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## ARTICLE VI.

## AN EXAMINATION OF ISAIAH XIII.

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THE following attempt to show the genuineness of this chapter, and to find its historical occasion in the circumstances of Isaiah's time, is exposed to an enfilading fire from two opposite fortresses. The ancient view understands the chapter to treat of the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, an event which Isaiah was inspired to foresee; the fulfilment being so minutely literal that the prophecy can only be explained as a supernatural revelation from God. This general theory is still held by eminent writers; for example, Rawlinson in the "Pulpit Commentary."

A leading modern view—that of most German, and many English and American scholars—starting with the same reference of the passage to B. C. 538, finds in it a contemporary picture, or nearly so, by some unknown prophet.

A preliminary standing-ground between these extremes is a desideratum, and may be gained by means of hypotheses.

Let us suppose, then, that the traditional theory is correct so far as this, that the prophecy was fulfilled in the days of Cyrus; we cannot stop there, and neither does the common view. For the prophecy predicts an utter desolation, so that Babylon should never be inhabited. Now the Persian conquest effected a change of rulers, but nothing remotely approaching the accomplishment of these conditions. The common reply is that prophecy is not subject to strict limitations of time. The prophet sees peak rising above peak, but cannot see the space between them. The condi-

tion of Babylon at present, and for many centuries past, is in striking accordance with this word of Holy Writ. The fulfilment began with the conquest by Cyrus, and was prosecuted under Darius Hystaspes, Xerxes, and the Seleucidæ. By the time of Strabo, some seven centuries after Isaiah, Babylon was almost a desert. Pausanias, in the second century of our era, says that nothing remained but the walls; since then, the literal fulfilment of the prophecy has never been interrupted.

Now if this theory proves to be the best explanation of all the facts of the problem, it is sure of final acceptance. It is capable, however, of extension backwards as well as forwards; and if it appears that Babylon was taken in the age of Isaiah, in a manner at least as conformable to the prediction as the conquest by Cyrus, the traditional view will simply be supplemented by the statement that the prophecy began to be fulfilled in the eighth or seventh century instead of the sixth. Those who hold this view are therefore as much interested as any one in ascertaining whether such facts exist. The immense expansion of Babylon in the intermediate century or two no more contravenes the prediction on this hypothesis than the failure of the city to decline during the two centuries from Cyrus to Alexander contravenes it on the ordinary hypothesis. In fact, a fulfilment in the age of Hezekiah is a distinct advantage to the predictive element; for the common view needs correcting as well as supplementing. Whatever may be true of prophecy in general, this particular prophecy does *not* stand out of relation to the time of its fulfilment. It closes with the distinct statement, deliberately repeated, "Her time" (that is, the time of Babylon's overthrow) "is near to come; her days shall not be prolonged;"—but on the common explanation, her time was far to come, and her days were for centuries prolonged.

We may be confident, then, that no objection from the standpoint of tradition will lie against the attempt to find

an initial fulfilment of this chapter in or near the lifetime of its author.

The preliminary defence against what I have called a leading modern view is obtained by means of other hypotheses. A critical glance at the entire passage, Isa. xiii. 1–xiv. 27, divides it into four portions, which may or may not have been originally separate.

The first is chapter xiii., which we will call *a*. It comes to a solemn and appropriate close in the sentence already quoted.

Section *b* comprises xiv. 1, 2. It introduces the wholly new conception of Israel in exile, and predicts that they will hereafter rule over their oppressors.

Section *c* extends from xiv. 3 to 23. This ode on the king of Babylon is very different from anything else in the book of Isaiah.

Section *d*, xiv. 24–27, relates to the overthrow of Assyria in the land of Jehovah, whose hand is stretched out over all the earth.

This last portion, by common consent, belongs to Isaiah, and alludes to the destruction of Sennacherib's host. The dominant critical view proceeds on the theory that the three previous portions belong together, and were written about the close of the exile. Thus the passage is divided as follows: *abc* exilian, *d* Isaian.

Let us now make the supposition that each of these other three sections, as well as *d*, is a separate prophecy, *a* and *b* being joined mechanically by a redactor who simply inserted the particle *for*. Grant for the sake of argument that *b* and *c* will then be exilian, it does not follow that *a* will be. Babylon was certainly captured more than once in Isaiah's lifetime, and so he *may* have predicted its utter overthrow in chapter xiii. This hypothesis gives the formula: *a* Isaian, *b* exilian, *c* exilian, *d* Isaian.

By another hypothesis, we may leave *c* unchanged, but

join *b* with *a*. The redactor made no insertion, we will suppose. The logical connection apparent is the real connection. Babylon falls because Jehovah has mercy on Zion and grants her deliverance from captivity. Why now must this particular captivity fall in the sixth century rather than the eighth? And why must the writer have been a captive himself instead of watching the situation from afar? How many things our critics read into the text which are not there!

In Isaiah's time the northern kingdom of Israel had been broken up and in good part swept away; Tiglath-Pileser carried the captives to Babylonia among other countries. Now if the writer of xiv. 1, 2, might have formed the expectation that the positions of oppressor and oppressed would be exchanged by Israel and Babylon on the fall of the latter, and if Isaiah might have foreseen this last event, then we have a basis for grouping as follows: *a b* Isaian, *c* exilian, *d* Isaian.

