12a, xlii. 20d, xlii. 16, l. 15.

G has the following clauses and verses not found in H or S: iv. 4b, iv. 5a, iv. 25b, v. 7b, vi. 19b, xii. 4, xiv. 8, xxxii. 18cd, xxxix. 17ab, xli. 22ab, xlii. 15b, xlix. 15b, l. 23c, l. 24cd, li. 14, li. 19.

G omits clauses and verses occurring in both H and S in xii. 14 (1), xv. 15 (1), xv. 20 (1), xvi. 15, xvi. 16, (but found in Holmes and Parsons, MSS., 248, 106), xxxi. 13 bd, xxxi. 22a (1), xxxi. 28cd, xxx. 17a, xxx. 17 (1)b, xxxi. 6 (1), xxxii. 4 (1), xxxii. v (1), xxxii. 11 (1)a, xxxii. 12b, xxxii. 14 (1), xxxii. 16 (1), xxxii. 17 (1), xxxii. 22 (1), xxxv. 10cd, xxxvi. 8 (1), xxxix. 20c, xl. 19bc, xlii. 15d, xlii. 4d, xlii. 25e, xlii. 13 bcd, xlii. 23e, l. 24 (1) b, li. 11c, li. 20a (1) and (2) and li. 26cd (in part).

S has the following clauses and verses not found in G or H: xxxi. 22 (1)cd, xxxviii. 21, li. 20ab (1), xxxix. 21l, xl. 26ef, xlii. 12.

S omits the following verses and clauses occurring in G and H: iv. 10c, iv. 19, iv. 27 (1), iv. 28 (1), v. 6ab, vi. 9, vi. 10, vi. 17b (1), vi. 22 (1) and (2), vi. 30, vii. 15, vii. 17 (1), xiii. 20, xiv. 10, xiv. 16b, xv. 15b, xiv. 22, xxxi. 13a, xxxi. 15b, xxxi. 17b, xxxi. 22, xxxi. 24, xxxvi. 23 (28), xxxvi. 21, xxx. 17b, xxx. 17 (1)a, xxxii. 3, xxxii. 5, xxxii. 6, xxxii. 7, xxxii. 8, xxxii. 9 (1), xxxii. 11a, xxxii. 11 (1)b, xxxii. 14, xxxii. 15, xxxii. 16, xxxii. 18a, xxxii. 22, xxxiii. 2, xxxiii. 3, xxxviii. 11, xxxviii. 14a, xxxviii. 20b, xxxviii. 21b, xxxviii. 25b, xxxix. 17abcd, xxxix. 20a, xxxix. 30d, xl. 6ab, xl. 9, xl. 10, xl. 14b, xl. 18a, xli. 4bcd, xli. 9cd (?), xlix. 10a, xli. 11a, xli. 13–18, xli. 19a, xli. 21, xli. 22, xlii. 1–8, xlii. 10cd, xlii. 14, xlii. 21cd, xlii. 1ab, xlii. 11–33, xlii. 3abc, xlii. 4b, xlii. 9cd, xlii. 16, xlii. 3a, xlii. 7de, xlii. 8cd, xlii. 9–14, xlii. 17cd, xlii. 20d, xlii. 21a, xlii. 23e, xlii. 12a, xlii. 15, xlii. 19e, xlii. 10cd, xlii. 12, xlii. 13d, xlii. 15a, xlii. 6a (?), xlii. 7b, xlii. 13b, xlii. 17cd, xlii. 19, xlii. 20ab, xlix. 7b, xlix. 14b, l. 3b, l. 4a, l. 12de, l. 17a, l. 18b, l. 19bcd, l. 20, l. 21, li. 4b, li. 5.

From these lists it will be seen that H adds more than either of the others and G more than S; while on the other hand H omits less than the others and G less than S.

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of the supposition that H is more original than G or S, the instances of *plus* on the part of the latter being such as "may easily be traces of an *intra*-Jewish or even *intra*-Hellenistic development of Ecclesiasticus." Of this argument of König's, it may certainly be said with fairness that while, like subjective arguments in general, it is not conclusive, it disproves any *prima facie* claim of priority on the part of G or S.

Secondly, König argues for the originality of H from a comparison of the quality of the variations. Here he discusses first the corruptions of the text of H, and agrees with Cowley, Neubauer and Smend that H bears unmistakable signs of corruptions even in those parts which have no marginal notes.\* In controverting Prof. Margoliouth's criticisms on H, Prof. König takes up the verses commented on by the former and treats them in the order of their occurrence by chapter and verse. In spite of Prof. Smend's cutting remark in *T. L. Z.* for March, we are inclined to believe that König has shown that, on the whole, Margoliouth's proofs of a Persian go-between are fanciful or inconclusive, and we think that König is on the right line when attempting to prove that G and S can be derived, readily and reasonably, from a Hebrew original. The argument would have been much stronger had König not been hampered by following the lead of Margoliouth and discussing those passages only which he had mentioned. An argument like this is cumulative and should be made comprehensive. Lévi, Halévy, Perles, and others have shown how conclusive this line of argument can be made. Much, however, remains to be done in this direction. The greatest difficulty is that so few scholars are sufficiently masters of Hebrew, Greek and Syriac to be able to marshal all the nuances of the corresponding words in the three languages, so as to prove that there is no point of contact between H, G and S, and that G and S could not have been translations of H or *vice versa*. It seems that, at present at least, it would be better to discuss those parts of the text that are certain, and not to base arguments on the restored words, only one or two letters of which are legible.†

\* This subject is further treated and more fully by Nöldeke in the *Zeitschrift für alttest. Wissenschaft* for 1900; Heft i; by Lévi in *L'Ecclesiastique*, xix-xxi; by Perles in the *Wiener Zeitschrift* for 1896, and by Schechter and Bacher in *The Jewish Quarterly Review* for January, 1900, as well as in the standard editions with texts.

† Before closing this argument, attention should be called to Smend's ingenious attempt to answer the statement that there are Arabic words in the text of H (*Theologische Literaturzeitung* for March, 1900). Smend contends that there are no Arabisms in Ben Sira, and to our mind with convincing force. Especially good is his remark on *chalaq*: that a mediæval Jew would have considered it a monstrosity to use in an ostensibly Hebrew production an Arabic word with so spe-

Thirdly, König attempts to determine the character and origin of the marginal notes appended to the Hebrew text. As to character, they may be classified into those regarding the orthography, the system of terminations, the linguistic usage and the real or supposed corruptions of the text. As to the origin of these marginal notes, Margoliouth says (in the *Origin of the Orig. Hebrew*) that they are "alternate renderings, corrections, suggestions, notes of various readings," "suggested improvements in orthography, accuracy and seemliness of expression." "On a translator's rough copy such a quantity of marginal notes would naturally be found and bear evidence of the care, the deliberation and the hesitation with which he worked. But in the margin of a late copy of a work professing to be original and handed down as books were handed down before the invention of printing, such a quantity of variants would be astounding." The author "for some reason or other may have abandoned the task of translating before he got his work into proper shape." To these statements König replies that Margoliouth's view of the origin of the marginal notes appears to him to be true in only a very few instances. Some are reminiscences of other passages of Scripture, some correspond to parallel passages, some are intra-Hebraic, such as the remarks on spelling, etc., some originate in a comparison with G or with S, and the two Persian notes are *formal* and not material elements of the marginal notes. The word *nakil* which Margoliouth renders *translator*, König translates *narrator*, though others contend with equal authority for the meaning *copyist*. As to the marginal notes being a proof of retranslation, König remarks, first, that even MSS. of parts of the Old Testament canon exhibit notes on the strange spelling or the formation of words (see *e. g.*,

cific a religious meaning, and for which in Hebrew there was already in *bara* a technical term ready. Besides, he reasons, the Arabic *chalaqa* in the Koran and elsewhere is employed to denote what the Hebrew meant by *bara*; and as the idea certainly did not come from Arabic heathenism, there is the strongest probability that this *terminus technicus*, like so many others in the Koran, may have been derived by Mohammed from the Jews or Christians. Halévy (in the *Revue Sémitique* for January, 1900, p. 80, note) confirms this view by showing that the Latin Vulgate in Deut. iv. 19 rendered *chalaq* by *creavit*. Surely no one would maintain that the Hebrew Rabbis, from whom Jerome learned his Hebrew, were influenced by the language or literature of the Arabs.

