

# SOME EARLY JUDÆO-CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS IN THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY.

EDITED WITH TRANSLATIONS BY ALPHONSE MINGANA, D.D.

## I. A NEW LIFE OF CLEMENT OF ROME.

### FOREWORD.

**U**NDER the above title we present a new life of Clement of Rome, or Clement the Doctor, the original manuscript of which is preserved in the library of the monastery of Za'farān, the ordinary residence of the monophysite Patriarch of Antioch. It is written on parchment in Estrangelo characters which can hardly be later than the eleventh century, but being truncated at the end, the colophon which might have revealed something about its provenance, is consequently missing. It contains a precious collection of hagiographical pieces, under the general title of *Book of Lives of Saints*.

The text here printed has been carefully copied for me by Fr. Ephraim Barsom, the head of the West-Syrian press at Mardin. I examined myself the original, but was unable to fill the lacunæ of the few words which here and there could not be deciphered. These words have almost completely faded away, and for their restoration we are reduced to a surmise. In the text of the present edition when this restoration did not lack probability, we have placed the restored word between brackets; but when such a restoration would, in our judgment, have involved a mere conjecture, we have deemed it wiser to refer to it by the word "illegible," in the translation, and by three dots in the text.

The copy transcribed from the unique manuscript at Mardin is now preserved in the John Rylands Library, where it is placed at the end of some chapters of the works of Gregory of Cyprus (fourth century) on Christian monachism. In 1914 I published an English translation of this document (*Expositor*, p. 227 sq.) with a short

*Foreword* containing the principal points of comparison with some early Christian compositions. But as no serious judgment can be formed of a writing in the absence of its original text, I present here to the students of Christian antiquities the Syriac text from which the English translation was derived.

In his interesting Introduction to the Acts of Euphemia,<sup>1</sup> F. C. Burkitt has made the happy remark that the East has always been famous for the telling of tales. If this remark is given the full credit which it deserves, very few apocryphal stories would afford insoluble problems to hagiologists. To cast into the mould of a mere tale the history of saints and of popular heroes is the favourite art of the Syrians, who count in their *martyrologium* scores of lives of saints which in later generations have been made accessible to Western Christendom. In this category are to be included the Acts of Judas Thomas, of Peter and Paul and of all the ancient productions of Edessene literature. So far as our knowledge goes this kind of hagiology flourished from the third to the fifth century. If the psychological mind of the actual inhabitants of the country be of any value for our investigations of the early centuries of our era, and if the present art of telling a tale in Syria can have certain resemblance with its prototype of the heroic age of Christianity, the process of its evolution would be as follows :—

After the death of a hero, his history was transmitted orally from father to son among certain literary circles. Several years later some other circles wished to know something about the hero on whom praise was so skilfully lavished by his first admirers. The duty of enlightening such people and of writing down on parchment the hero's exploits was naturally incumbent on the persons belonging to the first group of men, and preferably on a man who by reason of social standing or intellectual proficiency was in a more favourable position to perform the task. The accuracy of the history written in this way depended on the man who wrote it, on the distance which separated him from the hero, and on the personal authority of people who constituted the intermediary links separating him from the hero. This method proved very successful and was adopted in the eighth century by the Muslim Syrians as a basis for the more recent history of the founder of Islam and his first disciples. The only

<sup>1</sup> *Euphemia and the Goth*, p. 50.

difference which distinguishes the Christian from the Mohammedan oral tradition, is the mention, in the latter, of the intermediary traditionists. This difference arose from the sceptical attitude of Christians and Jews towards the new heroes of Southern and Central Arabia. The Muslim writers were obliged to give greater precision and more actuality to their traditionists in face of people naturally indifferent and even hostile. The Muslim was obliged to say : Peter told Paul, Paul told James, James told John, John told my father, and my father told me ; the Christian his predecessor, speaking to Christians, could only say : it has been told, or I heard from some friends, or Paul said so, and could even sometimes dispense with all formalities and approach without compromise the subject he wanted to transmit to posterity.

In the development of this method certain bold writers could even find their way for putting in the mouth of their hero what *post factum* they wanted him to have said in some circumstances of his life, or for making him tell his own story from beginning to end. In the *Clementine Homilies*, Clement is made to say Ἐγὼ Κλήμης, Ρωμαίων πολίτης ὄν, and in the *Recognitions* the narrator wants him to begin with *Ego Clemens in urbe Roma natus, ex prima ætate pudicitia studium gessi*. All these methods of narration are simple ramifications of the art of story telling, and constitute an embellishment and an amplification of the fact that the narrator had not seen the hero whose life he was preserving for future generations.

The present life of Clement of Rome is to be classed in this category of tales. What enhances its value are the similarities and dissimilarities which it offers when compared with the Clementine literature of the third century. Our document is more sober in detail than both the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions*, lacking as it does scores of incidents which if not identical with the fantastic fairies of the *Arabian Nights*, or the allegorical allusions and genealogical trees of animals of the *Acta Thomæ*, yet by their curious *mise en scène*, have many points of resemblance with the life and adventures of the Twin of our Lord.

The main points of difference between the already known Clementine literature and our document may be summarized as follows :—

1. Our document nowhere makes mention of *Simon Magus* who

plays such an important rôle in Clement's life. Lipsius<sup>1</sup> has since 1872 believed that the magician Simon was to be regarded as a mythical person who has never existed, Simon being simply a pseudonym of the Apostle Paul. Hort<sup>2</sup> has tried to refute Lipsius' view with apparently good reasons. The document here printed supports the theory of the absence of the magician's intercourse with Peter and Clement in the original form of the story, and this induces us to suppose that Simon's introduction in the scene might have been a late embellishment of the narrative.

2. In the Clementine literature (*Patr. Græco-Lat.* I, 1359 and II, 330) Clement's mother is called Mattidia; the present document calls her Mitrodora. Both names sound well, and it is impossible to decide which of them she actually bore, although Mitrodora, by its relation to *μίτρα* or *Μίθρας*, would seem to be more likely. There is also a difference in the names of the other members of the family, for whereas the *Homilies* (*ibid.* II, 330) call his father Faustinus; and his two brothers Faustinianus and Faustus, the *Recognitions* (*ibid.* I, 1359) give Faustinianus as the name of the father. This small variant might be due to a slip of the pen on the part of the scribes, and much must not be built on it, but it is worth while to remark that our document is in harmony with the *Recognitions* against the *Homilies*.

3. In the Clementine writings, the father is said to have left at home Clement, his youngest son, when he set sail in search of his wife and his two other children. The present document informs us that he took Clement with him.

4. The manner in which Clement and his relations became acquainted with Simon Peter, and met with one another after their previous separation is told in a form very different from that with which we are familiar in the Clementine literature. Generally speaking the details of the narrative of the new document are more naturally handled and explained, and no resort is made to the elaborate incidents of the Greek *Homilies* and the Latin *Recognitions*. Our document might, therefore, have preserved a more ancient form of the tale. Towards the middle of the third century, a Syrian or a Palestinian

<sup>1</sup> In his *Quellen d. röm. Petrussage*.

<sup>2</sup> *Notes Introductory to the Study of the Clementine Recognitions*, p. 127 sq.

writer would have brooded over a sober tradition and cast it into the mould of a detailed tale. A sober story, unless it be an abridgment of a longer one, is generally considered as a more primitive form of an oral tradition, and until it is proved, through other channels, that our document is *in fact* an abridgment of both *Homilies* and *Recognitions* combined, which in view of the deep changes involved it would be difficult to prove, we might safely assume that it preserves a more authentic exposition of facts than the corresponding Græco-Latin productions of the third or fourth century.

Another interesting point of comparison may be drawn from the *Acta Eustachii* (in *Acta Sanctorum*, Vol. VI, pp. 123-135). These spurious Acts tell us that a certain Placidus, who at his baptism received the name of Eustachius, was martyred under the reign of Hadrian with his wife Theopistis and his two sons Agapius and Theopistus. The manner of losing his wife and his children and of meeting them again, and the way the mother recognizes her children after a long absence, offer unmistakable parallels with the adventures of Clement and his relatives. These coincidences, we have said in our study referred to above, will perhaps establish the assumption that the tale of a man losing his wife and two children, and recovering them afterwards through the good fortune of having adopted some Christian beliefs, was the outcome of a folk-lore which seems to have formed the staple of the evening conversation of many a Christian in the first centuries of our era.

