

## Recent Foreign Theology.

### Strack's 'Outlines of Biblical Aramaic.'<sup>1</sup>

IN the *Theol. Literaturblatt*, 27th March last, Professor Strack has a very interesting article on the results of recent studies in the older Aramaic. In particular, the light that has been thrown upon this language by recently-discovered inscriptions is exhibited in considerable detail. From the nature of the case, however, this is a field many parts of which can be worked only by specialists. On the other hand, *Biblical Aramaic* (the language of Ezra iv. 8-vi. 18, vii. 12-26; Dan. ii. 4b-vii. 28; Jer. x. 11, and two words in Gen. xxxi. 47) demands the attention of every theologian. Yet Dr. Strack hazards the assertion that to ninety out of every hundred Old Testament students this is a *terra incognita*. And he is probably well within the mark in his calculation. His own little work, which forms the subject of this notice, will render such a condition of things in the future impossible or at least inexcusable. Intended in no way as a rival to the larger work of Kautzsch (*Grammatik d. Biblisch-Aramäischen*), Dr. Strack's *Abriss* will doubtless prove the favourite with those who have hitherto been deterred, for want of a handy text-book, from exploring this field of study. Owing to circumstances which the author explains in the article above referred to, he has been compelled to combine with some haste in one work elements which he had intended to handle in separate publications. There is (1) the Grammar of Biblical Aramaic, which sets out with a brief but thoroughgoing investigation of the relations between Hebrew and Aramaic in regard to various consonants and vowels. This preliminary study facilitates the comprehension of the following sections in which special attention is devoted to the noun and the verb, and in which we have a very useful list of all the verbal forms that occur in Old Testament Aramaic. (2) The Text of the Aramaic portions of the Old Testament is given *in extenso*, with variants and critical notes at the foot

<sup>1</sup> *Abriss d. Biblischen Aramäischen. Grammatik, nach Handschriften Berichtigte Texte, Wörterbuch.* Von Prof. D. Hermann L. Strack. Leipzig, 1896, J. C. Hinrichs. 1 m., 60 pf.

of the page. The author takes as his basis the text of Baer, but does not hesitate to introduce occasional modifications, the result of independent investigation. Not a few students will probably be grateful to him for lightening the text of most of the accents and a great deal of Baer's notation, which have little value as helps either for reading or for translation. Dr. Strack has personally examined various MSS., which are described in the Introduction. Two of these, which have the so-called Babylonian or superlinear punctuation, are of special value, because they are largely unaffected by the conceptions which dominated the later Massorettes. Then comes, what will be appreciated in a great many quarters, (3) the Vocabulary, in which the Biblical-Aramaic words receive their proper German equivalents.

By this little volume Dr. Strack has conferred a boon upon Old Testament students which we are confident they will not be slow to recognise. It implies an amount of work out of all proportion to its size, and contains an amount of information out of all proportion to its price. It is precisely the book many have been waiting for.

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### A New Babylonian Find.

IN the last number of Maspero's *Receuil des Travaux* appears an article by M. Scheil on a newly-found stele of Nabonidus. The find is carefully described, and the inscription reproduced from photographs in a very perfect manner. The learned Assyriologist transliterates and translates it with all the happy facility of a French Orientalist. The contents of the inscription, consisting of the lower portions of eleven long columns, and preserving nearly six hundred lines, are most interesting and valuable. In the first place, we learn that Sennacherib was murdered by his own son: the exact words are *māru šit libbi-šu ina kakku urassiššu*. This agrees with the Babylonian chronicle in mentioning but one murderer. Next we learn that Nineveh was destroyed by the Medes, the Umman-manda, as Nabonidus calls them. Their king seems to have been named

Iriba-tukte, which looks like an attempt to assimilate a barbarian name to something that would have significance to a Babylonian. The Babylonian monarch considers that this overthrow of Nineveh took place in revenge for the indignities Sennacherib had inflicted on Marduk, the supreme divinity of Babylon. He does not claim that the Babylonians had any hand in it, but terms the Medes his allies. Further, it is clear that this overthrow took place in B.C. 607. For Nabonidus says the Umman-manda destroyed all the temples of Assyria, and among them the temple of Sin at Harran. Nabonidus in the first year of his reign (B.C. 556) received commands in a dream to restore this temple. Three years later, after Cyrus had defeated these barbarians, Nabonidus was able to carry out the command, and states that was fifty-four years after the destruction of the temple. Further, we learn that Labaši-Marduk, king of Babylon, was only a child, and did not know how to rule; and that he came to the throne contrary to the will of the gods. Lastly, we learn that Nabonidus was not of the royal family, for he only calls himself the delegate of Nebuchadnezzar and Nergal Šar-ušur. The grounds for all the above conclusions are ably stated by M. Scheil. The remainder of the inscription, like nearly all the monuments of these later Babylonian kings, is concerned entirely with accounts of temple restorations, religious ceremonies, etc. Rarely do they give such valuable historical information.

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### The New Hebrew Concordance.<sup>1</sup>

THE want of a satisfactory Hebrew Concordance has long been seriously felt by all those whose duty or inclination it is to study the original languages of the Old Testament. Fürst's was by far the best, but he often chose the context of the words in, it would seem, a merely haphazard way, and he did not profess to include either the particles or the proper names. For the former one had to turn to Noldius, and for the latter to one or other of the small concordances expressly devoted to them. Neither was there any Concordance that took note

<sup>1</sup> *Veteris Testamenti Concordantiæ Hebraicæ atque Chaldaicæ*. Solomon Mandelkern. Leipzig: Veit & Co. 1896.

of proposed emendations of the Massoretic text, numerous and often important though these now are. There was room for a Concordance which should combine everything.

Dr. Mandelkern felt himself moved to fill up the void, and has to some extent succeeded. He has indeed done but little for the last item. No doubt it was difficult, but he mentions very few emendations and these only in his little Rabbinic notes, and has not affixed any indication to the passages themselves that such emendations have been suggested. Dr. Mandelkern should have studied under Mr. Redpath, and have learned how to make a Concordance as useful as possible, without passing a single hair's-breadth over the due limits of his subject.

But as regards the contexts that he quotes for each word, Dr. Mandelkern has conferred an immense benefit upon us. They are, with hardly an exception, much more carefully chosen than those in Fürst. It is also a convenience that he has adopted the Hebrew order of the books instead of the Vulgate. We have further tested several words taken entirely at random, and, so far as we can judge by doing so, find that the accuracy lies on the side of Dr. Mandelkern. He has a serious misprint on page 248, but this evidently is a misprint and nothing more. Whether he has made an improvement in putting only one reference where the same word comes twice in one verse is an open question. Fürst gives two, Dr. Mandelkern one, quoting the whole verse at length. He further helps us by often putting the Massoretic points in doubtful cases. We wonder that where the same form comes under more than one root he does not put cross references. It would have been an advantage.

Although we cannot candidly say that Dr. Mandelkern's quite comes up to the ideal of a Concordance, it is doubtless the best that exists for the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Bible. It is well printed, and the completeness of its contents makes it much more serviceable than any other.

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### Lipsius of Jena.

R. A. LIPSIVS (whose course is sketched for us by Professor Reischle of Göttingen in the *Christliche Welt*, 1896, Nos. 8, 9, 10, 12) has left a deep mark