As to the great number of *hapax legomena* which Lévi classes as New Hebraisms or Aramaisms, Smend well asks how Lévi knows that *neeman* never meant *eunuch* in Hebrew, nor *sr*, *health*. That these words are not found in these senses in New Hebrew does not prove that they were not so used when Ben Sira wrote. מנשן is not found in New Hebrew nor in Old Hebrew except here in Chap. 1. 2; but it is found in the Moabitic stone, in the same sense which is given to it here. How would a mediæval Jew know a word which is found elsewhere only on the Moabitic stone?

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Prov. i. 18, iii. 7, 21, etc.), "and, secondly, that it is possible and probable that a book which did not belong to the canon of the Old Testament and resembled a private composition underwent more corruptions (Comp. Joel Müller, *Mosechet Soferim*, §25)."

As Prof. Margoliouth errs in respect to clearness, and as Prof. König is hampered in his response by his method, we add the following analysis of Margoliouth's views on the origin of the marginal notes. His statements may be reduced to better order, perhaps, if we say that he contends that (1) alternate renderings, (2) suggested corrections (*a*) in orthography, (*b*) in expression and (3) notes of various readings, are, at least when they are numerous, an evidence of a copyist or editor. To this it may be responded, that the first contention is a begging of the whole question in dispute; that the second could be used to prove that all the Hebrew books of the Old Testament are retranslations; and as to the third, in addition to what König has said, it may be affirmed that while it is true that original writers have often added notes and variants to their first attempts, it is equally true that editors and copyists have done so. One need only look at a page of Ceriani's edition of the Syriac translation of Origen's *Hexaplar* to see that an editor, even in those times, did put marginal notes of various kinds in his MS.; and that it was customary to write marginal notes is admitted by all writers on textual criticism of the Old Testament or of the New, when attempting to account for all the numerous insertions which occur in the texts of certain MSS.

In the fourth place, König argues that it is not probable that a retranslation of Ecclesiasticus into Hebrew was made at a time so shortly after that in which it is known that copies of the original Hebrew existed.\* He shows the irrelevancy of the argument from the retranslation of the book of Tobit into Hebrew, inasmuch as we have no guarantee that there was a Hebrew original of Tobit, and if there were, we have no late traces of it in Hebrew literature; and it is not certain that the translations which we have are as early as the supposed retranslations of Ecclesiasticus. But even if a retranslation were probable this text cannot be such a retranslation from the Greek and Syriac. König illustrates this impossibility by many examples, which may be

\* Lévi says that the original existed certainly as late as the twelfth century. The Talmud quotes it. The Rabbis discuss it at length. The Midrashim name and cite from it. Saadyah and others quote from it (see *Revue des Études Juives*, 1877, p. 2). Cowley and Neubauer affirm that the mentions of Ben Sira after the time of Saadyah's are scanty and uncertain and, most probably, all of them second-hand.

multiplied by references to the writings of Lévi, Halévy, Perles, Bacher, G. Margoliouth, and others. The writer thinks this argument is convincing. When one remembers that H cannot be a translation or recension of any manuscript of G that we now possess, and that these MSS. antedate the time of a possible retranslation by five or six centuries; that Saadyah knew the original Hebrew in his time; that such a corruption of the text of H as we now have could not have taken place in so short a time as intervenes between Saadyah's day and the eleventh century; but especially when we consider that the Hebrew text may often be found to account for G and S, where the last cannot account for the Hebrew, the evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of the Hebrew being the original of G and S, and not *vice versa*. Most of the writers who have hitherto written on this subject have been seeking to bring the Hebrew text into harmony with G and S by correcting the Hebrew, and in many cases they have succeeded. But every time they so succeed they shed no light upon the subject in hand. When the Hebrew, Greek and Syriac agree or can be made to agree by a change in the Hebrew, no evidence can be gained as to which was the original, the Hebrew or the Greek and Syriac. But when a change in the Greek and Syriac, which we know to have existed in their present form for centuries before the supposed retranslation, can bring them into harmony with the Hebrew, we have an irrefragable argument for the priority of the Hebrew.\*

The margin, and the text also, would point rather to an Arabic or Aramaic original than to a Persian, Greek or Syriac. A comparison might profitably be made with the marginal notes and text of the codex Syro-Hexaplaris. It will be remembered that this codex represents a translation from the Greek into the Syriac. The marginal notes are consequently mostly in Syriac; but almost every column has Greek words in the margin and transliterations of Greek words in the text. Now Ben Sira has no Greek words on the margin and no transliterations in the text. Besides, there are no notes in Syriac, nor have any evidences been suggested as yet of Syriasms. Judging from analogy, a translator would place on the margin not merely other possible renderings, but also, occasionally at least, the words he found difficult to translate. Now here in Ben Sira the marginal notes are all in Hebrew and Ara-

\* For example, in xxxii. 18, the Hebrew as corrected by all critics has the well-known word for the law, *torah*. G renders this by the word for *fear* having read an Olaph for the final He. S apparently has the word for *way*, which is but slightly different from the word for the *law*. Again, in xxxviii. 3, תִּיִצֵב would account for the Syriac *nekimune* and G will be accounted for by changing θαυμασθησεται to θαμισθησεται.



maic, except two formal ones in Persian;\* and all write in praise of the purity of the diction and syntax of the text.†

In almost every Syriac or Arabic version from the Greek, the influence of the Greek can be clearly seen in the idioms and language. In the Greek translation of the Hebrew canonical books of the Old Testament, the Hebrew original shows itself in transliterations and so-called Hebraisms. All literal versions, such as renderings of the Scriptures usually are, especially those into another family of languages, bear evidence of their original. If these fragments are directly or indirectly a translation from Greek or Syriac, they should bear unmistakable marks of their originals. Such marks have not yet been shown.

One of the strongest arguments for the originality of the Hebrew has been neglected from a failure to recognize the difference in diction between the marginal notes and the text of the fragments. We have carefully gone over the lists of Dr. Driver, published in *The Original Hebrew*, etc., with the following results. If we accept the correction made by Driver and others in xl. 16, the word for *reed-stalks* is the only one in the text of xxxix. 15-xlix. 12 which is not found in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. There are nineteen words occurring in these eleven chapters, the root of which is not found in the Biblical Hebrew in the sense required here; twenty-two words, the root of which is found in the same sense, but not the form; and seventeen words, where the form occurs but in a different sense. Now, in the marginal notes on but five chapters (xl-xliv) there are twenty-seven words for which either root, form or meaning is not to be found in the canonical books. Does not this suggest that the date and author of the notes are different from the date and author of the body of the text? One need only compare the paucity and brevity of the notes with the text to estimate the force of this argument.‡ Or let him take the first column of p. xxxv of *The Original Hebrew*, etc. Here are twelve words quoted by Driver as not found in the Hebrew of the Old Testament or found in it only in the passage quoted or referred to. Of these twelve words, four are in the

\* Margoliouth's attempts to show the existence of Persisms have been universally rejected. As König well says, the two Persian marginal notes are formal, not material. That is, they have to do with the manuscripts and with the translator, narrator or copyist (*nakil*), not with the subject-matter of the text; so that they may be used only to show the age of the copyist or of the scholiast who made the marginal notes.

† Comp. Nöldeke in *Expositor* for 1897, p. 350; Lévi, *L'Eccles.*, xxxi; Halévy, *Étude*, p. 2.

‡ The marginal notes in the five chapters do not constitute more than about one-tenth as much as the body of the text, yet the non-Biblical words are about half as many as are found in the ten chapters.

margin and one in a title. One is a doubtful reading. Four, or perhaps five, of the remaining six are paralleled in the Old Testament Hebrew. Only one, *הִתְחַיֵּיתִי*, to *heat*, can fairly be cited as a New Hebrew word occurring in the text in a sense different from that in which it occurs in the canonical books of the Old Testament.