The epoch of the appearance of such a legend is difficult to determine. As far as the tale of Eustachius is concerned the Bollandists who edited it remark naïvely: "Quamquam hoc anonymi scriptoris testimonium, non magni ponderis esse posset apud criticos magis severos". The most ancient mention of the tale in the writings of Christian fathers, is, according to the Bollandists, made by Joannes Damascenus (*ibid.* p. 108). This being the case, one is tempted to believe that the final redaction of the Acts can scarcely go back to a time preceding the fifth century. In the case of a contrary assumption one would have thought that the tale would have been represented in Syriac literature, either in a translation or in a modified form of new recension. Since, in the editor's opinion, Palestine is given as the country of the hero's adventures and the Jordan as the sacred river where he lost his children, it would be unreasonable to suppose that

the beautiful tale would have escaped the attention of Syrian hagiologists.

The question of the date of the Clementine literature seems, on the other hand, to be more complicated. Hort (*ibid.* p. 24 sq.) has referred to two passages of Origen which seem to suggest that their writer was acquainted with an older form of the *Recognitions*. The first passage is important because it alludes to astrological computations found in both *Recognitions* and Origen, and Hort adds ingeniously: "As a matter of fact these chapters coincide pretty closely with the Book of the Laws of Countries extant in Syriac and in part in Greek, written by an early Bardesanist; and comparison shows that the *Recognitions* borrowed from the Bardesanist Book, *not vice versa*". Here we are in the school of the Edessene Bardesanes. Hort's view is clearly borne out by the close relation which exists between the method of telling a tale used in *Acts of Judas Thomas*, and the Clementine *Recognitions* and *Homilies*. The *Acts of Judas Thomas* are certainly the work of a pupil or grand pupil of Bardesanes, and if the astrological chapters found in the *Recognitions* are as Hort rightly asserts derived from Bardesanes, there should not be much difficulty in finding the country of the *Recognitions*, nor the probable date of their composition. The country would be a town in North-Eastern Syria, and the probable date of their composition 225-245.

The information given by Eusebius, in the chapter devoted to Clement (III, 38, 5), is also important. After mentioning his Epistles to the Corinthians, he proceeds: "Nay, moreover, certain men have yesterday and quite lately (χθὲς καὶ πρώην) brought forward as written by him other verbose and lengthy writings, said to contain dialogues of Peter and Appion of which not the slightest mention is to be found among the ancients, for they do not even preserve in purity the stamp of the apostolic orthodoxy". The expressions "yesterday and quite lately" used by Eusebius seem to corroborate the above date 225-245. The historian had chiefly in view the refutation of those who ascribed the pseudo-Clementine writings to the apostolic age, and the vehement χθὲς καὶ πρώην are simply an accentuation of this idea, without any attempt to determine the year or day.

Coming to our new Syriac document, we notice that it certainly belongs to the group of hagiographical pieces represented by the *Acts*

of *Judas Thomas*, and by several other pious compositions. A definite date will probably never be given to these pieces, but I think that we should not be far from truth if we tried to ascribe them to the second half of the third century of our era.

In the above lines we have taken into account only the older form of the romance, which, in the opinion of some critics, the Clementines exhibited before they came to be fixed in their present order. As they stand in Greek and Latin MSS., Waitz<sup>1</sup> and Böhmer-Romundt,<sup>2</sup> have dated the *Recognitions* after 350, on the ground of their Eunomian Arianism (cf. *Recog.* III, 2-11). Harnack<sup>3</sup> believes that this Arianism may be explained by the Lucianic school, and consequently dates them between 290 and 360. Quite recently Chapman<sup>4</sup> has dated as follows the different parts which compose the Clementine *Recognitions* and *Homilies* :—

“(1) *Dialogues of Peter and Appion* c. 320. (2) The first edition of the completed romance c. 330. It was perhaps retouched (3) by its author some years later. One of these versions was abridged and dislocated in (4) the *Homilies* c. 350-400. Another version was interpolated and altered (5) by a Eunomian c. 365-370 ; this was abridged further (6) c. 370-390 ; the last two, (5) and (6), were known to Rufinus ; he translated the shorter of them (7), c. 400. A somewhat expurgated edition (8) was apparently current among the Byzantines, according to the testimony of Nicephorus, and was used by Maximus and others.”

The grounds for ascribing the whole of the Clementine literature in their present form to such a late date are mainly :—

1. The occurrence in *Recognitions*, I, 73 of the word *Archiepiscopus* which is unknown before the fourth century.

2. Some striking parallels between the doctrine of the *Recognitions* and that of Eunomius's *Liber Apolegeticus* written about 362.

These two objections fall to the ground in the light of the new document, in which there is no suggestion of the doctrinal developments of the fourth century, and no intention on the part of the writer to dogmatize either in an orthodox or in an Arian sense.

<sup>1</sup> *Die Pseudo-Clementinen*, 1904, p. 371.

<sup>2</sup> *Zeitschr. Wiss. Theol.* 1903, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup> *Chron.* II, 534-535.

<sup>4</sup> *Zeitsch. Neut. Wiss.* 1908, p. 32.



We conclude this short preface by the following lines taken from the number of the *Expositor* referred to above : Critics will doubtless remark that this document is cast in a mould far more Jewish than the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* and *Homilies* can claim. This characteristic is a criterion not always to be despised in ascribing historical lucubrations to a determined epoch. In this respect the reader will surely notice that Peter is always called Simon or Simon Cephas, and never Peter or Simon Peter. Syriac scholars who are not accustomed to find very often in Syriac literature this old name applied to the head of the Apostles in such an exclusive manner will no doubt bear a certain testimony to the archaism of the narration. Its illustrations are generally drawn from the Old Testament, and everything in it suggests that it might have seen the light before the fourth century which saw the beginning of the doctrinal hellenization of Edessa and the neighbouring districts.

The Syriac style of the document is pure, and free from that exuberance of incorrectness and stiffness which characterize some Syriac translations of Greek originals, and the critic who would maintain that it has been originally written in Syriac will have powerful weapons in hand to defend his opinion.

#### TRANSLATION.

Again a story about Clement, the disciple of Simon Cephas, and about his parents and his brothers, how they also have been evangelized.

There was in the city of Rome a rich man called Faustianus, and the name of his wife was Mitrodora. They openly worshipped idols, and though they did not know God, they served Him truly and justly. They gave alms to the poor from their riches, like Job, and received the strangers and the poor like Abraham. The word of the Scripture was fulfilled in them, which says : " He who fears God behaves justly," and " Abraham believed in God, when still pagan, and He gave him the reward of his justice ".<sup>1</sup> And this just Faustianus received the reward of his justice at the end of his life. And as Abraham and Sarah have been tested through Isaac, so (Faustianus and Mitrodora) were without an heir, in order that justice

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gen. XV. 6 ; Rom. IV. 3 ; Gal. III. 6.



might be performed in them, and righteousness might increase through them.

If the hired man does not work, he cannot claim his salary, because it is not written that just people received any reward except after they had worked, and wicked people any chastisement till they had sinned. If Adam had not transgressed, he would not have been driven out of Paradise ; and if Cain had not committed murder, trepidation would not have dwelt in his limbs ; and the robber did not enter into Paradise till he confessed. So is the case with these just people, Faustinianus and his wife, whose rewards are according to their toil ; and since I have narrated the nature of their work, I will now relate their exploits. He who has the clean ears of the words of love, let him approach and hear a pleasant account and delight in it.

These righteous people were deprived of posterity, and for a long time they were distressed. After a certain time, God wished to comfort them and to show them that He had not kept back their reward from them. Mitrodora, then, had two babes in her womb, as Rebecca had Esau and Jacob. She gave them names, to the elder Faustinus and to the younger Faustus. She brought forth also another child, and she called him Clement.

Then the Evil One, the enemy of justice, wished to make them stumble by his craftiness, and to insinuate himself to these good people. The Lord promised to Eve and Adam the paradise of Eden, and the Evil One degraded them from their ranks, and God sent His Only Begotten, and saved them and made them go up to a place higher than the first. The Devil suggested to the brothers of Joseph to sell him, and God made him a redeemer to them, in the day of distress. (The Devil) wished, too, to dishonour Mitrodora by a detestable adultery, and this motive distracted her, and she returned to God.

Faustinianus had a brother, and the Evil One insinuated to him to conceive a passion for the wife of his brother ; and though he repeatedly solicited her, the faithful (woman) never wronged her husband, and she thought of a means to vanquish the Evil One. She made a false pretence, as if she had dreamt it, to take her boys and to go away from her husband, in order that by her absence the fire surrounding that violent man might be extinguished.