One more combination remains to be noticed: *a b c d* Isaian. This differs from what I have called the ancient, or traditional, view, in avoiding the necessity for Isaiah's miraculous foresight of Cyrus and his age. That view would permit the grouping: *a b c* Isaian, *d* Isaian, the two subjects being different; and so, after xiv. 23, the Revisers' "space" would remain (see the American Committee's note). But the theory before us understands the passage xiii. 1-xiv. 27, from first to last, to refer to the Assyria of Isaiah's time, for which Babylon stands, as one of its principal cities, and whose king repeatedly calls himself king of Babylon. If it be granted that in the midst of a lofty poetical characterization, such as Isaiah xiv., alternate expressions, like "the Assyrian" and "the king of Babylon," may refer to the same power, this hypothesis can be made quite forcible.

Five different combinations have now been proposed, each not only possible, but possessing some measure of

plausibility. As *d* is a constant quantity, we have (1) *a b c* Isaian, the traditional theory; (2) *a b c* exilian, the prevailing modern theory; (3) *a* Isaian, *b* exilian, *c* exilian, Bredenkamp's theory; (4) *a b* Isaian, *c* exilian, for which much might be said; (5) *abcd* Isaian, Strachey's theory. All these except (2) permit chapter xiii. to have been written by Isaiah. Hence we may proceed to investigate in its natural order the evidence for his authorship, hoping to secure unbiased attention to the facts which support the position chosen. The natural order, as I conceive, is as follows: *prima facie* statements, linguistic parallels, historical environment.

I. The *prima facie* evidence is twofold.

1. The chapter has come down to us in the book of Isaiah, a book which reaches us by a tradition (in the literal sense of the word) unbroken for more than two thousand years at any rate, i. e., from the time of the LXX. translation. Those to whom this evidence is a trifle would do well to reflect that on similar evidence we receive the great majority of all our ancient books. Be the evidence in the case great or small, there is nothing in this particular department to be put on the other side.

2. Our chapter has a special title: **מָטָא בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר חָזָה** **אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה בְּיַד אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרָיִם**. If the evidence requires it, we shall surrender the genuineness of chapters xl.-lxvi. and all the other antilegomena, including xiv. 1-23; but xiii. occupies a stronger position, behind the stubborn earthwork of its first verse. Dr. Rowland Williams and others may assert, as though it were a plain matter of fact, that the title was inserted at a late and unreliable period; but in so saying they speak what they do not know, and testify what they have not seen. It might be convenient for us to declare, in defence of the Isaian authorship, that the name Nineveh originally stood in place of Babylon in xiii. 19, and that it was changed by some later scribe; but we should be properly

challenged to subpoena the witness who caught the scribe in his blundering act. The evidence for the word *Isaiah* in verse 1 is not similar, it is precisely identical evidence with that for the word *Babylon* in verse 19.

Professor Cheyne in his Bampton lectures may show the unreliability of the psalm titles, and as fast as they are proved inappropriate we ought to reject them; but in the case before us, the question of appropriateness comes up later; till then, on *prima facie* grounds, chapter xiii. is *Isaiah's* by a double claim, of the book and of the title; there being absolutely nothing to set on the other side.

II. The linguistic evidence is threefold; from vocabulary, grammar, and phraseology.

1. *The vocabulary.* A special Index to *Isaiah* xiii. is presented herewith. There are in all 171 words, 135 of which, about four-fifths, recur in the commonly acknowledged parts of *Isaiah*. It matters not, then, how often they are found in the exilian or post-exilian literature; being themselves *Isaian*, they confirm, so far as their testimony goes, the presumption of the *prima facie* evidence. Of the 36 words not in *Isaiah* A, two are ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, namely, דִּיהָא, the doleful creatures of verse 22, and הַבָּשָׂה, the epithet *bare* in verse 2. Of the remaining 34 words, 21 are in the pre-exile prophets (not including *Joel* and *Jer.* i. and li.) and 7 others in the early histories (*Judges*, 1 and 2 *Samuel*); that is, 28 of the 34 words are in the pre-exile literature. The remaining 6 out of 171 words could hardly establish a *Babylonian* habitat for our author, but I proceed to examine them.

(1) הָלַח verse 20, *to pitch tent*. The *Piel* occurs in this place, and nowhere else at all. The *Kal* has the opposite sense, *to move tent*, and is so rendered in the Revised Version in the only two places where it occurs, *Gen.* xiii. 12, 18, of *Lot* and of *Abraham*. The verb is found in no other

conjugation. Hence as to meaning it is another  $\alpha\pi.$  λεγ. in our passage, and proves nothing on either side.

(2)  $\text{אִלְמוֹת}$  verse 22, R. V. *wolves*, margin *howling creatures*, is found only twice besides, at Isa. xxxiv. 14, the oracle on Edom, and at Jer. l. 39, against Babylon. These passages are practically identical. As their genuineness is disputed, they remain neutral in the argument from diction; but if we establish on other grounds the Isaian authorship of chapter xiii., the repetition is easily explained, whoever wrote them.