This difference of language can, we think, be best accounted for by supposing that the marginal notes were from a different and later source than the text; and such a change of language could not have taken place in the short interval of time which even Margoliouth admits as existing between Saadyah and the date of the Geniza MSS.

One serious objection to the originality of the fragments still remains to be considered. It is that arising from the doublets, especially as found in chaps. xxx and xxxi. Smend accounts for the doublets by the theory of corruption. He says:

"H is much corrupted and is often a worse reading than G S, which is easily explained when we remember that the MS. is from 800 to 1100 years later than the versions of the Greek and Hebrew. When H, as in Chap. li, agrees closely with S, having the same additions and variations, it follows that the Hebrew text which has come down to us is the same as that from which S was translated and that H was already corrupted from the original form. In the marginal notes and often in the text, especially in doublets, we have readings from G and S in juxtaposition" (*Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1900, v).

To this may be added the opinion of Nöldeke (Heft i, 1900, of *Z. A. T.*):

"These doublets are, in part, mere variants of which one originally stood in the margin, from which it was afterwards interpolated into the text. Some of them may have been genuine originally, though, perhaps, somewhat more different than at present. The author, being inclined to breadth in his presentation, oftentimes likes to present, one after another, the same or similar thoughts with very few variations in the expression. Some of such doublets could easily have fallen out of the old version, an event which happens so often by mere homœoteleuton. Again, it is a question whether the Hebrew copyist in old times would have scrupled to put in certain cases one synonymous expression for another. At any rate the Arabian writers exchanged with ease the formulæ of blessing, and the old translators would have been little concerned, on the whole, about such matters."

A few remarks on the form of Ben Sira ought perhaps to be added. The fragments destroy Margoliouth's theory of metre, which even when it was first formulated was combated by Driver and Nöldeke (see *Expository Times*, Fourth Series, Vols. i, ii and iv). Any one who looks at the Hebrew original will agree with Cowley and Neubauer (*Orig. Hebrew*, p. xiv) that "the lines are very variable in length, and that there is no indication that the author sought to adapt them to a uniform metrical scheme."\*

\* See also Lévi, *L'Ecclesiastique*, p. 2, and Kautzsch, *Apokryphen*, etc., p. 232.

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But while not metrical, the thoughts of Ben Sira seem to be expressed in strophes, consisting of a like number of double lines, corresponding in their parallelism to that of the parts of the single lines.\* Again, Schlatter shows that Ben Sira coördinates his verses into groups of fifty or a hundred, so that the book consisted of 1600 double lines, of which 700 belonged to the first part concerning the praise of wisdom, 400 to the second part in praise of learning and 500 to the third part in praise of great men.† Kautzsch thinks that this division was undoubtedly to aid the memory. Schechter claims that Ben Sira is Paitanic in its composition—that is, the book is a “patchwork of ready-made expressions and phrases from the Scriptures.”‡

II. THE VERSIONS.

Another subject closely connected with the discussion about the original text of the Hebrew is that which concerns the text of the versions, especially of the primary versions.§ The view put forth by Bissell and others that the Syriac had the Greek for its basis is clearly not the case, since S is usually much nearer to H than is G. This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the MSS., which is so fully done by Fritzsche for the Greek and by DeLagarde for the Syriac. Nor until a more thorough investigation of the variations between H on the one hand and G and S on the other has been made will we be in a position to arrive at any certain conclusion as to the character or reason for these variations.

It was supposed by Edersheim (*Introd.*, p. 23), and has lately been reiterated by Halévy, that G frequently misread or misunderstood the Hebrew original. That he at times misread the Hebrew script is most probable from the fact that certain letters are so little different in appearance that they are often indistinguishable, even with the best intentions on the part of the writer. If the original writer had a bad chirography or if his manuscripts were injured by time, it is certain that the translators would err in getting at the words intended by the writer. Fur-

\* See Bickell in *W. Z. K. M.*, vi, 1892, and Kautzsch, p. 232.

† See Schlatter, p. 100, *seq.*

‡ Schechter says that by the term Paitanim are generally understood the poets and hymnologists of the Synagogue. They created many new grammatical forms and words. Their writing is mostly a mosaic and their style is collusive. (See *Wisdom of B. S.*, p. 27.)

§ There are two primary versions of the original Hebrew which have been preserved to our day, the Greek and the Syriac. From the Greek we have secondary versions of more or less value into the Latin, Greek, Syriac (the Hexaplar), Armenian, Ethiopic and Old Slavic. From the Syriac Peshitto, a secondary version was made into Arabic. Several translations into Hebrew have been made, of which that by Ben Zeeb is probably the best.

thermore, in an unprinted text, especially one in which the vowel letters were at most but partially inserted, it would be almost impossible for the reader to catch in every case the exact nuance of form intended. But at present it seems to be premature to assert that the grandson of Ben Sira was ignorant of the language used by Ben Sira or to enumerate the number of his mistakes and misunderstandings. All agree that the text of the Hebrew is corrupt—much more corrupt than it was when the Greek version was made. All agree in like manner that the texts of G and S are corrupt. We must wait, therefore, until a complete textual criticism of the three texts has been made before we can even so much as enter intelligently upon the subject of the extent and variety of the variations and corruptions of each.

Edersheim makes a more serious charge when he claims that the translator of G “allowed himself to make alterations of the original text. Such changes,” he says, “might be introduced (a) for apologetical reasons, or (b) when he disagreed with the views of his grandfather, or (c) wished to express them more clearly, or (d) more forcibly, or (e) by way of glosses; but chiefly (f) when he wished to introduce instead of his grandfather’s his own Hellenistic views.”\* The passages which he mentions as evidences to substantiate these charges are three in number, only one of which is in the fragments which have been found. He says that it requires but slight knowledge to recognize the pronounced Hellenism of such a verse as Ecc. xliii. 27; and yet this verse is found in the Hebrew in exactly the same sense as in the Greek. From a comparison of the Greek codices, it would appear that many of the Hellenisms were due to late Christian emendations. Schlatter seems to have proven that certain ideas were either inserted by the translator himself or by some redactors of his work who lived not long subsequently. At least he has proved enough to make us wary about attributing ideas allied to those of the New Testament to Ben Sira, unless where we have the language of the original Hebrew to show for them.

It may be said, however, that the variations in G or S are not more numerous than in many parts of the canonical books of the Old Testament. The insertions of words for faith, love, etc., while important, are not numerous. Omissions or insertions of the conjunction Wau are no more frequent than in the LXX. or Peshitto versions. G frequently omits the pronominal suffix, but S usually gives it just as it occurs in H.†

\* Introduction to Ecclesiasticus in Wace’s *Apocrypha*, Vol. ii, p. 23.

† Compare, for example, xlix. 1-13, where G omits the pronominal suffix five times and Wau four times.

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Letters, clauses and words are sometimes transposed or mixed up.\* Transportations of letters are common (*e. g.*, xliv. 3*a*, *rd* for *dr*). Variations in letters are also not infrequent, and in fact all the variants which are found in the canonical books between the text of the Hebrew and the primary versions are found in Ecclesiasticus. On the whole, we may say of both G and S that the translation is well done, although often it is impossible to see any connection in sense between the original and the versions. Further study, however, may elucidate many a passage which at present seems dark.†

III. NAME AND AUTHOR.

Ecclesiasticus, the ordinary name by which the book is known, is a Latin title of doubtful origin. Some think it was introduced to distinguish Ecclesiasticus from Ecclesiastes, but it more probably means church-book, ecclesiastical book, the name having been given to it because of its frequent use by the ancient Church, especially in the instruction of catechumens. The title in Greek was: "The Wisdom of Jesus, Son of Sirach;" in Syriac, "The Wisdom of the Son of Sira," and in the original Hebrew, "Proverbs" or "Parables."‡ The author of the original work was Ben Sira, a Jew of Jerusalem, a man of the highest culture that his age could give, who had traveled abroad, who had studied and was thoroughly conversant with the literature and with the contemporary thought of the Jewish nation.§

\* For clauses, see the end of chap. xlii. and the beginning of chap. xliii. For words, see xliv. 4*a*, where we should read *Mim* for *Tau* in the second letter of the first word, and read "nations and kings" instead of the "princes of the nations" of the Hebrew and "leaders of the people" of the Greek.