Now, one day Faustinianus came home according to his custom,

and noticing that his wife was sad, he asked her : " What is the cause of thy sadness ? " She said to him : " I am sad, my lord, because I shall go away from thee and far from thy company ". Then Faustinianus became angry, and began to threaten and to say : " Who is it that has designed to sever thee from thy spouse ? I swear by the mighty gods of all Rome to deliver to terrible punishment him who designed this against me, and also to plunder his substance, in order that he may not speak behind the back of a man stronger than he." Mitrodora said to him : " Let thy wrath be not kindled, because he who will separate us one from each other is stronger than thou. Listen to me, my lord, and I shall tell thee the dream that I dreamt. I saw a man of fire seizing in his hand a sword of fire, and his lips sprinkling dew. He appeared to me like a furnace, and said to me and earnestly ordered me ' To-morrow take thy two boys, Faustinus and Faustus, and go away from Rome ; leave thy youngest son and thy husband in Rome, and do not come back to thy spouse till I warn thee '. The man that I saw told me all these things (and added) ' If thou dost not listen to everything I have told thee, I shall destroy thee with thy sons and thy husband '. I am very sorry that he whom I saw did not explain to me how long we shall be separated. Lo, the dream is unveiled ; interpret it thyself, since thou art wise."

When Faustinianus heard that, he was amazed ; he wondered, feared, and said : " This is hard to be explained by wise men ; even the mighty gods of Rome do not know what this vision means. I heard that there was one God in the earth . . . (*illegible word*) ; perhaps this dream . . . (*illegible word*) is by means of dreams . . . (*illegible word*) showed himself this year. Because those who know science say that it is the true God who created heaven and earth who wrought a wonderful miracle in every country, and that this is one of His disciples. Take then thy two boys, as He told thee, and go away from Rome, so that He may not be angry ; because if He is angry the earth will shake ; and the sea will dry up if He rebukes it, because He is its Lord. Lo, our fellow-kinsmen are in Athens, the Great . . . (*illegible word*) to them, as the man of dreams told thee. Take provisions for one year or two, and slaves and maids will come afterwards and serve thee. Take care of thyself and of thy children ; become like a mild dove which diligently attends to its nestlings, and feeds them by the pecking of its mouth ; become like a sparrow which

hides its nest from the spectators, and protects its nestlings from the hunters by its shrewdness ; become like a turtle-dove which loves its male, and keeps jealously the love of its consort." With such words Faustinianus warned his wife, and both spoke to each other in the grief of their separation. Faustinianus was very distressed, but Mitrodora did not wish to disclose a hidden secret ; God prompted them to this deed in order that their righteousness might be revealed to everybody.

And when Faustinianus agreed to send his wife, he endowed her with provisions, gold, slaves, and maids, and gave her her two children. When parting from her husband, she said to him : " Good-bye,<sup>1</sup> O man of my childhood and keeper of my youth. Who can know if we see one another again ; like a father . . . (*illegible word*) my lord, to the youngest son . . ." (*illegible word*).

She put to sea with her two boys, and when the ship moved two days in the sea, in the morning of the third day the sea grew rough, and began to roar as a (thirsty) lion for a well (of water),<sup>2</sup> and the waves began to be vehemently wild . . . (*illegible word*), and from everywhere violent winds and tempests tosseth (it ?). Then Mitrodora cried, bewailed, and said : " They say that Thou art God, O Son of Mary ; if Thou art God, come to our help and rescue us ; if height, depth, sea and land are under Thy command, the slave obeys his master and does not revolt against him ". And she said with great distress : " Woe is me, I wished to be drawn from a corrupted pond of sins, and lo, I am sinking in a sea of water, and there is no one to rescue. Woe is me, I proved an evil stumbling block to my two children." And when waves tossed her about on every side, she cried in the name of Jesus the Nazarene, and stretched her hands and embraced her boys. And she began to complain (in the presence of) her beloved ones : " (Cursed be) the hour in which I have separated my boys from their father, and this death which has surrounded me from every side. If Thou (Jesus) rescue me with my children, Heaven forbid that I worship or sacrifice except to Thy name."

When, in a prostration, she was praying before God with sobbing, the waves struck the ship from every side and it broke up, and those who were in it floated upon water like bits of grass ; and mother and

<sup>1</sup> *Lit.* remain in peace.

<sup>2</sup> We read *béra* instead of *bra*.

children were hidden from one another on the sea. And God made a sign to the sea not to destroy them, as He has commanded it for Jonas, and it listened to Him. He, therefore, bade the sea to keep them and not to harm them without His order ; because God can keep (a man) in the sea as if he were on land, since sea and land are under His command.

While they were tossed in the sea during all the night, salvation dawned on them in the morning. The right hand that has been stretched to Simon, and he was drawn up, has been stretched to the help of the woman and her sons ; and as God willed in His mercy, He made them reach the port of Tripoli.

Seamen went out in the morning and saw them weeping by the sea-shore. A widow took them, honoured them, and brought them up with great honour. She gave them names : she called the one Anicetus and the other Aquilas.

As to their mother, God willed and made her reach the town of Arad. She began to weep for her boys, saying : “ Where shall I go to seek your corpses, O my beloved sons who are drowned in the sea ? Behold, I am deprived of my beloved and of my acquaintances. Woe is me, I was like a ship bearing riches, and the waves of the sea scattered my riches and threw my treasures to the wind, and lo, I am like a vine whose beauty hail has destroyed. Would that I had swift wings like those of young eagles, to go and see thee, O Faustianus, when wandering after us ; when sending slaves bearing provisions, and these (slaves) returning back to thee, bearing bad news ; when sending (letters) to the inhabitants of Athens about us, and these answering thee with bitter letters ; when caught by the day of weeping and grief, and encircled by all pains and severe tribulations ! ”

While Mitrodora was afflicted by these and similar things, the chiefs of the town of Arad heard, and gathered round her and asked her, saying : “ What is thy story, O woman ? and which is thy country ? Behold ! thy voice has shaken all our town.” And she told them truly all her story. And they began to console her, but she afflicted herself with cries and lamentations.

Then a widow came to her, and began to comfort her, saying : “ I am a widow like thee, and deprived of husband and children. Come to my house, and we will live together in bereavement and spend our life in bitterness.” And Mitrodora went to her, and was,

out of necessity, begging her bread. When she noticed that her strength was failing, she went and sat at the gate of the town, so that she might take alms from the people. But where she most suffered, there deliverance dawned on her through Simon, the head of the disciples.

After Mitrodora had spent two years in this great hardship, Faustinianus got together provisions, and sent them through his slaves. When the messengers reached Athens and asked the kinsmen of Faustinianus about Mitrodora, they answered them : " We have not seen here this woman and we have not heard her story ". The messengers went back weeping and bearing letters full of sorrow and news of anguish. When they called on Faustinianus and he read these letters, he was pained, and he wailed and wept bitterly. He wrote letters to all quarters, countries, and villages. Messengers scoured all countries and flew to all quarters, but returned with weeping. Faustinianus began then to wear deep mourning, took his youngest son, and went out wandering about and asking everybody : " Have you seen my wife and her sons drowned, or roving along the roads ? " When he was walking and asking, he lost sight of the young boy, and from deep grief he did not notice that.

When the boy Clement was straying, a seaman took him and got him into a ship, and in that very night they sailed for the country of Syria. And when Simon was teaching by the seashore, in towns, the seaman took the boy, and gave him to Simon, and he became his disciple. He was the first disciple that Simon Cephas had. And Simon took the boy Clement and went to Tripoli, in order to evangelize there.

While he was teaching, the woman who had brought up his brothers came and gave them up to become the disciples of Simon Cephas ; and the grace of God thus gathered together the three brothers. The head of the Apostles and they three ate and drank together, and they did not know one another.

And Simon went away to Arad, to preach there the true faith ; for the grace of God called him to comfort the weak woman by means of her three beloved ones.