(3)  $\text{אֲרָמֹת}$  verse 22. In the sense of *widows*, this word is common in Isaiah A, but in the sense of *desolate places*, a play of words being suggested between this word and  $\text{אֲרָמֹת}$ , it recurs only at Ezek. xix. 7. As we shall see, the pun is quite in Isaiah's manner.

(4)  $\text{דְמוּת}$  verse 4. This is the commonest word to express the abstract quality of likeness. There are several others in the language:  $\text{דְמִיּוֹן}$ ,  $\text{מִשְׁל}$ ,  $\text{מִסָּל}$  or  $\text{סָמַל}$ , but it so happens that not one of these is used in the clearly pre-exilic literature, though  $\text{תְּבִנִית}$  occurs in Psalm lviii., which Delitzsch and others consider Davidic. The other three words are exceedingly rare; and  $\text{תְּבִנִית}$  is more properly concrete, a *pattern*; it is distinguished from  $\text{רִמֵּשׁ}$  at 2 Kings xvi. 10, where Ahaz sends from Damascus the likeness of the altar and its pattern. The author of Isa. xiii. 4 hears the voice of a multitude in the mountains, and sees the likeness ( $\text{דְמוּת}$ ) of a great host; whether it was Isaiah or some one else who expressed this idea,  $\text{דְמוּת}$  was the most fitting word to use.

(5)  $\text{זָהָב}$  verse 12, *fine gold*. This occurs elsewhere eight times. If Professor Cheyne is right in making all the psalms late, we have no sure evidence that this was an early word; if otherwise, we note its occurrence in Psalms xix. and xxi. At all events, there is no other word for *fine gold*.

(6)  $\text{עֲרֵמוֹת}$  verse 21, R. V., *satyrs*, margin *he-goats*, Am.

appendix *wild goats*, omitting margin. Isa. xxxiv. 14 is treated in the same way. *Per contra*, at Lev. xvii. 7, the Revisers read: "And they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto the he-goats [margin, *satyrs*], after whom they go a whoring;" and in 2 Chron. xi. 15, Jeroboam appointed him priests for the he-goats [margin, "*satyrs*. See Lev. xvii. 7"]. The American appendix has no note on either passage. The only real parallel is Isa. xxxiv. 14; and hence the  $\text{שְׂעִירִים}$  are as indecisive as the  $\text{אֵיִם}$  considered before.

This completes the list. It is claimed, however, that some of the words in our chapter are used in a different sense from that in which Isaiah employs them. Dillmann instances, for example,  $\text{רָהַיְפוּ}$  verse 2, as contrasted with xi. 15 and xix. 16. But it will not be seriously argued that a writer in any language may not speak of "shaking the hand" now as a threat, and again as a signal. The word  $\text{עָרַבְתִּי}$  which Dillmann also claims as a late word, is, as he notices elsewhere, the earlier *form* of the word, occurring at Jer. iii. 2; while  $\text{עָרַב}$  is exclusively late, being found only in Nehemiah and Second Chronicles. On the other hand, Dillmann admits the following words in chapter xiii. to be characteristic of Isaiah (not peculiar to him, but favorite words of his): verse 4,  $\text{חִמּוֹן}$ ,  $\text{יִשְׁאֹן}$ ; verse 5,  $\text{כִּקְצֹה}$ ; verse 7,  $\text{יָלַב יָסֵם}$ ; verse 19,  $\text{נִמְאָה}$ ,  $\text{תִּמְאָרַת}$ ,  $\text{עֲבִי}$ ,  $\text{נִמְאָה}$ ; verse 2,  $\text{נָס}$ ; verse 3,  $\text{עֲלִיז}$ ; verse 5,  $\text{מְדַדֵּק}$ ; verse 8,  $\text{צִיץ}$ .

The following index should be compared with the writer's vocabulary of Isa. xii. (*Journal Biblical of Literature*, vol. x. part 2); also with the index to Isa. xl.-lxvi. (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, October, 1881; January, 1882). This kind of evidence has often been overrated; the present tendency is toward the opposite extreme. The chief value of such philological testimony is seen in combination with other evidence.

## INDEX TO ISAIAH XIII.

## K

קָחַל	Pl. 20 only. Kal Gen. xiii. 12, 18 only.
קָחַר	10, 10 = A
קָחַה	21 only.
קָחַו	Kal 8 = A
קָחַי	22 = xxxiv. 14; Jer. l. 39 only.
קָחַךְ	14 = A
קָחַשׁ	8, 14, 14 = A
קָחַרְיָהוּ	9, Jer. Prov. only.
קָחַל	8, 14, 14 = A
קָחַלִּים	19 and xxxv. 4; xxxvii. 4, 16, 17, 19 = A
קָחַלְקָה	22 = Eze. xix. 7 only.
קָחַרְץ	1 = A
קָחַשׁ	7, 12 = A
קָחַי	3 = A
קָחַה	Ni. 4 = A (xvi. 10) B. Jud. 1 Sam. 2 Sam. Hos. Mic. Kal A B
קָחַה	8, 9, 13 = A
קָחַרְץ	5, 5, 9, 13, 14 = A
קָחַה	16 = A Pl. not in B
קָחַשׁר	1, 17 = A
קָחַרְתִּי	17, 19, 19 = A

## L

לָחַד	4, 10, 13, 13, 15, 17 = A
לָחַל	1, 19; xiv. 4, 22; xxi. 9; xxxix. 1, 3, 6, 7 and B. Mic. iv. 10; Jer. <i>passim</i> .
לָחַל	Ni. 8; xxi. 3; Jud. 1 Sam. 2 Sam.
לָחַח	Kal. 2, 5, 6, 9, 22 = A
לָחַח	18 and B. Hos. Mic. Jud.
לָחַח	16, 21 = A
לָחַח	1, 18 = A
לָחַח רָחַח	21; xxxiv. 13; xliii. 20; Mic.