† It will be an interesting study to trace the influence of the LXX. Greek upon the Greek of Ben Sira. Bissell claimed that this influence was considerable and that sometimes, indeed, the translator seems to have made a direct use of the LXX (see, for example, his Commentary, p. 277). Lévi says that Ben Sira has the same rendering as the LXX. in only a few places (*L' Ecclesiastique*, xlix). This, of course, does not prove that the LXX. was not already made, nor that it was not known to the translator of Ecclesiasticus. The parallel passages of the Old Testament, when exactly alike in the Hebrew, often vary materially in the Greek version.

‡ See Edersheim's *Introduction*.

§ According to the Hebrew text the author was Simon or Jesus, Ben Eliazer, Ben Sira; but Kautzsch argues from comparison with the Syriac that it should rather be Joshua, son of Simon, and this is confirmed by the prologue where the grandson calls his grandfather Jesus. This change is important since it lends color to the opinion of Bar Hebraeus that our author was the son of Simon, son of Onias, the High Priest, and to that of Sincelus, that he followed Simon II as High Priest. This last opinion, according to Schürer, is based on a misunderstanding by Sincelus of a passage in Eusebius, and the first is contrary apparently to his genealogy as given in the Hebrew.

The Hebrew text does not support the view that Ben Sira was a priest as asserted by Zunz.\* Nor is the theory of Grotius that he was a physician better supported. It was based upon xxxviii. 15, "He that sinneth before his Maker, let him fall into the hands of the physician," a text which affords no foundation for affirming that Ben Sira himself was a physician.† Little more convincing are the passages produced by Kautzsch to show that his learning must have helped him to the most prominent official positions. All that is said in xxxviii. 24, 33, and in xxxix. 1-5 of scribes, judges, students and travelers, is in the third person and purely objective; and while it is certain that Ben Sira was a student and traveler, and while he may have been a scribe and judge as well, the proof that he was all of these can be gained not so much from these passages as from the fact that he wrote the book he did. That he was a traveler is proven rather from xxxiv. 10-12, where he speaks in the first person of his wanderings and dangers. Whether the psalm in chap. li ought to be pressed into describing actual experiences of dangers might be questioned, since it is so highly poetical. At any rate that this danger resulted from calumny before a king is rendered dubious by the fact that the word for king is absent from both the Syriac and the original Hebrew of ver. 5 (6). That he was a diligent student of wisdom from his youth up appears clearly in li. 13-28.‡ That Ben Sira was a resident of Jerusalem rests upon the authority of the Greek version, since the statement is omitted from the Hebrew and Syriac of l. 27. Still in this case the grandson may have supplied the item of information, and from him also, in the prologue, we learn that his grandfather, Jesus, "had devoted himself to the reading of the law, the prophets and the other books of the fathers, and through familiarity with these had been drawn to write somewhat pertaining to instruction and wisdom in order to promote living according to the law."

\* The first text adduced in favor of this view is a reading in the Greek Codex Sinaiticus of l. 27. The second passage, vii. 29-31, has certainly nothing in either the Greek or Syriac versions to support the view of Zunz, and unfortunately the Hebrew MS. breaks off after the first three words of verse 29. These three words, however, agree with the Greek and Syriac exactly.

† H agrees with the Greek of xxxviii. 15, except that it has "will behave himself proudly before," instead of "let him fall into the hand of." S and the margin of H agree also with G, except that they have "shall be delivered," instead of "let him fall." But from no text is it other than a far-fetched inference that Ben Sira was a physician.

‡ The Hexaplar Syriac omits all of chap. li and the variations between the Syriac Peshitto G and H are more numerous and inexplicable than anywhere else in the book.

#### IV. THE DATE.

After the text and versions, the next important subject of discussion in reference to Ben Sira is the time of its composition. There are three statements that must be considered in regard to this part of the subject. Two of these are found in the prologue of the Greek translation. The translator says that Jesus Ben Sira was his grandfather, and he says further that he, the grandson, came to Egypt in the thirty-eighth year of Euergetes the king, and after having continued there some time, he found a copy of his grandfather's book and translated it. The third statement is in the fiftieth chapter of the book, in the seventh and last chapter of the beautiful portion in praise of famous men, "in whom the Lord manifested his great glory." Here Simon, the son of Onias, the great priest, is mentioned, and it is said of him that he repaired the temple and fortified the city of Jerusalem and supplied it with cisterns. Such data would ordinarily enable us to fix absolutely the time, but in this case it happens that all the terms in the equation are ambiguous. The Greek word *παππος*, while it does mean grandfather, may also mean ancestor. There were two Ptolemies surnamed Euergetes, and two High Priests of the name of Simon, the father of each of whom was named Onias. The fact that the first Ptolemy can in no sense be said to have reigned longer than twenty-five years seems to rule him out; seeing that Ptolemy Euergetes II. reigned alone and in conjunction with his brother Physkon for forty-four years. But here another ambiguity, real or supposed, comes in to vitiate the conclusion. In the phrase "In the eight and thirtieth (38th) year of Euergetes," the Greek word translated *of* is *ἐπὶ*, and the question arises, does this mean *of* or *under*? If the former, the writer of the prologue states that he, the grandson, came to Egypt in the thirty-eighth year of Euergetes, and this Euergetes must be the second of the name. If *ἐπὶ* means *under*, as Westcott asserts, then the writer says that he himself was thirty-eight years old when he came to Egypt; and there is no hint in the statement as to which Ptolemy is meant. As to which Simon, son of Onias, is mentioned in the fiftieth chapter, the evidence is not convincing, although we are inclined to think that the arguments adduced are in favor of Simon the First, who exercised his functions from about 310 B.C. The latest and perhaps the best résumé of the reasons for esteeming Simon the First to be the one referred to by Ben Sira is that by Halévy in the number for July, 1899, of the *Revue Sémitique d'Épigraphie et d'Histoire Ancienne*. It is substantially as follows: (1) Simon is characterized by Ben Sira

as "the greatest of his brethren and the glory of his people." This extraordinary distinction can harmonize only with what Jewish tradition records of Simon the First, called in their tradition, as well as by Josephus, the Just. Simon the Second is known in Jewish tradition and in Josephus by name only.

(2) If the Siracid had wished to make allusion to Simon the Second, he would necessarily have designated him by a distinctive number or title, in order that he might not be confounded with his illustrious predecessor of the same name.

(3) The particular care which the Simon of Ben Sira employs to protect the people and to render all due solemnity to the sacrifices of the Temple corresponds to the adage known of Simon the Just, who considered that, besides the Law, acts of beneficence and the sacrificial cult were the basis of Jewish society. Of Simon the Second history has preserved no adage nor the least meritorious act.

(4) The Simon of Ben Sira participates personally in the execution of numerous works. History says nothing about Simon the Second having taken any part in those works which were executed in his time.

(5) The works done in the time of Simon the Second were not repairs of the Temple.

(6) The silence of Josephus with regard to the works under Simon the First arose from the fact that they did not result in any efficient defense for Jerusalem, although to a contemporary, such as Ben Sira is assumed to have been, they might have seemed to be all-sufficient.