When Simon and Clement were in their way, Simon said to Clement : " My brother, behold ! thou hast been twenty years with me, and I did not ask thee what was thy country, or where thou

camest from, or if thou knewest whether thou hadst parents or kinsmen". When Clement heard that he began to weep bitterly, and said to him : "Listen, my lord, and I shall speak before thee : I am from a great family of the city of Rome, from the royal family, the son of Faustinianus the great ; the name of my mother was Mitrodora ; and besides, thy servant had two brothers, the name of the elder was Faustinus, and of the other Faustus. My mother dreamt a dream, which became the cause of her death ; she saw a man of fire riding on horses of fire and he said to her, 'Arise, take thy children and go away from Rome'. My father had kinsmen in Athens ; he gave her provisions and the brothers elder than I, and he sent her to Athens ; and since they left us we have not heard any news about her ; my father sent messages to all countries, and no one said that he had seen them ; then my father took me and went away wandering and asking everybody about them. When walking, I and my father, on the sea-shore, I have been out of his sight, and through the pain of his heart, he did not notice me in that moment. As to me, when a seaman noticed me, he took me, put me on board and brought me to thee ; such a pain, and such trials befell me ! Now God knows if my parents survive or not."

And Simon was amazed, and glorified God and began to cry in sorrow and to say to the child in grief : "I have hope in God, that if thy parents are alive, thou wilt soon see them".

When Simon and Clement reached the gate of Arad, Simon saw Mitrodora sitting, and said to her : "Woman thou art young in thy age,—and thou chocest this ignominious business for thee ; why likest thou not to . . . ? (*illegible word*), and thou wilt live". She said to Simon : "My lord, if thou knewest the hardships that I have borne, and the pains that my eyes have seen, even if thou hadst a remedy of death, thou wouldst have given it to me, so that I should drink it and be delivered from this pain".

The divine Apostle said to her : "O woman, reveal thy story to me, and I have a remedy of life that I shall give thee ; drink of it and be saved from thy pain".

And the woman began to tell successively all her story. When the divine Apostle heard it, his mind rejoiced, and he glorified God for having soon answered his prayers. When the woman was telling all this, Clement was in the town with his friends. And Simon

Cephas said to her : “ Woman, thy pains are bitter, and thy ailment is great, but I have hope in God that He will comfort thee in thy pains ”.

When Simon was still speaking to her, the young Clement returned back to him. Simon then said to him : “ Tell me, my son, all that thou toldest me on the way ”.

And the young man began to tell all that he had endured. And Simon said to Mitrodora : “ Listen to what this young man is telling ”. When she listened, her heart glowed towards this young man, her son, and she recognized him. The young man, too, recognized his mother.

And the mother began to say to her son : “ Come in peace thou who takest away my pains and wipest the tears off my eyes ; come in peace, O slain man who lived again, O dead man who comforted his parents by his resurrection ! I worship the God who made me worthy to see thee ; I confess Him, because those who trust in Him will not be confounded. I am Mitrodora, thy mother. I hope that He who has counted us as worthy to meet each other will count us also as worthy to see thy brothers.”

And Simon took Clement and his mother and went to the young men, his brothers. Before they reached them, they looked at Clement and his mother with him, and they began to grumble, saying : “ Who is this woman who speaks to Clement and walks with him ? Behold, we have been fellow-disciples for twenty years, and we have not seen him either speaking to a woman or looking at a woman ; can she be his mother ? ”

When Clement reached them, his brothers asked him without knowing that he was their brother : “ Tell us, our brother, who is this woman who is with thee ? ” What great marvel, my brothers ! How great is the Providence of God—to whom be glory ! Who will not wonder ! Who will not glorify God for His mercy and for His great compassion towards His creature !<sup>1</sup> Three beautiful branches were cut off from their vine, and April came in its season and made them blossom in their vine ! How beautiful are three mild doves which flew from their nest, and when they escaped the sparrowhawk, they gathered at the voice of their mother ! How beautiful are three young eagles which grew up without their parents, and when their wings were sufficiently strong, they came and caused their

<sup>1</sup> *Lit.* clay.



parents to rejoice ! A poor woman who during twenty years has been deprived of her children, the grace of God gathered them in one hour, and they came to her ! Then Clement answered his brothers, not knowing that they were his brothers : " My brothers, this is my mother ! "

His brothers began then to ask him : " Tell us, our brother ; behold we have lived together for twenty years, and we did not ask thee where thou camest from, and what thy family was in the world ; tell us that now, and we will tell thee from whence we are ". And Clement began to tell to his brothers, none knowing that all were brothers the one to the other. Their mother was standing far from there and hearing the words of their mouths. " As to me, O my brothers, I am from the city of Rome ; my father was called Faustinianus, and my mother Mitrodora ; I had two brothers, and their names, for one, was Faustinus, and for the other, Faustus ; and through a dream that my mother dreamt, we have been scattered among the nations ; and now, by the will of God, I have found my mother, and have recognized her. "

His brothers said with tears in their eyes : " Our brother, from thy words, if they are true, thou art our brother, and we are thy brothers ; I am Faustinus, and this is our brother Faustus. When we went out (of Rome) and sailed for two days in the sea, our ship broke up . . . (*illegible word*), and we have been scattered among the nations. "

Their mother heard these things, and her arms were restored, for they had been for a long time withered. She embraced them in weeping and in saying to them : " Be sure that I am your mother Mitrodora, who was sent to Athens with you, by your father ". And together they glorified God who had gathered them into His sheepfold.

Then the three brothers asked Simon, their master, to baptize their mother. And when they found a place fit for baptism, they showed it to their holy master, and he baptized Mitrodora ; then he sent the three brothers with their mother to Laodicea. And he stood up to pray, and then to follow them ; when he prayed, he said : " O God, in the hands of whom all the ends (of the earth) are ; O God, rich in mercy, as Thou hast gathered these by Thy mercy, answer me my prayer from Thy treasure ; if the husband of

Thy handmaid Mitrodora be alive, make him present to see his wife and his sons ; if he be kept in life may a sign from Thee make him present, in order that he may come and receive Thy yoke, and work with us in Thy vineyard". And God heard quickly the voice of the Apostle, and a (divine) sign caught away Faustinianus from Rome and brought him to Simon, the Apostle.

And when Simon was walking in the way, behold, an aged man stood before him, dressed in old patches and in worn-out clothes, and with much dust on him, like a poor man. Simon asked him : " Who art thou, man, that thou wanderest in the hills ? Art thou a thief, a robber, or a shedder of men's blood ? "

The old man answered Simon with great grief, and said, " I am neither a thief nor a robber ; but thy servant is from the city of Rome. I had a wife and three sons, and when she was asleep she dreamt a bad dream, and through it we have been scattered among the nations. This happened twenty years ago, and behold, I am wandering after them, and I cannot find them ; and to-day when I was in the country of Rome, something like a right hand caught me and flung me into this country. Behold, I am under some phantasms and agitated, since I do not know where I am."

Simon said : " If somebody comes now and shows thee thy wife and thy sons, what wilt thou give him ? " The old man said : " God is witness that I have no other thing than that I shall become a slave before him for ever "

And Simon took him and went to his encampment ; and Simon raised his voice saying : " Come, Mitrodora, and see Faustinianus, thy husband ; take thy beloved ones, and come to meet him ; like an eagle he has crossed sea and land for thy sake ". And all at once she flew like a dove, and took her nestlings with her ; but when she saw Faustinianus dressed in patches and surrounded by poverty, she asked him with great grief : " Tell me, O man, what is thy country ? It seems to me that thy limbs have borne many pains. I craved long to see my spouse, but the figure that I notice in thee is not his."

The old man, then, said to her : " If thou art Mitrodora, I am Faustinianus "

And Mitrodora said to him : " Where are the glory and the beauty that thou didst put on and the gorgeous raiment in which thou wast dressed ? "

The old man said to her in grief : “ Since the day when thou and thy children were separated from me, I have been in pain and wandering for your sake ; sea, I crossed ; land, I scoured ; height, I trod ; and depth, my soul sounded ; thirst overpowered me, hunger tormented me, bareness of feet made me suffer, heat burned me, and cold dried me, so that I might find you ; and I did not find quietness till now ”.

And Mitrodora said to him : “ Come, O tree, and see the branches which had been separated from thee ; they have become staves, and behold, they are sustaining us ”. The old man, then, approached, and kissed his sons tenderly ; and began to weep upon them as if they were departed people rising (from the dead), and said : “ Come in peace, O slain ones, who have returned (to life) ! O departed ones, who have been resuscitated ! Blessed are my eyes, for I have seen you to-day ! I glorify God, because He gave you to me to sustain my old age, to take away my pains, and to console my affliction.”

And Simon Cephas baptized also the old man, their father ; and all, mother, sons, and father, became pure sanctuaries and dwellings to the Holy Spirit, reached a high rank, and were much renowned in sanctity.