## M

מָחַח	3. 11 = A
מָחַח	11, 19 = A
מָחַח	3 = A

גוי 4 = A

גם 8 = A

ד

הדר 20, 20; xxxiv. 10, 10, 17, 17; xxxviii. 12 and B. Jud. Jer.

ימיה 4; xl. 18.

רפר Ni. 15 only. Kal Jud. 1 Sam.

ה

ה 5, 5, 8, 9, 10, 10, 13, 15, 15 = A

היהח Kal 14, 19 = A

היקל 22 = A

הלל Hi. 10; Job only. Pi. B. Jud. 2 Sam.

המון 4 = A

הנח 9, 17 = A

הר 2, 4 = A

ז

זר 11; Pa. Pro. Jer. Mal. only.

זקב 17 = A

זעם 5 = A

ח

חבל Pi. 5 = A

חבל 8 = A

חול Kal 8 = A; xxvi. 17, 18 and B. Jud. Hos. Mic. etc.

היח Kal 18; 1 Sam. Jer. Eze.

היהח Kal 1 = A

חטא 9 = A

חזץ Kal 17 = A. B. Hos. Mic. 1 Sam. 2 Sam.

חרב 15 = A

חריץ 9, 13. Hos. Nah. Jer. 1 Sam.

חשב Kal 17 = A

חשק Kal 10 = A

י

יד 2, 7 = A

ידה 4, 5, 6, 9, 13 = A

י'ם	6, 9, 13, 22 = A
י'לר	Kal 8 = A
י'לל	Hk. 6 = A
י'צא	Kal 10 = A
י'קר	Hk. 12; Pro. only. Kal B. 1 Sam.
י'רר	10 and B. Jer.
י'שב	Kal 20 = A
י'שקרו	1 = A

## ב

ב	6, 8, 14, 14, 19 = A
ב'רב	10; xiv. 13 and B. Am.
ב'י	6, 10 = A
ב'ל	5, 7, 7, 15, 15 = A
ב'לי	5 = A
ב'ן	7, 13 = A
ב'סיל	10; Am.
ב'סה	17 = A
ב'שרים	19 = A (xxiii. 13) and B. Jer. <i>passim</i> .

## ג

ג	2, 3, 3, 5, 9, 9, 16, 20, 22 = A
ג'א	10, 10, 17, 17, 18, 18, 20, 20, 20, 22 = A
ג'רב	7 = A
ג'רב	8 = A

## ד

ד'רי	17; xxi. 2; Jer.
ד'שבה	19 = A
ד'לא	Kal 21 = A
ד'לחה	4 = A
ד'לחה	4, 19 = A
ד'ן	5, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13 = A
ד'סט	Ni. 7 = A
ד'צא	Ni. 15 = A
ד'קום	13 = A
ד'רוק	5 = A (characteristic).
ד'א	1 = A (characteristic).
ד'שה	Ni. 22; Eze. only. Kal. A. Pu. A.

ג

קנא	<i>Hi.</i> 10; 2 <i>Sam.</i> xxii. = <i>Ps.</i> xviii. only. <i>Kal</i> A Job only.
קרח	<i>Ho.</i> 14 only. <i>Ni.</i> xvi. 3, 4; xxvii. 13. <i>Pu.</i> A.
קריב	2 = A
קיס	<i>Kal</i> 14 = A
קינח	<i>Hi.</i> 2 = A
קס	2 = A B (characteristic).
קצר	18 = A
קשל	<i>Kal</i> 15 = A
קצח	20 = A
קטא	<i>Kal</i> 2 = A

ד

קלם	19 = A
קסח	<i>Ni.</i> 15 only. <i>Kal</i> A

קכרה	9, 13 = A
קכ	20 = A
קיון	11 = A
קילל	16; <i>Hos.</i> 1 <i>Sam.</i>
קיר	<i>Hi.</i> 17 and B. <i>Polel</i> A
קין	16, 18 = A
קל	2, 7, 11, 11, 13, 17, 18 = A
קלח	3 = A (characteristic).
קם	4, 14 = A
קמח	19 = A
קנג	11; <i>lviii.</i> 13 only.
קנח	<i>Kal</i> 22 = A
קרבי	20; <i>Jer.</i> only. ( <i>קרבי</i> <i>Neh.</i> 2 Ch. only.)
קרוץ	11 = A
קת	22 = A

ה

קו	12. <i>K'thubhim</i> only.
קנה	<i>Kal</i> 14 = A
קנים	8, 8 = A
קנר	<i>Kal</i> 11 = A. <i>Pi.</i> 4 only.
קרר	18 = A
קרת	2 = A

## ז

זאן	14 = A
זבא	4 = A
זבוי	14, 19 = A (characteristic).
זבוח	Pi. 3 = A
זבויים	21 = A
זביר	8 = A B (characteristic).