(7) If we judge the original to have been written in the time of Euergetes the First, and the translation to have been made in the time of Euergetes the Second, there would have been ample time for those corruptions in the Hebrew text and MSS. to have arisen which are manifested in the version of the grandson; assuming, of course, that the Oxford fragments are genuine.\*

\* It is no more than fair to state that Prof. Kautzsch, in the Introduction to his recent work entitled *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments*, stoutly maintains the current view that both Euergetes the Second and Simon the Second are meant. The seventh argument of Halévy is weakened by his implication that the variations between our present Hebrew and Greek texts were existent in the grandson's time. It is not necessary to suppose that the text of the elder Ben Sira had been corrupted at all when it reached the hands of the translator. He may have "misread and misinterpreted," and he may have adapted and interpolated; but as to corruptions, there would be ample time for all of them to have arisen between the time of Ben Sira, the younger, and the earliest MSS. of the Greek and Hebrew, the former of which are five hundred and the latter twelve hundred years later than the time of the translator.



V. RELATION TO THE CANON.

Now that the original Hebrew has been found, the question is raised anew as to why Ecclesiasticus was not received into the Hebrew or Palestinian canon. An answer to this question was attempted by the great Jewish scholar Geiger.\* He says in substance that the Talmud does not give the grounds of its rejection. The Gemara, in giving a ground for its rejection, quotes a sentence which is not only harmless, but is found in no recension of Ben Sira, and is evidently an interpolation. Its rejection might be on account of its late composition, or because the author not merely designates the time of its composition by mentioning Simon the High Priest, but also names himself [l. 27]). This mention of himself may be the reason, Geiger thinks, why the Syriac version omits the verse. Geiger suggests two further reasons for its rejection from the canon: First, the teaching concerning the resurrection; secondly, a decided preference for the priests and especially for the line of Zadoc.†

Among Christian scholars different reasons have been given for the rejecting of Ecclesiasticus from the canon by the Jews. The view of Hitzig, that it was because of the original text having been lost at a very early period, is irrevocably overthrown by the discovery of the Geniza fragments; and even if the fragments did not exist, it is contrary to the testimony of Jerome, Saadyah and others. Fritzsche supposes the rejection to have been based on the fact that (1) the author did not bear any one of the old and revered Jewish names, (2) that the work was composed at a late date, (3) that there is little contained in it which is not contained in the Book of Proverbs, and (4) that its silence on the doctrine of the resurrection may have prejudiced those who formed the Palestinian canon against it. Of these reasons Bissell remarks as follows:‡

"There is certainly much force in some of these reasons; but we must also give to the Jewish readers of the book, even at this early date, credit for a wiser discrimination and a finer sense of propriety than seem to characterize some of its modern critics. It could not well have escaped them that in its mass of material, much of which is worthy of all consideration, there are also found elements of coarseness, of egoism, of a merely worldly philosophy, such as appears in none of

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\* *Zeitschrift der deutsche morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, xii. 536, *seq.*

† Unfortunately the passages which he quotes bearing on the resurrection are not in the Hebrew fragments except a part of the passage in chap. xlviii, the most important verses of which (10-12) are mutilated beyond restoration. In the passage bearing on the priesthood, in the most important verse (that which compares the inheritance of David with Phinehas), the text of H differs so much from G and S as totally to invalidate Geiger's argument.

‡ *The Apocrypha*, p. 283.

the divine-human productions of the Old Testament; and that its entire composition moves in an entirely different plane from that of the Hebrew Bible."

Those who hold that the canon of the Old Testament was settled by the men of the Great Synagogue need but the one argument of the late date to show why Ecclesiasticus was not included in the canon. For if the canon were closed about 400 B.C., a work composed in the third or second century B.C. could not have been admitted into it.

Some maintain, however, that as a matter of fact many Jewish writers quote Ben Sira as Scripture. More than seventy citations from Ecclesiasticus are given in Cowley and Neubauer's collection of proverbs preserved in Talmudic and Rabbinical literature. Of these, however, only two begin with the form "*as it is written.*" One of these (No. 67 of Cowley and Neubauer) is not found in the Greek or Syriac version, nor in the original Hebrew fragments, though it occurs in line seven of the first of the so-called Alphabets of Ben Sira. The other (No. 24 of Cowley and Neubauer) is introduced with the formula: "In the Hagiographa (*Kethuvim*), as it is written;" then follows the citation: "Every bird dwelleth according to his kind and man according to that which is like to him." On this it may be remarked, first, that the formula of introduction certainly implies that the writer thought he was quoting from the Scriptures. The word *Kethuvim* stands for the third part of the canon and *dekathuv* is an ordinary formula of introducing Biblical citations.\* Secondly, that it bears marks of having been quoted from memory; for it is composed of parts of two verses. The first part is taken from xxvii. 9, and is substantially the same in G and S (the original Hebrew of this chapter not having been found). The difference between the citation and the texts, however, suggests that the writer was quoting from memory, and that his memory was not exact.† Consequently, as he does not mention the name of Ben Sira, it is probable that he supposed he was citing from some canonical book, such as the Book of Proverbs.‡

\* See Tyler on *Ecc.*, p. 97, and Buhl's *Canon and Text*, p. 15.

† The citation is from Baba Qama and differs from the Syriac in omitting "of heaven" after birds, and from both Greek and Syriac in adding "all" before "birds." The second clause is found in the Hebrew fragments published by Schechter and Taylor. (However, it is more like the latter clause of xiii. 15, than the latter clause of xii. 16, as Cowley and Neubauer suggested in the list of citations from Ben Sira.) Here also the quotation is not literal. Baba Qama has *Ben Adam* instead of *Kol Adam* and *Lomadh* instead of *He* and omits *Eth*, agreeing exactly with the Syriac but differing materially from the Greek.

‡ In the other quotations from Ben Sira given in Cowley-Neubauer, the following formulæ of introduction are found: 1. "Rab said," xi, xix, xxvii, xxxix (the numbers denote the citations as enumerated in C N); 2. "Rabbi Johanan said," xlv; 3. "Rabbi Eliezer saith in the name of Ben Sira," I. *bd* (in *b saith* is omitted);

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We are told that "the writings of Ben Sira did not defile the hands," which implies the exclusion of Ecclesiasticus from the canon.\* Some of the Rabbins even declared that it was among the outside writings, the reading of which involved the loss of eternal life. This extreme denunciation Edersheim attributes to a Jewish antipathy to the book occasioned by the esteem in which it was held by Christians, and to the danger apprehended from the perusal of a work which was not strictly orthodox; and he remarks, further, that Rabbi Joseph ultimately gave forth a statement, which not only allowed the judicious use of the book, but leads us to infer that it was regarded as an *ecclesiasticus*, suited for catechetical and homiletical uses. For other purposes certain passages were especially recommended. The Talmud and Midrash both refer to Ecclesiasticus. In the fourteenth century it was said that the Talmud intended by condemnatory expressions to prohibit such a study of Ben Sira as should be made of the Bible, but not an occasional resort to it.

It being clear from the above that Ben Sira was never used as canonical in the Jewish Palestinian Church, the next matter for consideration is, what has the Christian Church held as to the relation of Ben Sira to the canon. There is a great probability that James was acquainted with the Greek version of Ben Sira, since his language and phraseology are so largely similar to those of Ben Sira and differ from all the other books of the Old Testament and the New. The clause "Be swift to hear," of the seventeenth verse of the first chapter of James' epistle, is exactly the same as a clause of the eleventh verse of the fifth chapter of Ecclesiasticus. While this might be a mere coincidence if standing alone, the other evidences of James' acquaintance with Eccle-

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4. "Rabbi Eliezer saith," liv *bc*, lix; 5. "Ben Sira said the Proverb," x; 6. "Ben Sira said" or "saith," xxx, xlii; 7. "In the book of Ben Sira it is written," xvii; 8. "It is written in the book of Ben Sira," i *c*, xxxv, xli, liv, lxiv, xxxvi *bis*, lxv, lxix; 9. "The proverb says," liv. 9; 10. "Thus saith the proverb," xxxviii; 11. "In the Hagrographa (Kethuvim) as it is written," xxiv; 12. "As it is written," lxvii; 13. "It is explained in the book of Ben Sira," lxviii. None of these above lxiii are to be found in the present Greek, Syriac or Hebrew.