And we all, let us glorify God who comforts distressed people, and takes away the pains of those who trust in His name. Glory be to Him for ever and ever. Amen.

## II. THE BOOK OF SHEM SON OF NOAH.

### FOREWORD.

The curious treatise here printed will add something to our knowledge of Biblical Apocrypha. The field of extension of these spurious productions is already very wide, but, if we mistake not, none of them purports in a similar way to predict events dealing with agriculture. Our work is a kind of agricultural horoscopy ascribed to Shem son of Noah. In the *Book of Jubilees* x. 12 ; XXI. 70, mention is made of certain books of Noah. “ And he gave all that he had written to Shem, his eldest son ; for he loved him exceedingly above all his sons ” (R. H. Charles’ *Apocrypha and Pseudopigrapha*, II, 28). “ For thus I (Abraham) have found it written in the books of my forefathers, and in the words of Enoch, and in the words of Noah ” (*ibid.* p. 44). “ For so my father Abraham commanded me ; for so

he found it in the writing of the *Book of Noah* concerning the blood" (*Testament of Levi*, *ibid.* p. 365). In the *Book of Enoch* there are also traces of a certain apocalyptic work attributed to him (1 En. 6-11 ; 54, 7 ; 55, 2 ; 65-69, etc., of Charles' edition). Ephiphanius (*Adv. Hær.* xxvi. 1) tells us that among some Gnostic sects a book was current bearing the name of Nuria, Noah's wife.

In the text of *Jubilees* quoted above it is only said that Shem transmitted to posterity his father's works, and no specified book is directly attributed to him. From *The Jewish Encyclopædia* (xi. 262) we learn "that Shem is supposed by the Rabbis to have established a school in which the Torah was studied, and among the pupils of which was Jacob. Later Shem was joined by Eber,—and the school was called after both of them. Besides, the school was the seat of a regular *bet-din* which promulgated the laws current in those times. The *bet-din* of Shem proclaimed the prohibition of and the punishment for adultery." This last feature must not be overlooked in reading the present apocryphon in which there is frequent mention of adultery.

Many public libraries contain physician Asaph's medical treatise described by Steinschneider (*Hebr. Bibl.* xix. 35, 64, 84, 105). The introduction to this treatise registers a tradition to the effect that Shem son of Noah was the inventor of medicine which had been revealed to him by the Angels. This information would also tend to explain why a treatise on astromancy or horoscopy could have been written under the name of Shem. In ancient times no good physician was able to dispense with astromancy, and after all the herbal drugs had failed, it was the handiest recipe to produce effects that no other medicine could produce. It was on many occasions a safe panacea admitting of scarcely any exceptions.

The *Book of Shem*, son of Noah, has been mainly written for people interested in agriculture. It tells which is the good year for cultivation, and which is the best month in which to sow. Shem draws his knowledge of these questions from the twelve signs of the zodiac. From the same source he can foretell the dearness or cheapness of the most necessary articles of food : wheat, barley, watered cereals, oil, wine ; and is able also to prognosticate the health of the most useful domestic animals such as sheep and cattle.

The country in which the *Book of Shem* was written is easy to

determine. The author lays stress continually on events dealing with Egypt and Palestine. As far as Egypt is concerned the inundation of the Nile takes a prominent place, and is mentioned in every section. Of the Egyptian towns Alexandria is the only one which has deserved special record. As far as Palestine is concerned, the holy city has no place in the mind of Shem, and curiously enough, his mind was not interested in any other Biblical town. Probably Damascus and the district of Haurān which are frequently mentioned by name constituted an integral part of Palestine in the geography of the treatise. From these precise data, it is safe to infer that the work was written somewhere in Egypt for people who had great interest in Palestine, or somewhere in Palestine for people who had great interest in Egypt.

Unfortunately we cannot be so categorical as to the question of the epoch of the appearance of the work. On the one hand it does not contain any precise historical details entitling us to fix on a determined date, and on the other hand the frequent mention of the Romans and of their kings induces us to suppose that it saw the light in the period of the Roman domination of Egypt and Palestine. Further, the writer seems to have certain interest in the matter of Jewish emigration from Palestine, because he distinctly mentions the propitious and unpropitious years for emigration. If any argument can be built on this information, we should be tempted to say that the treatise was written in a time of national distress in Palestine, and this would naturally suggest a time not very remote from the catastrophe which befell the Jewish nation under Vespasian and Hadrian. It is, however, precarious to make a categorical pronouncement on this subject ; we shall presently see that the outer form of the work actually postulates a much later date.

Another puzzling question is the religious belief of the problematic Shem. Having found nothing in his work which would vouch for his Christian tendencies, we have ventured to suppose that he was a Jew. Indeed some details which characterize his work seem to point to a Jewish authorship ; such is the question of emigration, Passover, continual distress, and persecution. Strictly speaking the argument taken from the word Passover would vanish if, through other channels, it were proved that the document was Christian ; in this case Passover would simply have to be changed into Easter. The same may be said of the topics of emigration, distress, and per-

secution. Some words which have disappeared from the manuscript would perhaps have solved the problem, but as the work stands, it has certainly more Jewish than Christian colour.

The question of the original language of the document is even more difficult to settle. We have before us in a relatively recent manuscript a text with numerous lacunæ and several corrupted passages. Until some other manuscripts are, therefore, found, or some exact quotations by subsequent writers are given, it is more prudent to suspend our judgment. The Syriac style, however, contains vocables which reflect a certain influence of the Arabic language. It is through this language that we understand some new Syriac words which are missing in the most recent dictionaries. The argument must not be considered as decisive, and it is even probable that such words might have been in use before the ninth century of the Christian era in which the Arabic could reasonably exercise an influence on the Syriac. Syriac dictionaries are still in somewhat embryonic state, and the reading of any book reveals words which are to be catalogued in a final *Thesaurus* of the language, which has still to see the light in a contingent future.

In the prognostication of the events which take place if the year begins in Cancer the author uses the words *Krāyātha* and *rsā'a*. If we do not call to our help the Arabic language for the determination of these words, the phrase will not give any reasonable meaning. As far as the first word is concerned the Arabic verb *aḵra* which means "he had a backache" suits best the context, and so we have supposed that the word is a noun of action of a corresponding Syriac *aḵrī*. As far as *rsā'a* is concerned we have also resorted, in order to find an appropriate sense, to the Arabic *rasa'* "soreness of the eyes".

In the next section, it is said of locusts *wankhowzūn*. No meaning given to this verb by the lexicographers can satisfy the context. So we have tried to explain it through the Arabic *Kāza* meaning "he gathered".

There is also a sentence which in our judgment can yield no meaning, and the Syriac scholar who could find a good sense for it would be very fortunate. In the section of Scorpio, after having foretold that the Nile will overflow half of its normal rate, the author or the translator adds immediately the incomprehensible *Gōghé dkattinta*. The

use of the words *Kattinūtha* and *Kattina* in the sense of "distress" and "distressed" respectively deserves also special notice.

We conclude the above survey with a great margin of uncertainty.

The manuscript in which the work is found is not very ancient. It cannot be placed earlier than the fifteenth century. It contains many treatises on astrology by different writers, and among these treatises is included the Testament of Adam, which is printed in the second volume of the *Patrologia Syriaca* (pp. 1309-1360). The copyist of the book was an extremely bad Syriac scholar, and his transcription is frequently ungrammatical and corrupt owing to the omission of prefixes and suffixes, and to the awkward confusion between graphically similar letters, such as *D* and *R*; occasionally also one notices in the text the omission of complete words and a false conjugation of verbs. The manuscript which formerly belonged to J. Rendel Harris's precious collection and was numbered "Cod. Syr. 165" is now the property of The John Rylands Library where it stands as Cod. Syr. 44. It is the most unsatisfactory Syriac MS. which I have ever seen. Its contents are sometimes similar to those of the "Syrian Anatomy" or "Book of Medicines" so ably edited and translated in 1913 by E. A. Wallis Budge (pp. 520-656).

Such is the outer form of this fantastic apocryphon. If it cannot claim the honour of being counted among the books which have excited so keen an interest among some theologians, its supposed paternity will always give it a place in the shelf of writings bearing the sacred name of Biblical Patriarchs.

#### TRANSLATION.

Discourse written by Shem son of Noah about the beginning of the year and all that happens in it.