## פ

פבץ	Pi. 14 = A
פבט	Pu. 3; Eze. Eze. 2 Chr. only. Ni. A. Hi. A.
פול	2, 4, 4 = A
פבא	5 = A
פבא	Kal 3 = A
פבוי	6, 22 = A (xxxiii. 13)
פבט	18 = A

## ר

ר	4 = A
רבץ	Kal 21 = A. Hi. 20; liv. 11; Jer. Eze. Cant. Pa. xxiii. only.
רבו	Hi. 13 = A
רבו	Kal 4 = A. Hi. 2 = A
רבו	Pi. 18 = A
רבוט	Pi. 18; 2 K. only. Pu. 16; Hos. Nah. only.
רע	8, 11 = A
רעב	Kal 20 = A
רעב	Kal 7 = A
רעב	Kal 13; xxiv. 18; Am. ix. 1.
רעב	Pi. 21; Nah. Joel, Job, 1 Chr. only.
רעב	11 = A

## ט

טוי	Kal 7 = A
טעב	21; xxxiv. 14; Pent. Eze. Dan. 2 Chr.

## ש

שאון	4 = A
שבב	Hi. 11 = A

שָׁבַל	Ni. 16; Zec. xiv. 2 only. Pu. Jer.
שָׁד	6 = A
שָׁדַד	6; Joel, Eze. Pent. and <i>K'thubhim</i>
שָׁבַן	Kal 20, 21 = A
שָׁם	20, 20, 21, 21 = A
שָׁמַד	Hi. 9 = A
שָׁמַח	9 = A
שָׁמַחִים	5, 10, 18 = A
שָׁמַחֵם	10; xxxviii. 8, 8 and B. Jud. 1 Sam. 2 Sam. Am.
שָׁמַחֵם	Ni. 16 and Zec. only. Kal Jud. 1 Sam.
שָׁמַחֵם	Ni. 2 only. Pual Job only. No others.
שָׁמַחֵם	Hi. 11; xxv. 11, 12; xxvi. 5, 5 and B. 1 Sam.

## ח

חָבַל	11 = A
חָבַח	Kal 8 = A
חָבַחִים	22; xxxiv. 12; xxxv. 7 and B. Mic.
חָבַחֵם	19 = A

2. *Grammatical constructions.* The few points differing from strict regularity are all paralleled in Isaiah A.

(1) Ver. 9. The infinitive carried on by a finite verb = xxii. 13; xxx. 14; xxxi. 5.

(2) Ver. 10 f. The perfect tense inserted for vividness into a series of futures = viii. 8; xi. 6.

(3) Ver. 17. The future expressed by הָיָה with the participle = viii. 7.

(4) Ver. 2. The imperative put poetically for the indicative = xxiii. 1, 4.

(5) Ver. 2. The voluntative with וְ conjunctive = v. 19.

(6) Ver. 14. The circumstantial clause = i. 31, etc.

(7) Ver. 17 f. The order of the words: subject, object, predicate = iii. 17; xi. 8; xvii. 5; xxxii. 7, 8.

(8) Ver. 17. The accusative *pendens* = i. 7; ix. 1; xi. 10.

(9) Ver. 19. The noun with verbal force = xi. 9.

(10) Ver. 14. The distributive with plural verb = ix. 18.

3. *Phraseological affinities.*

(1) An accumulation of particulars for emphasis. Verses 7, 8. So throughout Isaiah. Cf. i. 16, 17; v. 25; xvi. 10; xxi. 3, 4; xxii. 21; xxviii. 15; xxix. 4; xxx. 30, 33; xxxii. 6, 14; xxxiii. 8, 9.

(2) Poetical repetition of a word or phrase, verses 20, 21. So i. 9, 10; vi. 10; viii. 22, 23; xiv. 26, 27; xxiii. 8, 9, 15, 16; xxviii. 15, 17, 18; xxxii. 15, 16.

(3) A general statement differentiated into positive and negative particulars. Verses 19-22. So v. 26-29; viii. 11-13; xi. 3, 4; xvii. 7, 8; xxii. 12, 13.

(4) Play upon words, verses 6, 12, 22. So v. 7; vii. 9, etc.

(5) Characteristic expressions.

Ver. 2. Lifting up a signal; cf. v. 26; xi. 12; xviii. 3.

" 4. Nations in tumult; cf. xvii. 12, 13, a close parallel.

" 5. The whole earth; cf. x. 23.

" 6.  $\text{אֱ־וֵרִיתִּים}$ ; cf. i. 7; xxix. 2.

" 7. The heart melts; cf. xix. 1. This was in Dillmann's list.

" 11. The high brought low; cf. ii. 11-17; v. 15; x. 16, 17, etc.

" 12. A remnant left; cf. i. 9; vi. 11-13; xvi. 14; xxi. 17, etc.

" 13. Effects of Jahveh's wrath, cf. ix. 18 (a close parallel; cf.  $\text{אֱ־וֵרִיתִּים}$  causal and  $\text{אֱ־וֵרִיתִּים}$ ).