\* See Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus*, Chap. 31, Vol. ii, and the note in Tyler's *Ecclesiastes*, p. 97. Tyler says: "At first sight it may seem a strange and unsuitable assertion to make with regard to *sacred* books, that they 'pollute the hands.' The explanation is given, however (Yadaim iv. 5), that it was out of regard for the sacred books that they were looked upon as unclean. Greater care and caution are exercised with respect to the unclean than with respect to the clean. In this respect uncleanness is an indication of regard, just as the bones of an ass, though despised and contemptible, are clean, while the venerated bones of the High Priest are unclean. No one makes spoons out of the bones of his loved and honored relations. So, also, the uncleanness of the sacred books is an indication of esteem and love. Heretical books do not pollute the hands."

siasticus which have been collected by Boon, Eichhorn and others, are almost convincing. Edersheim claims that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was also acquainted with Ben Sira, though he did not exactly quote from it.\*

Coming to the Fathers, it seems to be quoted in the Epistle of Barnabas. It is also cited by Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Origen as Scripture, and by the formula used in citing from the canonical books. Origen not merely quotes from it, but he defines the uses of the Apocryphal books in his letter to Africanus where he urges that the practice of the Church in regard to the use of them has been developed under the providence of God, and that the antipathy to them on the part of the Jews has arisen from a hatred of the Christians and by fear lest by these books the Christian faith might be strengthened.† In the Western Church, Cyprian often quotes from it, apparently as canonical. Augustine ranks the book with the canonical writings on account of its authority in the Church, and it was under his guidance that the African Church at the Synods of Hippo, 393 A.D., and Carthage, A.D. 397, pronounced Ben Sira, along with the other Apocryphal books, to be canonical. On the other hand, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Amphilochius and Jerome agree in their lists of the canonical works with the Palestinian canon. But Athanasius expressly mentions Ben Sira as among the books which were once permitted by the Fathers to be read. The Synod of Laodicea pronounced against the use of non-canonical or Apocryphal books as injurious to the purity of the Church; but it is probable that this Synod, like Athanasius, did not include Ben Sira among the class condemned, seeing that it was in the MS. copies of the Old Testament in Greek which were commonly used in the Church, and the Synod simply condemns the use of books not in the Old or New Testament. In the Middle Ages the question of the extent of the canon was an open one and in the Western Church authorities vacillated between the narrow view of Jerome and the looser view of Augustine. It was not until the Reformers had decided in favor of the Palestinian canon that, at the Council of Trent, the Roman Church, out of a spirit of opposition,‡ declared Ben Sira, among others, to be

\* See Introduction to the Ecclesiasticus in Vol. ii of Wace's *Apocrypha*, p. 22.

† Buhl's *Canon and Text of the Old Testament*, p. 53.

‡ So Buhl says (*Canon and Text*, p. 64). It is no more than fair to say that the decree of the Council of Trent concerning the canonical Scriptures gives as the reason for the canonization of the Apocryphal books, that they were wont to be read in the Catholic Church and were contained in the old Latin Vulgate, and that the church wished to use them as testimonies and authorities in confirming dogmas and in restoring morals in the Church (see Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. ii, part. 2).

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sacred and canonical, and anathematized all who denied its teachings. Of course, in reference to this book, the Romish Church was consistent in making the Latin version the canonical and inspired ecclesiastical representative of Jesus Ben Sira, neither knowing nor caring for the Hebrew original. The Greek Church, at the Synod of Jerusalem in 1672, decided to canonize the books which had been handed down by the Catholic Church. The Armenian Church, if its views are correctly represented by the Bible published at Venice in 1805, does not consider Ben Sira as of equal authority with other books of the Alexandrian canon. It puts Second Ezra, Judith, Tobit, First, Second and Third Maccabees, The Wisdom of Solomon and Baruch among the canonical books; but Ben Sira is placed, along with Third Ezra, the Prayer of Manasseh and Third Corinthians, in the Apocrypha or, as the Armenian version has it, the Addition or Appendix, which comes after the New Testament. In this edition of the Armenian version, Ben Sira reaches only so far as the 43d chapter, but even in this abridgment there are frequent omissions of verses and larger portions and numerous variations. In the Syrian Church, Aphraates quotes every book of our canon of the Bible except the Song of Songs, but he quotes no Apocryphal book. The school represented by Theodore of Mopsuestia rejected from the canon not merely Ben Sira and the other Apocryphal books, but the Books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther and Job. The Nestorians acknowledge the same canon as Theodore, except that they add to it Job, Ben Sira and the Apocryphal additions to Daniel. Some of the Monophysites adopted the same canon, generally with the addition of Esther.\* Lagarde has published the Coptic version of the Apocrypha in the Sahidic dialect and a fragment of a Memphitic version. There is no doubt that the Coptic Church followed the Alexandrian canon. The canon of the Abyssinians was the broadest of all, as they seem to have acknowledged several works which were never admitted into the canon of any other Church, and so far as known were never quoted as Scripture by any of the Fathers after the third or fourth century A.D.† As might have been expected, Ben Sira was one of the books accepted by them as canonical.‡

\* Buhl, *Canon and Text*, p. 53.

† Dillmann, in the Preface to his *Liber Henoch Æthiopica*, iii, says in reference to the Abyssinian canon: *Hand satis esse mihi videbatur, eos tantum, qui in Hebræorum canone continentur, libros eorumque nudum textum, quem iquidem collatis codicibus censerem optimum, edere, sed totum ecclesiæ Habessinicæ Vetus Testamentum—itaque præter canonicos Hebræorum, etiam eos, quos Apocryphos Protestantes, Catholici deuterocanonicos vocant, libros et nonnullos pseudepigraphos—in hoc volumen recipiendum.*

‡ It is noteworthy that the Abyssinians did not possess the books of the Macca-

It will thus be seen that the Protestant Church of the Reformation and the Syrian School of Theodore of Mopsuestia stand alone in rejecting all of the Apocryphal books, Ben Sira among them. It only remains to state the position of the three great Protestant branches of the Church on this question. In his translation of the Bible, completed in 1534, Luther followed Jerome and Carlstadt in calling the books "allowed to be read" "Apocryphal," and he introduced them with the words: "These are books not to be held in equal esteem with those of the Holy Scriptures, but yet good and useful for reading." The Apocryphal books received by Luther into his translation were exactly the same as those canonized by the Romish Church except that the Prayer of Manasseh was added. In Art. 6 of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, Ben Sira is classed among "the books which the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth not apply to them to establish any doctrine." Among the Confessions of the Reformed branches which refer specifically to the books of the Bible, the French, Belgic, Westminster and Waldensian Confessions, the Irish Articles of Religion, the Declaration of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, the Evangelical Confession of the Free Church of Geneva, and the Methodist Articles of Religion expressly exclude all the Apocryphal books from the canon.\*

The question will naturally be asked if the Hebrew fragments can suggest any further reasons as to why the early Christian Church adopted Ben Sira, in spite of the fact that it had been rejected by the Jews. Prof. Schlatter answers this by asserting that those ideas which most commend Ben Sira to the Christian mind are shown by the original Hebrew, and from other sources, to have been interpolated into the Greek version. He declares that if the original Hebrew had been presented to the Church it would not have been accepted as canonical. The ideas of love, repentance, etc., which are probably due in the Greek version to

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bees, until two or three centuries ago, when they were translated from the Latin. Dillmann says, in his Preface to the *Libri Apocryphi Æthiopici*: "Maccabæorum libri non inveci nec ante duo vel tria sæcula e vulgata Latina in Geez translati, in hoc volumine non recipiendi erant."

\* The canonical books are declared by these Confessions to be "all those which proceeded from the inspiration of God," or "which have been transmitted to us by the universal consent of the Jewish people, to whom the oracle of God was confided under the guidance of Jehovah," or which are known to be "the sure rule of our faith, not so much by the common consent of the Church, as by the testimony and inward illumination of the Holy Spirit, which enables us to distinguish them from other ecclesiastical books, upon which, however useful, we cannot found any article of faith" (see Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. iii, pp. 360, 385, 489, 526, 601, 730, 758, 781 and 808).