If the year begins in Aries :—

The year will be hard. The quadrupeds will die. There will not be many clouds. The standing corn will not have good size, but it will have fat grains. The river Nile will overflow well. The king of the Romans will not remain in one place. The stars of heaven will be scattered like rays of fire. The moon will suffer eclipse. The first crops will perish, and the second will be ingathered. From Passover . . . <sup>1</sup> corn will be mildewed. The year will be bad, with

<sup>1</sup> A hole in the MS. with the disappearance of about four words.



severe war and distress over all the earth, especially over the land of Egypt. Many ships will break up when the sea is rough. Oil will be at a moderate price in Africa, and wheat will be at a low price ; in Damascus, Ḥaurān, and Palestine it will be at a moderate price. (Palestine) will have different kinds of diseases, plagues, and war,<sup>1</sup> but it will be delivered from them and saved.

If the year begins in Taurus :—

Anyone having in his name (the letters) Beith, Yodh, or Kōph will be ill, or will be killed with iron weapons. There will be earthquake. A wind will start from Egypt and spread over all the earth. The year will be rich in wheat and abundant rains, but the chiefs of the land and of the surrounding places will destroy that (wheat). The yearly rain<sup>2</sup> will fail during three months, and then corn will be very dear during thirty-six days ; many people will die from diseases of the throat, and then tribulation will cease. The first crops (of wheat) will perish, but as (above), the second crops will be ingathered, and barley with the watered cereals will be ingathered also. The devils will attack the sons of men, but they will not harm them in anything. Two kings will rise against each other. The great river Nile will overflow above its normal rate. Those who are on board a ship in the sea, and those who are on the sea will be in great distress. At the end of the year there will be great blessing.

If the year begins in Gemini :—

The moon will be good. A South wind will blow, from which rain will come. Anyone having in his name the letters Tāw, Ḥéth, or Mim will have tumours and boils in his face. At the beginning of the year there will be a severe war. There will be early rains, and the standing corn will be good, especially in the watered places. Mice will abound in the earth. The Romans (and the Persians ?)<sup>3</sup> will wage a severe war against one another, and the Romans will come forth by ships on the sea, will fight and destroy them. Malicious people will rise in the world, who will do mischief, and there will be great anxiety and distress. Good will come at the end of the year and the river Nile will overflow well.

<sup>1</sup> The word *zaina* may be a mistake for *saw'a*, " earthquake ".

<sup>2</sup> The word is written on the margin.

<sup>3</sup> Hole in the MS. with the disappearance of a word.

If the year begins in Cancer :—

At the beginning of the year corn will be at a moderate price, and people will be comfortable. The Nile will overflow at half its normal rate. Alexandria will be besieged, and distress will be in it from pest. Stars will shine very brightly, and the moon will suffer eclipse. At the beginning of the year wheat and barley will be dear.<sup>1</sup> Winds will abound, and many people will suffer from back aches, coughs, and soreness of the eyes. Wine will be abundant. Oxen, sheep, and small cattle will perish; and cereals will also perish, but oil will make up for them. At the end of the year corn will be dear for nine days, and then there will be rain, and (the year) will have much blessing.

If the year begins in Leo :—

There will be early rains, but the soil will be scorched by North winds; corn will not be injured and the food of mankind will be good. Wheat, rice, and cereals will be dear, and wheat will have to be watered. Oil and dates will be dear. There will be diseases in sons of men and the pregnant animals will perish as well as small cattle. A king will fight against a king. A considerable number of locusts will make their appearance and their number will decrease but slightly . . .<sup>2</sup> they will turn from one place to another and they will be gathered together. The river Nile will overflow at its highest rate. People will suffer from headaches. At the end of the year there will be much rain.

If the year begins in Virgo :—

Anyone having in his name (the letters) Yodhs, or Semkath, and Beith and Nūn will be ill, will be plundered, and will flee from his house. And there will be at the beginning of the year [ . . .<sup>3</sup>] There will be shortage of water in some places. The first crops will not flourish. People will be in distress and sickness, Summer and Winter. The second crops will be ingathered, and will be good. Corn will be dear in Haurān and in Bithynia, (?) but at the end of the year their price will be moderate. Wine will be cheap and delicious. Dates will be abundant. Oil will be dear. Wheat and barley will be at a moderate price, and cereals will be cheap. Rain will be late and will

<sup>1</sup> These words are written on the margin by a later hand.

<sup>2</sup> A hole in the MS. with the disappearance of a word.

<sup>3</sup> There are evidently some words missing here.

not fall upon the earth during thirty days down to the time of Pass-over. . . .<sup>1</sup> The king will fight against another king and will kill him. Living in Alexandria will be dear. The (Nile) will not overflow well. Many ships will break up. At the end of the year there will be moderation in everything.

If the year begins in Libra :—

There will be early rains, and the (order of the) year will be inverted. People will be secure from the East wind. Fig-trees will not bear fruit. Dates and oil will abound. Wine will be dear. Wheat will be at a very moderate price. Locusts will appear. In Africa there will be a great and severe war. People will have acute diseases. In the middle of the year rain will fail during twenty days. The (kind of) wheat (called) armo'yātha (?) will not be fat enough. All fields will be good. Anyone having in his name (the letters) Yodh or Beith will be ill, will have anxiety, and will emigrate from his country. Wine will be spoiled, and adultery will increase with the increase of foul desires. The king will remain in one place, and power will cease in the earth, and high officials will flee into the sea, and there will be between (them) a severe war. In Galilee there will be a violent earthquake. Marauders will appear in Haurān and in Damascus. The river Nile will overflow to its highest rate. In Egypt there will be a cruel pest, which will be in . . .<sup>2</sup> that is to say mules. People will be in distress because of the shortage of rain.

If the year begins in Scorpio :—

A North wind will blow at the beginning of the year, and there will be many early rains. At the end of the year everything will be dear, and rain will be so scarce that people will address prayers and supplications to the living God, for the sake of food. Pregnant women will have diseases. Many people will emigrate<sup>3</sup> from their countries out of distress. Wheat and barley will be ingathered, but only in small quantity ; cereals will be ingathered. There will be wine and oil. Boils will spring forth in the bodies of people but they will do no harm. The Nile will overflow half of its normal rate.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A hole has caused a word to disappear.

<sup>2</sup> A hole with the disappearance of a word.

<sup>3</sup> The verb is written on the margin.

<sup>4</sup> There is here a Syriac sentence for which I cannot find any satisfactory meaning.

Anyone having in his name (the letters) Tāw, or Yōdh, will be ill, but will recover. Anyone born in Scorpio will live, but will be killed at the end of the year.

If the year begins in Sagittarius :—

Anyone having in his name (the letters) Beith, or Pê, will have severe illness and distress, which will be aggravated at the beginning of the year. People will be in distress in many places. Little will be sown in the land of Egypt. In the middle of the year there will be much rain. People will store corn in the barns because of the shortage of rain. Crops will not be good, so also will be the case at the end of the year. Wine and oil will be at a very moderate price. Adultery will increase, and small cattle will perish.

If the year begins in Capricornus :—

Anyone having in his name (the letters) Kōph will be ill, will be plundered, and will be struck with sword. An East wind will dominate the year. Every one should sow earlier ; the last in sowing will not succeed. At the beginning of the year . . .<sup>1</sup> will be dear. Waves and billows will increase. [ . . . ]<sup>1</sup> will perish. In the middle of the year corn will be dear. Thieves will increase. The officials of the state will be bad. Wasps and reptiles of the earth will multiply and injure many people. Many people (will move)<sup>2</sup> from one place to another because of the war which will take place. Wars will increase in the earth. At the end of the year rain will be scarce. In some places the standing corn will yield something, and in others it will perish. There will be pest in Damascus and in Haurān, and famine in the littoral of the sea. Adultery will increase. People will offer prayers and supplications, will fast and give alms for the sake of rain. The watered cereals will be normal.

If the year begins in Pisces :—

Anyone having in his name (the letters) Kōph, or Mīm, will be ill, and will be plundered. The year will be good and the standing corn will also be good and beautiful. There will be early rains. The game of the sea will increase,<sup>3</sup> and when the sea is rough ships will break up. The [ . . . ]<sup>4</sup> will be ill. Wine, oil, and wheat

<sup>1</sup> The copyist has omitted here the subject of the verb.

<sup>2</sup> This verb (or one similar to it) has been omitted by the copyist.

<sup>3</sup> Owing to a hole, the first and the two last letters of the verb appear.