In summing up this branch of the subject, let me explain why I would attach no undue weight to the first division treated. The vocabulary of Isaiah is so rich and extensive that even if our passage were exilic it could hardly avoid coinciding with this to a large degree. I have taken pains to test in this way Ezekiel xxv., which fills the same space in the Hebrew as Isaiah xiii., and which is also a prophecy against foreign nations. I found nearly (not quite) as large a proportion of Isaian words there as here. But

there were some notable contrasts. The whole number of different words in Ezekiel xxv. is but 109, against 171 in Isaiah xiii.; the reason is that Ezekiel keeps repeating himself, while our passage is more varied. (The careful student will not confound this quality of style with that noticed at (2) under phraseology). Isaiah xiii. has 28 words used by pre-exilic writers outside of Isaiah A; Ezekiel xxv. only 13. Over against the 6 apparently late words out of 171 which we have been examining, Ezekiel xxv. has 10 out of 109, or 9 per cent against  $3\frac{1}{2}$ . I repeat, however, that I would lay much less stress than formerly upon such figures. We are considering the evidence, I take it, in its proper order. The chapter having come down to us as Isaiah's, holds its place until dislodged; the argument from diction has no tendency to shake it, but on the other hand is decidedly confirmatory.

### III. The historical situation.

This has been so magnified and distorted by centuries of tradition that it is difficult for the student of the Bible to turn his attention away from the huge metropolis of Nebuchadnezzar's pride, and the splendid details of Jeremiah i. and li., and ask whether this prophecy really discloses anything incompatible with the Babylon of Isaiah's time, and with the general environment of that prophet.

For my present purpose, I insist upon isolating chapter xiii. I do not attempt as yet to decide whether chapter xiv. may be a part of the same prophecy with this; but the negative is supported not only by the considerations already adduced, but by the fact that in chapter xiii. the people of Babylon perish as well as the city; there is a general slaughter, so that a man is rarer than fine gold;—in xiv. 2, however, Israel changes places with its captors, and rules over its oppressors. Further, it makes for the separation of *b* from *c* that in xiv. 22 extermination is again threatened. In *a* also (chapter xiii.), Babylon is to become a wilderness, in-

habited by wild beasts; cf. Jer. l. 43, "a dry land and a desert;" in *c* it is to be inundated, and become pools of water. In *c* the interest is engrossed almost wholly by a *king* of Babylon; in *a* no such character enters.

Doubtless these statements can be reconciled; but they are not *natural* statements (especially the first pair) for the same writer to make in immediate succession.

These arguments of Bredenkamp deserve a more respectful hearing than Dillmann has given them; they are not to be answered by any such epithet as his "*apologetische Halbheit*."

Returning to chapter xiii., we find gathered against Babylon a host under the Lord of hosts. As is not uncommon in the prophets, a great calamity, affecting the whole world, and even the heavenly bodies, is contained in the overthrow of God's foes (verses 5-13). Every such visitation, whether in Edom, or Jerusalem, or Babylon, has a universal element, is one scene from the day of Jahveh, the *dies irae*.

Verses 14-22: the city is taken; plunder, rapine, and wholesale destruction of natives and foreigners, old and young, ensue. The pitiless Medes cannot be bribed to spare; they rest not till the beauty of the Chaldean's pride becomes an irreparable ruin like that of Sodom; and the time is near.

I cannot agree with Bredenkamp, that the mention in verse 5 of the enemy as coming from a far country, from the uttermost part of heaven, shows that the writer did not live in Babylon. Sargon himself repeatedly mentions "the cities of distant Media" and "Media the far one." Nor do I think there is much force in his argument that if chapter xiii. had been written in the time of Cyrus, Elam as well as Media would surely have been mentioned. It is always hazardous to reason from what might have been; it is better to inquire whether the text as we have it gives positive data as appropriate to the age of Isaiah as to any other. This age

was that of four great Assyrian kings, Tiglath-Pileser III., 745-727, Shalmaneser 727-722, Sargon 722-705, and Sennacherib 705-681, these dates, however, being not yet settled with precision. No annals of Shalmaneser have been found; but the records of the other three kings have much to our purpose. Isaiah was a statesman, a man of courts; his writings reveal a remarkable acquaintance with the geography and politics of his time. It has often been urged against his authorship of chapter xiii. that neither the Chaldeans nor the Medes had risen above Isaiah's horizon, and that Babylon could not have been so powerful then. I shall devote most of my remaining space to citations from the monuments, which may help us to apprehend Isaiah's actual view-point and the range of his observation. The translations are mostly from George Smith.

In Tiglath-Pileser's historical tablet, there is a long list of geographical names ending with Likra, the heap of gold, and called "districts of rugged Media." "The whole of them," he says, "in hostility I overwhelmed, their numerous fighting men I slew, 60,500 of their people and children, horses, asses, mules, oxen, and sheep without number I carried off, their cities I pulled down," etc.

The same king, in his annals for the year 744-43 relates: "The tribute of the lords of the Medes, all of them to Bikin, I received. My general Asshur-dainini to the powerful Medes, who are at the rising of the sun, I sent. Five thousand horses, people, oxen and sheep without number, he brought."