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the influence of the philosophy of Aristobolus, are supposed to have induced the Alexandrian Jews, and afterwards the Christian Fathers, to accept Ecclesiasticus as an inspired and canonical book.\*

A more important matter than that which relates to the exclusion of Ben Sira from the canon is that which concerns the testimony which Ben Sira bears to the extent and authority of the Old Testament canon. The prologue of the grandson bears witness to the threefold division into "the law, the prophets and the other books," but unfortunately it does not define the limits of these parts, nor make any statement as to whether the canon were to be considered as closed; nor as to the manner in which, nor the time at which, it had been formed. The original Hebrew does not help us directly in regard to these points, but it affords us a large number of expressions, not recognized in the Greek or Syriac versions, which bear the similitude of citations and which are to be taken into account in determining the canon which existed at the time when Ben Sira wrote. These expressions seem to show that Ben Sira was acquainted with the writings from which they are conscious or unconscious citations. Of course many of them may be undesigned coincidences or ordinary modes of expression. It is conceivable, too, that in the case of certain books, Ben Sira may have been the more ancient, and they may have quoted from him. The strongest scientific objection to this last view will lie in the evidence which the Hebrew of Ben Sira bears of being of a more recent date than that of Daniel, Ecclesiastes and other books. Though apparently and doubtless intentionally an imitation of Proverbs, and filled with Biblical expressions, yet Ecclesiasticus has in proportion to its size more *hapax legomena* than any book of the Old Testament. In addition to this it contains more late Hebrew and Aramaic expressions than any Hebrew portion of the Old Testament, except perhaps Ecclesiastes. Tyler seems to have shown conclusively from a comparison of the coincidences between Ecclesiasticus and Ecclesiastes, and especially of Ecclesiasticus xxxiii. 13-15 with Ecclesiastes vii. 13-15, that Ecclesiastes was written prior to Ben Sira (see Tyler's *Eccles.*, §3).† Of course we would not expect many similarities of expres-

\* See Schlatter: *Das Neu Gefundene Hebraische Stück des Sirach*, p. 190.

† Prof. D. S. Margoliouth argues (*Expositor* for 1890, p. 299) that Ben Sira must be later than Ecclesiastes because of the similarities between the Targum of Ecclesiastes and the Rabbinical quotations in Ben Sira. This merely shows, however, that the Rabbins changed the text of Ben Sira or rather translated it, just as they did with the Hebrew of Ecclesiastes in the Targum (see further on the relations of Ecclesiastes to Ben Sira in Driver's article in *The Expositor*, iv, 358). Schechter finds six examples of the same phrases in Ben Sira and Ecclesiastes and

sion between books so different in purpose and style as Ecclesiasticus and Esther and Daniel. In regard to the words which are "common to Ecclesiasticus along with from one to three Old Testament books," we gather from the list published by Dr. Driver that Esther has seven such words, occurring fourteen times in all; Daniel has six, occurring twelve times; the Song of Songs has three, occurring three times; Ecclesiastes has nine, occurring sixteen times.\* It seems to

only one example of a phrase in Ecclesiasticus which is the same as a phrase in Esther (xlviii. 12 and v. 9 of Esther). The same is true of the Song of Songs (vi. 3 and iii. 16 of Song of Songs). There are three coincidences of expression in Ecclesiastes and Daniel (iii. 30 = Dan. iv. 24, xxxvi. 8 = Dan. xi. 35 and xxxvi. 17 = Dan. ix. 7).

It has been advanced against the Book of Daniel that Daniel is not mentioned in the list of worthies of Ecclesiasticus xlix. The same objection might be made against Esther, for neither Esther nor Mordecai is mentioned. The objections, however, are not conclusive, because, first, the account in Ben Sira is not chronological and, secondly, it is not complete. All of the judges are omitted except Samuel, and only a few of the prophets, priests and kings are mentioned. The following is a list of those who are referred to by Ben Sira: Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Moses, Aaron, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, Nathan, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Josiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Job, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah and Simon, the High Priest (the last is not mentioned in the Old Testament but in Josephus). The miracles of Daniel are not spoken of, but it will be noted that Ben Sira mentions very few of the miracles of Israelitish history and that only in passing.

\* We have prepared from Driver's glossary the following list of the number of words common to Ecclesiasticus along with from one to three of the books of the Old Testament, and also an enumeration of the number of times they occur in Ben Sira and in the Old Testament combined. The first column denotes the number of words found only in Ben Sira (xxxix. 15, xlix. 12) and in the book mentioned (or at most one or two other books of the Old Testament). The second column gives the number of times the word occurs all told in Ben Sira (xxxix. 15, xlix. 12) and the Old Testament combined:

Genesis,	7	9	Nahum,	0	0
Exodus,	3	4	Habakuk,	1	1
Leviticus,	0	0	Zephaniah,	1	1
Numbers,	3	5	Haggai,	0	0
Deuteronomy,	4	6	Zechariah,	0	0
Joshua,	0	0	Malachi,	1	1
Judges,	1	1	Psalms,	15	22
1 Samuel,	1	1	Proverbs,	11	12
2 Samuel,	0	0	Job,	10	19
1 Kings,	5	9	Song of Songs,	3	3
2 Kings,	3	3	Ruth,	0	0
Isaiah,	11	14	Lamentations,	3	3
Jeremiah,	7	8	Ecclesiastes,	9	16
Ezekiel,	14	18	Esther,	7	14+
Hosea,	0	0	Daniel,	6	12
Joel,	0	0	Ezra,	4	5+
Amos,	0	0	Nehemiah,	2	2
Jonah,	0	0	1 Chronicles,	4	5
Obadiah,	0	0	2 Chronicles,	11	13
Micah,	1	1			



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the writer that any argument on the relative dates of these books, based upon linguistic peculiarities alone or on similarities in thought or expression, is sure to be influenced by the bias of the writer. It seems certain that Ben Sira the elder was acquainted with the three divisions of the Old Testament and with nearly all, if not all, of the books which are now received by the Church as canonical.\*

\* Schechter says on p. 34 of *The Wisdom of Ben Sira*: "None of the canonical writings even shows the least sign of conscious imitation; no trace of Paltanic artificiality is to be detected in any of them, even when they reproduce words and sentiments of their predecessors; and lastly they are free from late developments of the language such as are displayed by Ben Sira. From these results two conclusions appear to follow: (1) That when the same phrases occur in one of the canonical writers and in Ben Sira, the balance of probability is strongly in favor of the supposition that Ben Sira was the imitator of the canonical writer and not *vice versa*. (2) That as clear examples of such imitation by Ben Sira can be found in the case of all the canonical books, with the doubtful exception of the Book of Daniel, these books must as a whole have been familiar to Ben Sira and must therefore be much anterior to him in date." We add a list of "phrases, idioms, typical expressions and even whole verses about which there can be no reasonable doubt" that they suggested to Ben Sira "phrases, etc.," of which he made use. This list is based on Schechter's, but reversed. The bearing of these citations on the canon will be obvious:

Genesis—i. 1, 14, 27; iii. 20; v. 24; vi. 4, 8, 9; vii. 14; ix. 12, 14, 16; xiii. 10; xvii. 4; xviii. 14, 25, 27; xxii. 18; xxvi. 3; xxxix. 5; xliii. 34; xlvii. 6; xlix. 4, 24.

Exodus—iii. 8; vi. 13; vii. 3; viii. 28; xiv. 14; xv. 6, 17; xxiii. 5, 21; xxiv. 10; xxvi. 33; xxviii. 4, 15, 21, 32; xxxi. 11; xxxiv. 6, 10, 24; xxxv. 35.

Leviticus—vi. 8, 15; ix. 25; x. 9; xvi. 34; xxii. 16; xxiii. 7; xxvi. 25, 26, 42, 45.