<sup>4</sup> The subject has been omitted by the copyist.

will, all of them, be good. Crops will also be good. There will be strife and much devastation in towns; as to the villages, their site will change from one place to another.<sup>1</sup> Marauders will come forth from Palestine, and . . .<sup>2</sup> will wage a great war against three towns; and the Romans will sometimes be victorious, and sometimes defeated. A great disease will affect the sons of men. A black man will come forth seeking power, and the royal family will perish. The king will endeavour to hear what people would say, and will destroy many towns, and no one will be able to check him, and the fear of God and His mercy will be far from him. At the end of the year there will be peace and security for the sons of men, and union and concord between all the kings of all the earth.

If the year begins in Aquarius<sup>3</sup> :—

Anyone having in his name (the letters) Lamadh or Pé will be ill, or plundered.<sup>4</sup> At the beginning of the year rain will increase, and the Nile will overflow at its highest rate, and Egypt will [ . . . ]<sup>5</sup> over Palestine. [ . . . ]<sup>6</sup> will produce. Lambs and sheep will flourish. A West wind will dominate the year. A king will fight against a king. The first crops will be good. The (watered) cereals will not grow much, but they will yield (something). The merchants will ask for helpers from the Living God.

### III. FRAGMENT FROM THE PHILOSOPHER ANDRONICUS AND ASAPH, THE HISTORIAN OF THE JEWS.

#### FOREWORD.

The short extract here printed is a genuine quotation from a Greek writer called "Andronicus the Wise, the Philosopher, and the Learned". These epithets can hardly lead us to determine the author's identity. In examining all the writers with the name of An-

<sup>1</sup> The Syriac wording of this sentence is very ungrammatical. Possibly the copyist did not understand the text he was transcribing.

<sup>2</sup> A hole with the disappearance of a word.

<sup>3</sup> The copyist is raising here an objection against the text he was transcribing, because in it Pisces were put before Antiquarius, while Antiquarius must have been spoken of before Pisces.

<sup>4</sup> The sentence *'akar min* is difficult to understand.

<sup>5</sup> The verb is omitted by the copyist.

<sup>6</sup> The subject is apparently omitted by the copyist.

dronicus to whom might be assigned the authorship of the fragment we were able to find only three whose claim could be regarded as worthy of consideration : (1) the astronomer Andronicus Cyrrestes who according to Vitruvius (I, 6, 4) set up at Athens the octagonal tower of Marble, which is seen in our days ; his death is generally placed at about 100 B.C. (2) Andronicus of Rhodes, the peripatetic philosopher who arranged Aristotle's writings in the form with which we have become familiar ; his death is placed by some Greek scholars at about 50 B.C. (3) The Christian Andronicus of Hermopolis in Egypt, whose poems according to Libanius (Epist. 75) were much esteemed in Egypt and in Ethiopia. In A.D. 359 he was suspected of pagan practice, according to Amm. Marc. (XIX, 12), but was acquitted by Paulus, the envoy of the emperor Constantius.

Of these three writers the one who possesses stronger claims is Andronicus Cyrrestes mentioned by Eusebius of Cæsarea in his work on the "Star".<sup>1</sup> In the *Syrian Anatomy, Pathology, and Therapeutics* of E. A. Wallis Budge,<sup>2</sup> this Andronicus is mentioned three times (pp. 237, 521, 654 of the translation).

Perhaps some other Andronicus whom we do not know might be set forth as the author of the present fragment, but the main point of interest which it contains concerning the Jewish writer Asaph will hardly be affected. The impression that one gathers from the wording of the translation, is, however, that Andronicus was a Christian writer speaking of olden Pagan times of Greece. He relates how before his time a certain literary man called Asaph, a Jew and an "historian of the Hebrews," had given to the twelve signs of the Zodiac the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. Now who was this Asaph ?

*Primâ facia* one might think of Josephus as the real "historian of the Jews". The quotation, however, is not found in Josephus, and probably Josephus did not write in Aramaic. Further, Syriac writers transcribe rightly Josephus' well-known name as *Yusiphus*. The problem is therefore to be approached from another side. In the *Jewish Encyclopædia* we are informed that Asaph Ben Berechiah, one of the captive Levites carried off to Assyria (I Chron. vi. 39), is given in later Jewish legends as a vizier to Solomon. The article

<sup>1</sup> W. Wright in *Journal of Sacred Literature*, 1866, p. 521.

<sup>2</sup> Leipzig-Oxford, 1913.

which is written by Gottheil refers to the *Fihrist* (I, 19) as embodying the same information as that found in Jellinek, *B. H.* v. 23. I was, however, unable to find the name of Asaph in the *Fihrist*. If Gottheil is right in his opinion that in the Jewish tradition Asaph is a vizier of Solomon, we might perhaps find in him a certain similarity with Aḥikar. Aḥikar was the vizier of Sennacherib, and Asaph the vizier of Solomon.

The fragment here printed, which can hardly be later than the fourth century of the Christian era, presents Asaph as a Jewish writer and a Jewish historian, and adds that he wrote in Aramaic and not in Greek. There were evidently at the beginning of the Christian era, or in some unknown period preceding or following the Christian era, books written in Aramaic by a certain Asaph. In lapse of time mediæval tradition brooded over his name and made him the vizier of Solomon.

In many public libraries there is a Jewish medical treatise attributed to a certain Asaph. The manuscript preserved in Paris (No. 1197, 7) calls him Asaph *ha-Yarḥōni*, that is to say, "the astronomer". In the historical introduction to the treatise Asaph is placed between Hippocrates and Dioscorides. The style, however, of the treatise does not bear out such an antiquity, and Steinschneider has even thought that it was translated into Hebrew from some Syriac original.

The previous lines induce us to suppose that there might have been a Jewish astronomer, historian, and physician called Asaph living in the centuries immediately preceding or following the Christian era. His works having been lost, his surviving name might have been prefixed to some later literary productions, in order to enhance their credit. On this point our fragment is important and deserves careful consideration. It is possible that the author of the medical treatise referred to above was a person distinct from the one quoted in this fragment; in this hypothesis the Asaph who wrote the medical treatise would have lived somewhere in the eighth to the tenth century and the Asaph of our fragment would have lived at a much earlier date. For the sake of further researches it is also useful to state, that in the *Chronicles of Jerahmeel* (edit. M. Gaster, p. 230), there is reference to a certain Asaph, governor of the garden of Lebanon, and contemporary of Darius King of Media, Cyrus King of Persia, and Zorob-



babel, and living, therefore, in a period immediately following the Jewish deportation to Babylonia. We learn from the *Jewish Encyclopædia* (XII, 688) that the duodecimal division of the Zodiac is first mentioned in the Jewish literature in the "Sefer Yezirah" which is of unknown antiquity (possibly sixth century). In *Yalkut* (n. 418) an attempt is made to apply the twelve signs of the Zodiac to the twelve tribes of Israel; the following lines will attribute this attempt to hebraicize the Zodiac to a much earlier date. The manuscript which contains the text is the same as the one described above under the section "Book of Shem son of Noah".

#### TRANSLATION.

Again a discourse upon the twelve *στοιχεία* of the sun, written by Andronicus the Wise, the Philosopher and the learned.

Because the lovers of truth must always remember and understand the good and prominent things which enlighten the mind of those who seek after them, I have been anxious, my brethren, to lay down before you the prominent question of the evolution of the course of (the sun), that is to say the limits, the times and all the course of its succession with the days of the moon and the influence of the twelve *στοιχεία* which gravitate circuitously in the number of the twelve months of the year, and which foretell events which happen to us by order of God, creator of everything.

In investigating<sup>1</sup> these *στοιχεία* the Greeks have defined and shown their names and their entities. They have called them by the names of their gods, and they follow one another in the order of the *κανόνες* of the numbers of the days of the months, that is to say according to the lunar computation.

They begin with Dio son of Cronus, and they call him Aries. After him comes Poseidon his brother whom they call Pisces. After him comes Apollo, whom they call Aquarius. After this they put Ares, whom they call "Dog of Water," but with us it is Capricornus. After him they say Hermes, whom they call "Kérwān"<sup>2</sup> (Sagittarius). After this they say Pluto, whom they call Sçorpio. After this they say Athena, whom they call Libra. After this they put Aphrodite, whom they call "Virgo" who is Spica. After this they say Artemis,

<sup>1</sup> The text here is ungrammatical and somewhat corrupt.