Sargon also says in his Annals (xiv. 2, 3): "I subdued the towns of Media." "I reigned from Yatnan [Cyprus] . . . to all the cities of remote Media." In another inscription (ii. 2) Sargon says: "My mighty hand reached from the town of Hasmar unto the town of Simaspati in Media the far one, which is situated at the rising sun." Again (v. 17): "In the sixth year of my reign, [716-15] . . . I increased

the large tribute of 28 Prefects of the capital places of Media." The next year, "To keep my position in Media, I built fortifications in the neighborhood of Kar-Sarkin; I fortified . . . [the name is gone]. I received the tribute of 22 Prefects of the capitals of Media." Another year passes, and we come to 714-13. "In the eighth year of my reign, I received the tributes of Van, of Media, which the men of the land of Van and Ellip had kept from me." In the following year, 713-12: "The lands of Bait-Ili, the district of Media, which belongs to Ellip [here follow the names of ten provinces and one town] the far districts of the territory of the Arabians from the rising sun, and the principal districts of Media had shaken off the yoke of Asshur and had terrified the mountain and the valley." Sargon goes on to relate that he reduced them to submission, and that he received the tribute "of 45 governors of the Median towns." So much for the strength and importance of Media in Isaiah's time.

Turning now to Chaldea, we read in II. R. 67, Tiglath-Pileser's historical tablet: "Chaldea through its extent in hostility I swept." In Sargon's Annals, xiv. 2, four provinces are mentioned, "which form Chaldea in its totality," and he adds: "I took their tributes, I put over them my Lieutenants as Governors, and I forced them under my sovereignty."

Here then is the name Chaldea; the region thus defined, namely Babylonia, as might be naturally expected, is constantly named on the monuments, often being called Kar-Dunias, or Sumir and Accad. The southern portion, along the coast of the Persian Gulf, is termed Bit-Yakin. This was the home of Merodach Baladan, who was contemporary with all these kings, and who was either a Babylonian patriot, as Lenormant describes him, or a very troublesome rebel. The inscriptions fully corroborate the scriptural statement that he became king of Babylon. Tiglath-Pileser says that the seacoast of Bit-Yakin had never been subdued

by his predecessors, but that Merodach Baladan, overwhelmed with fear, came and kissed his feet. In another inscription he boasts as follows: "Kar-Dunias, the whole of it, I possess and I rule its kingdom." He places his conquest of Babylonia in the first year of his reign, i. e., 745. In 744 he added its cities to the borders of Assyria and appointed his generals governors over them. Seven years later, 738-37, in the midst of a campaign against Syria, he relates: "My general captured [certain cities, the names partly obliterated] of the people of Babylon and the cities which were around them. Their warriors he slew, [the captives?] to the land of the Hittites to my presence they brought." Accordingly, we find among his royal titles, "king of Babylon, king of Sumir and Accad," Babylon being the only city thus singled out. The strength and signal importance of Babylon appear too from the long struggle it kept up against the powerful monarchs of Assyria. Though often subdued, it as often rose again. In 721, the first year of Sargon, as before in the first year of Tiglath-Pileser, Babylonia revolted. "Merodach Baladan," says Sargon, "having usurped, against the will of the gods, the kingdom of Babylon, . . . I led away . . . men [the number is lost], whatever they possessed . . . I transported them to Syria." A good chance for Isaiah to get definite information about them and their country. Twelve years later, in 709, Merodach Baladan is in alliance with Humbanigas the king of Elam, and all the tribes of Mesopotamia, for "against the will of the gods of Babylon . . . he had sent during twelve years ambassadors."

It was probably one of these embassies which came to Hezekiah, and which might have resulted, but for the prophet's intervention, in provoking the king of Assyria to take vengeance on Jerusalem. Directly afterward, however, the irrepressible Merodach Baladan formed another league with a new king of Elam, Satruk-Nakhunti. This was the

occasion of Sargon's triumphant march into Babylon itself. "The inhabitants of Babylon called upon me," he says, "and I made shake the entrails of the town of Bel and of Merodach who judges the gods. I entered immediately to Babylon, and I immolated the expiatory victims to the great gods. I established my power in the midst of the palace of Merodach Baladan."

The next year (709-708) Sargon makes Babylon the base of his final expedition against Merodach Baladan. "In the thirteenth year of my reign, in the month Iyar, I left the town of Suanna [Babylon]. . . . Merodach Baladan . . . assembled his forces at Dur-Yakin, and he fortified his citadels." [The battle follows, ending with his defeat and flight, and the capture of 80,500 men.] "Concerning the people of Sippara, of Nipur, of Babylon, and of Borsippa, I allowed them to continue in the midst of the town their ancient professions."

Let us pass now to the annals of Sennacherib. In 703: "Merodach Baladan, king of Kar-Dunias, together with the troops of Elam, in front of the city of Kish I defeated. In the midst of the battle he abandoned his baggage; he fled alone; into the land of Guzumman he escaped; he entered in among the marshes and reeds; his life he saved. . . . His palace in Babylon I entered with rejoicing; I opened his treasuries; gold and silver, vessels of gold and silver, precious stones of every kind . . . I brought forth, I counted them as spoils, I took possession of them. My soldiers I despatched after him into the land of Guzumman, into the midst of the marshes and reeds. Five days passed; but not a trace of him was seen. In the might of Asshur my lord, 89 strong cities and fortresses of Chaldea, as well as 820 smaller cities and towns round about them, I besieged, I took, I carried away their spoil. The Arabians, Aramaeans and Chaldeans who were in Erech, Nipur, Kish, Charsak-

kalama, Cutha, with the inhabitants of the rebellious city, I brought forth, I counted them as spoil."