Numbers—x. 2; xi. 21 *bis*, 28; xii. 12; xiv. 24; xv. 38, 39; xvi. 22; xvii. 23; xviii. 3, 19; xx. 20, 24; xxi. 5; xxiii. 22; xxiv. 17, 21; xxv. 4, 12, 13; xxvi. 56; xxvii. 20.

Deuteronomy—iii. 5; iv. 14; viii. 3; x. 17 *bis*; xi. 17; xiii. 15; xviii. 1, 2; xxi. 4; xxv. 7; xxviii. 2, 22, 58, 63, 64; xxx. 15; xxxi. 17; xxxii. 14, 21 *bis*, 41; xxxiii. 11.

Joshua—i. 5, 6; iv. 5, 24; vi. 26; x. 13; xiv. 9; xxi. 42.

Judges—v. 28; ix. 15; xiii. 5.

1 Samuel—ii. 7, 10 *bis*; vii. 9, 10 *bis*; xii. 3, 5; xiv. 6; xx. 16; xxii. 2; xxv. 28, 29, 39.

2 Samuel—iii. 34; xi. 8; xii. 13; xxiii. 1.

1 Kings—viii. 11, 17, 22, 30; xii. 10; xviii. 29, 30; xxi. 20.

2 Kings—ii. 9; iii. 3; x. 10; xii. 21; xix. 3, 22.

Isaiah—i. 4; iii. 12; iv. 5; v. 24, 25; x. 6; xi. 2; xiii. 8; xiv. 22; xxix. 4, 6; xxx. 25; xxxiv. 5, 8, 10; xxxv. 3, 10; xl. 14, 15, 26, 31; xlii. 6; xliv. 13; xlix. 6, 7; l. 9; li. 3, 6; lii. 10; liv. 12 *bis*; lv. 13; lvi. 3, 5 *bis*, 8, 11; lvii. 1, 2 *bis*; lviii. 2; lix. 17; lx. 18; lxi. 3; lxiii. 7; lxv. 5.

Jeremiah—i. 5, 10; ii. 8, 24; ix. 2; x. 16, 25; xi. 16; xx. 9; xxi. 8; xxv. 14; li. 56.

Ezekiel—i. 28; vii. 11; xvi. 7; xxviii. 13; xxix. 7; xxxvi. 3; xxxvii. 11.

Joel—iv. 3.

Amos—iv. 13; v. 24; ix. 3.

Jonah—ii. 7.

Micah—ii. 1; vi. 8.

Of another fact we can be equally certain, that Ben Sira knew the psalms contained in each of the five books of the Psalter. Furthermore, either he quoted from the so-called Maccabean psalms or they quoted from him. If we arrange the Psalter according to books, we find that the two are parallel in one hundred verses—twenty-eight in Book i, thirteen in Book ii, fourteen in Book iii, ten in Book iv, and thirty-five in Book v. Of the four psalms which have been held by most critics to be Maccabean, the forty-fourth, seventy-fourth, seventy-ninth and eighty-third (see Strack, *Einleitung*, p. 123), all except the eighty-third have phrases the same as those found in Ben Sira. The seventy-fourth has five such phrases and the forty-fourth has three. This bids us pause before we accept these psalms as Maccabean, especially when we notice that the New Hebraisms and Aramaisms which are to be found in Ben Sira are not equivalent to those found in the psalms. No one of the words mentioned in Driver's glossary is found in any one of the four psalms generally claimed as Maccabean. On the whole, it may be concluded that the evidence of Ben Sira is in

Nahum—i. 4; iii. 4.

Zephaniah—i. 15; iii. 18.

Zechariah—ii. 13; ix. 10.

Malachi—iii. 19, 23, 24.

Psalms—Book I—i. 1 *bis*, 2 *bis*; viii. 3, 6; x. 3; xv. 3; xviii. 45; xix. 6; xxi. 4; xxii. 6, 23; xxv. 6; xxix. 3, 9; xxxi. 11; xxxiii. 1, 3, 6, 7, 15, 18; xxxiv. 10, 33; xxxvii. 30; xl. 5, 6. Book II—xliv. 4, 19; xlv. 3; xlix. 11; lv. 5; lxvi. 3; lxviii. 6; lxxi. 17 *bis*, 18, 20; lxxii. 8. Book III—lxxiv. 2, 10, 11, 12, 13; lxxv. 8; lxxvii. 12; lxxix. 12; lxxxiv. 12; lxxxvi. 13; lxxxviii. 4, 7; lxxxix. 20, 30. Book IV—xcv. 3, 5; cii. 1, 27; civ. 25, 31; cvi. 4, 15, 16, 23. Book V—cvii. 21, 23, 24, 31, 34; cxii. 6, 9; cxv. 6; cxix. 7, 54, 59, 62; cxx. 3, 4; cxxi. 4; cxxxi. 1; cxxxii. 2, 13, 17; cxxxvi. 1; cxliii. 1; cxlv. 1 *bis*, 2, 20, 21; cxlvii. 1, 2, 5, 16, 19 *bis*; cxlviii. 3, 8, 14.

Proverbs—i. 8; ii. 2, 22; iii. 13, 16, 18, 29; iv. 9, 13, 18, 19, 20; v. 23; vi. 32; viii. 17, 35; x. 2, 5, 24, 30; xi. 4 *bis*; xii. 14, 21; xiii. 22; xiv. 32; xvi. 1, 3, 4, 32; xvii. 17, 18, 21; xviii. 3, 9; xix. 14, 16, 19, 23; xx. 8; xxi. 23, 24; xxii. 11, 29; xxiii. 6; xxiv. 7, 10, 23, 29; xxvi. 24, 25; xxviii. 5, 17, 19, 20; xxx. 32; xxxi. 3.

Job—iv. 3, 20; v. 9, 17, 21; ix. 5, 12; x. 19; xi. 20; xiii. 4; xv. 17; xvi. 2; xviii. 5; xx. 6, 29; xxi. 31, 33; xxii. 15; xxiv. 5, 12; xxv. 6; xxvii. 2, 13; xxviii. 25; xxxii. 9, 10; xxxiii. 18; xxxvii. 5; xxxviii. 16, 22, 23, 25, 37; xxxix. 28; xl. 22; xlii. 5.

Song of Songs—v. 16.

Ruth—

Lamentations—i. 2, 20.

Ecclesiastes—iii. 1, 15; vii. 8, 12; viii. 1, 4; xii. 7, 13.

Esther—v. 9.

Daniel—iv. 24; ix. 17; xi. 35.

Ezra—?

Nehemiah—ix. 3; xiii. 22.

1 Chronicles—xiv. 17; xvi. 28; xvii. 12, 20; xxix. 4.

2 Chronicles—vi. 30; xix. 7; xx. 30; xxx. 18; xxxv. 14.

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favor of a Psalter used by him which had the five books into which it is now divided and most probably the same psalms.

These remarks on the canon may be summed up by saying that, while the evidence of Ben Sira as to its extent is not conclusive, he certainly quoted from all three parts, and that he most probably was acquainted with all the books of the Palestinian canon.

We shall add but a remark or two on other questions of introduction. From xlv. 5, it is evident that Ben Sira recognized Moses as the author of the Torah—of the statutes, testimonies and judgments taught to Israel. Solomon also seems, in xlvii. 17, to be looked upon as the author of Proverbs; for the words “with songs, proverbs, dark sayings and figures” are certainly based on Proverbs i. 6. More significant than this, it is said of Isaiah, in xlviii. 24, that “by a spirit of might he saw the end and comforted the mourners of Zion” (comp. Isaiah xl. 1 and lxi. 3). This shows that at the time when Ben Sira wrote, Isaiah was considered to be the author of the so-called Deutero-Isaiah.

Such are some of the questions which are raised anew by the discovery of the Hebrew fragments of Ben Sira. Their importance can scarcely be overestimated, especially in regard to the light which they throw upon the language, literature and history of the Jewish people during the dark period between the time of Ezra and the rise of the Maccabees. If the preceding pages have been lacking in interest, it has been due not to the subject discussed, but to the manner in which it has been treated.

ALLEGHENY.

ROBERT DICK WILSON.