<sup>2</sup> Is it Crotus?

whom they call Leo. After this they say Dionysus, whom they call Cancer. After this come the Dioscuri, called Castor and Pollux, sons of Zeus by Leda, and they call them Gemini. After them comes Hercules, whom they call Taurus.

Asaph the writer and the historian of the Hebrews explains and teaches clearly the history of all these, but does not write and show them with Greek names, but according to the names of the sons of Jacob. As to the effects and influences of these *στοιχεία* he, too, enumerates them fully without adding or diminishing anything, but in simply changing in a clear language their names into those of the Patriarchs. He begins them in the Aramaic language and puts at the head Taurus, which he calls "Reuben". After it comes Aries, which they<sup>1</sup> call "Simeon". After it comes Pisces, which they call "Levi". After it comes Aquarius, which they call "Issachar". After it comes Capricornus, which they call "Naphtali". After it he sketches a rider while shooting, and calls him "Gad," and he is analogous with the Kirek ?<sup>2</sup> of the Greeks. After it comes Scorpio, which he calls "Dan". After it he mentions Libra, which he calls "Asher". After it he mentions Virgo, whom he calls "Dinah". After it (comes) Leo, which he calls "Judah". Then he sketches Cancer, which he calls "Zebulun". After it he mentions Gemini, whom he calls "Ephraim" and "Manasseh".

As lovers of truth you will see and understand that these (*στοιχεία*) have been named according to the number of days (of lunar computation). I say this, even if it happens that the peal of thunder is heard (in them). At each month of the year, each one of the *στοιχεία* turns circuitously according to the *κανόνες* of the months and gravitates according to the number of the moons, each one of them having been brought about by the three *κανόνες* of the evolution of the moon. This is their exposition, their order, and all their influence of which we are aware.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The copyist has used many verbs in plural which must have been in singular.

<sup>2</sup> Is not this a mistake for Crotus ?

<sup>3</sup> The Syriac translation of all this last passage is corrupt and ungrammatical. The translator does not seem to have understood the Greek original.

SOME EARLY JUDÆO-CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS IN  
THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY.

TEXTS.

508 אבא רבא דבית מלמי אבא אבא  
 דאמריה חזקיהו רבא דבית מלמי רבא  
 דבית מלמי רבא דבית מלמי

אבא רבא דבית מלמי רבא דבית מלמי  
 רבא דבית מלמי רבא דבית מלמי רבא דבית מלמי  
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לא מעבט א תד לחדש גבול דפליס חזק  
 לא חמית דבעתה פעזילא סגבול דספלה  
 תגל לא סתלה לכוז דנל. אלהל אעול  
 אבך לא אפסותי בך פזבילא סאללה  
 דבילל סלך לא גזל וסל סדבסותי גבול  
 דאסבך אעל לא אב סל לכה פזבילא.  
 ססחל סלך חזק חזק אפפליסלסע סגז  
 וסל סל אע אעל סעל סעל סעל. סלך  
 דלסגז א דל דספליסל סל סל סל אע  
 סרסנטס. סך דלס א סל אגזל אעל דבול  
 ססל ססזס אעמל אגזל דססל ססס  
 אעסע. סבול סס סך אבך סל חזק  
 סל סל סך סך סל סל סל סל סל סל  
 אסל דבול אע ססל אע דל אבך  
 אגזס. ססגל חזל אבך ספלזסזסזל  
 אגז אגזל אע דפול אע ססססס.  
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 סלסזל אפפליסל. סססס אבך אבך  
 אגזל ססזל סל סל סל. ססך סל  
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על סתתם לא צדקת אף כי הם צדקו  
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 ١٩٠١ ١٩٠٢ ١٩٠٣ ١٩٠٤ ١٩٠٥ ١٩٠٦ ١٩٠٧ ١٩٠٨ ١٩٠٩ ١٩١٠  
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לְהַכְרִיז׃ סְנַחְמֶן לְחַשֵּׁן אֶלְ לָל. וְשָׁחַד  
 עֲמִידָה׃ סְעָח לְלִשְׁתִּי סְעָח דְּבָרָא כְּעִלָּה  
 סְעָח סְעָח לְשׁ לְלִלָּה סְעָח אֶל לָל  
 כָּלִישׁ לְדִין נְחָח לְחַשְׁתִּי כְּבָרָא סְעָח לְעִלָּה׃  
 סְעָח עֲמִידָה׃ סְעָח סְעָח מְעָח לְשׁ אֶל לָל  
 דְּלִזְהַבְּ סוּרָה לְמְעָח דְּסָח דְּאֶל לְסָח לְשׁ  
 עֲמִידָה׃ לְאַחַד לְאַחַד לְעָלִי טָעֶה עֲמִידָה  
 סְעָח לְשׁ עֲמִידָה לְשׁ דְּסְעָח לְמְעָח  
 לְסָח לְשׁ לְעָלִי אֶל לָל לְשׁ לְעִידָה׃  
 מְעָח אֶל נָחַד סְעָח לְסָח לְעִידָה׃  
 סְעָח דְּסוּרָה לְסוּרָה לְשׁ עֲמִידָה דְּסְעָח לְעָלִי  
 לְשׁ לְשׁ סְעָח לְשׁ אֶל לָל לְסָח לְשׁ  
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אמת פני אלמשי הלל רבדה שו לומו  
 לט עמדו לאזל תז חל מו דלאעמא ל  
 תאזל. סגז הלל למלאה חל מו  
 דעתל. אמו לט עמדו למפלזזהזל  
 עמד מו אמו הלל לט. סגז עמדי  
 זאמ וזל לט לט אל הלל תז סגזא ש.  
 לו א ש הלל רבדה לאמו. סגזי לו  
 דלאמו לתז לט תעלמו מנת אטא  
 סגז דזל דנת. לא תעלמו סגז  
 דמא סגז דמא לאעמא טעמס.  
 סגזי לו לט לט לאעמא לסואי.  
 סגזי לו לט לט סגזי לו דמעתז  
 ס. לו לט סגזזהזל אמו [מעתז  
 לו דט] דאעמא ל לסואי דתגזי ש  
 דמא ל לסואי דאטי. סגזי לו  
 עמדו למשי הלל סגזי לו רב  
 לט ש הלל סגזי לו סגזי לו  
 למשי הלל סגזי לו סגזי לו  
 לומו ש סגזי לו סגזי לו סגזי לו  
 דמא למשי מלא סגזי לו סגזי לו  
 סגזי לו סגזי לו סגזי לו סגזי לו  
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חלמיש ופרימס עלהש ונסתהו חן  
 נבנן בן [לש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]  
 [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש] [ש]

חב ל גבס גלמל אה גתגדל סלמסס  
 סמל אסס גס זססל ספמל אסס למל  
 גפסמסס . לל אס למ גס זסס סגמל  
 למ סלל גלל סמל אסס לס  
 פספמל סלל גלל ספמל גזל .  
 אסמ למל אסס לס ספמל גלמס  
 לל פספמל סלל גלל פספמל סג  
 למ סלל גסויל למ אגמל סל סמל .  
 סמל למסס סלל [ספמל] אסס גמל  
 גמל [אסס ג] סלל ספמל אה... ג  
 מל סלמל לסס . [גלל] גלל למל למס  
 [ספמל גזל] גגל למל למל  
 [למל ג] למל סלל . [למל] למל  
 סלל למל למל גלל גמל אה למל  
 סגל סגל למל למל גמל גמל גמל  
 גמל למל למל . סגל למל גמל  
 גמל למל למל [למל] סלל למל למל  
 סגל סלל למל למל למל למל למל  
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אהט מללא דיל ט פלהחא דעמלא  
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 סמסזל

מילא דג דווגט דתחלוט פמסגה  
 סעסעלה דסמב עזזל תילק דעפתי  
 סמסגת א פ מסגת א דמלא דילק דתמ  
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 א פ דגל דלמס א דמלא דמסגת  
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 סמסגמ סמסגמ אל אילק דגתג  
 למסגל לה א תעסג אלסל אגגל דחל.  
 חג מלא ולק (sic) ס לטע פלהחא ט  
 סג<sup>1</sup> דמסגת ס. סססגת ס. א סמסע  
 סססג<sup>2</sup> סססג. חג חס אע אל אמסגל  
 דלמסגת ס. סגג סג טג סג דגה דסג  
 דסל סססע דמסגת דג דמסגל דמסג  
 סג דג טסגתל דמסגזל חג סגג סגמלא

<sup>1</sup> Cod. סעזל

<sup>2</sup> Cod. טסס טסא