We have not yet done with Babylon, but before going further let us see how the data already gained correspond to the period and the statements of our chapter. We find Babylon, which is bounded on the west by the desert, encompassed on the three other sides by the powers of Chaldea, Elam, Media, and Assyria. Already Babylon looked back to a proud antiquity. She had furnished literature, religion, and all forms of civilization to the rapidly growing Assyrian power. Assyria herself (as Sayce remarks in his *Life and Times of Isaiah*, p. 80) was as yet but little known to the statesmen of Judah. Even Isaiah, in his prophecies against the Assyrian, never mentions Nineveh. Babylon, however, had been known to the Israelites from time immemorial, and Chaldea was their traditional birth-place. Babylon was maintaining a long and variously successful struggle for independence, and her ambassadors came with offers of friendship to Jerusalem. This city was the "proud ornament of Chaldea"—so Cheyne renders the phrase in our verse 19; and by reason of its wealth, which Sennacherib describes, as also by reason of the contest for its possession, it might well be called the glory [lit., the gazelle] of kingdoms; a phrase less appropriate, one would think, to the colossal metropolis, girded with its mountain of brick, which Nebuchadnezzar erected.

It is objected, however, that in these struggles the Medes were on the side of Babylon; and also that the Medes were not consolidated into an empire until after the time of Isaiah. We need not reply, with Bredenkamp, by referring to the doubtful story of Deioces; but we may observe that the two objections may be made to neutralize one another. Exactly because Media was only an aggregation of fierce, warring districts, the Medes who supported Merodach Bala-

dan are not to be considered as an entire nation, but as those tribes (perhaps the nearest) whom he could influence.

But when the kings of Assyria record their repeated raids upon Median tribes, and their capture of scores of thousands of Medes at one time, it is impossible to doubt that they recruited their armies from these fierce warriors. Secular history confirms exactly the traits of the Medes depicted in our chapter. Isaiah's countrymen of North Israel were some of them settled among the Medes; from personal friends among these, as well as from other sources, he may have formed an accurate picture of their cruelty and implacable atrocity. Our chapter says nothing of a kingdom of the Medes; but if the author desired to impress most forcibly the impending overthrow of Babylon, he could do this with vividness by awaking against it the ferocious people who could not be bought off with silver and gold, and who would have no pity on the fruit of the womb.

We are so accustomed to read this chapter in the light of a later Babylon, and especially in the light of Jeremiah I. and II., that it would be a useful exercise to re-read the latter prophecy, noting how many details there are which point with the greatest certainty to the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar's time, and which yet are totally absent from the picture in the book of Isaiah.

We come finally to consider the total destruction of Babylon portrayed in Isaiah XIII. Returning to the annals of Sennacherib, and passing over other struggles with Babylon, we find his campaign of 691 depicted as follows (III. R. 14, 43-53): "In my second expedition to Babylon, when I planned to capture it, I went swiftly, and like the approach of a shower I stormed, and like a black cloud I cast it down, I surrounded the city with destruction. By *bilti* and *napalkati* I took that city; of its people, small and great, I left not; and [with] their corpses I filled the streets of the city. I captured Shuzub, king of Babylon, together

with his family; I brought him alive to the midst of my country. The treasures of that city I carried off; gold, precious stones, a possession, a treasure, I counted to the hands of my people and they turned it to their own hands. As for the gods dwelling therein, the hands of my people captured them and broke them in pieces; and their treasure, their possession, they took. . . . City and houses, from their foundation to their roof, I destroyed, laid waste, burned with fire. Wall and rampart, temples, towers of brick and earth, whatever there was, I carried off and cast into the *Arahti*. In the interior of that city I dug canals, and covered its site with waters. The work of its foundation I destroyed, and against it I increased the deluge of its destruction. In order that the ground of that city and the temples might not be touched in future time, I hurried it into the waters, and I finished it completely."

Now it is not necessary to suppose that this description is perfectly accurate. Sennacherib is a great boaster, and in certain particulars his statements are questioned. But it is an undoubted fact that he did destroy Babylon, and that about twelve years later Esarhaddon rebuilt it, making it a second capital of his empire. We know not how long Isaiah lived after Sennacherib's expedition to Palestine in 701; if he was alive at the destruction of Babylon in 691 he need not have been more than eighty years old. The supposition that he wrote chapter xiii. agrees well with Sennacherib's account, either on the extreme rationalistic theory of a prophecy after the event, on the reverent modern theory of a divine inspiration to announce principles, coupled in this case with a remarkable coincidence as to details, or on the traditional theory that the details themselves were divinely revealed to him.

In our distance and ignorance, we should be thankful for sufficient light to perceive that the *materials* of our prophecy may all have been present to Isaiah's consciousness,

and to re-assure ourselves in the conviction that in this case, as in so many others, the compilers of the book of Isaiah may have seen clearly the external evidence which we see through a glass darkly.